



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Department of Human Services

*Safety, Oversight and Quality*

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Reference: 20-65 Provider Alert

Date: February 29, 2020

To: Nursing Facility Providers, Community Based Care Providers & Adult Foster Home Providers

From: Department of Human Services  
Aging and People with Disabilities  
Safety, Oversight and Quality Section

Subject: **COVID – 19 (Coronavirus)**

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Dear long-term care providers:

This alert is being sent to ask for your immediate action in helping prevent the spread of illness in Oregon long-term care facilities.

In recent days, concerns have grown in Oregon about the recent occurrences of a new strain of coronavirus, also known as COVID-19. COVID-19 is a new respiratory illness that has sickened tens of thousands of people worldwide.

It is very important that we do all we can to ensure that vulnerable populations, including older adults and people with disabilities, are not exposed to the virus.

We are sending this alert to encourage you to post a notice to visitors to practice prevention when entering a long-term care facility. An example notice is attached that may be customized for your specific facility.

We have also attached informational materials from the Oregon Health Authority to help educate the public about how to prevent the spread of flu viruses.

*“Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe”*

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Normally, long term care facilities must permit visitors as residents choose. Via this alert, we are notifying providers that the Department of Human Services will not take any negative regulatory action for facilities acting in good faith when they deny visitation.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

Michael McCormick  
Interim Director  
Aging and People with Disabilities Program  
Department of Human

## ATTACHMENTS

For general information about the DHS Office of Safety, Oversight and Quality, visit the DHS Web site at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/). If you have questions about this alert, please contact the Nursing Facility Licensing Unit at [NFLicensing@state.or.us](mailto:NFLicensing@state.or.us)

# Novel Coronavirus

## Fact Sheet

### What is novel coronavirus?

Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a virus strain that has only spread in people since December 2019. Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new virus. It has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people and there is not a treatment.

### How does novel coronavirus spread?

Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person to others through:

- the air by coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes

### How severe is novel coronavirus?

Experts are still learning about the range of illness from novel coronavirus. Reported cases have ranged from mild illness (similar to a common cold) to severe pneumonia that requires hospitalization. So far, deaths have been reported mainly in older adults who had other health conditions.

### What are the symptoms?

People who have been diagnosed with novel coronavirus have reported symptoms that may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus:

#### Fever



#### Cough



#### Difficulty breathing



### What should I do if I have symptoms?

Call your healthcare provider to identify the safest way to receive care. Let them know if you have traveled to an affected area within the last 14 days.

### Who is at risk for novel coronavirus?

Currently the risk to the general public is low. At this time, there are a small number of individual cases in the U.S. To minimize the risk of spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to promptly identify and evaluate any suspected cases.

**Travelers to and from certain areas of the world may be at increased risk.** See [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) for the latest travel guidance from the CDC.

## How can I prevent from getting novel coronavirus?

If you are traveling overseas (to China but also to other places) follow the CDC's guidance: [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel).

Right now, the novel coronavirus has not been spreading widely in the United States, so there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public. Steps you can take to prevent spread of flu and the common cold will also help prevent coronavirus:

- wash hands often with soap and water. If not available, use hand sanitizer
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid contact with people who are sick
- stay home while you are sick and avoid close contact with others
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing



Currently, there are no vaccines available to prevent novel coronavirus infections.

## How is novel coronavirus treated?

There are no medications specifically approved for coronavirus. Most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. However, some cases develop pneumonia and require medical care or hospitalization.

## For more information:

[www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus](http://www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus)

Updated 1/31/2020



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION  
Health Security, Preparedness and Response (HSPR)

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the Public Health Division at 971-673-0977 or 971-673-0372. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.

# How can I avoid getting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

**Right now, the risk of getting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low in the U.S.**

Steps you can take to prevent the spread of flu and the common cold can also help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.



Wash your hands often with soap and water.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.



Avoid contact with sick people and stay home if you're sick.



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.

Due to a recent confirmed case of coronavirus in Oregon, and flu season, \_\_\_\_\_ is taking additional precautions to prevent the transmission of these illnesses and protect the health of our residents.

If you are not feeling well – and in particular, if you have a fever, a cough or are experiencing difficulty breathing or shortness of breath – or if you recently traveled to an area

experiencing a coronavirus outbreak, we kindly ask that you not visit until you are certain that you are not contagious.

If you have questions, please contact:

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Thank you!