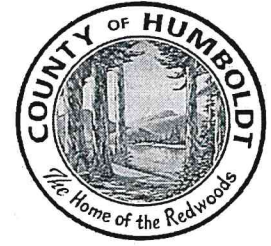


**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT  
JOINT INFORMATION CENTER**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 17, 2020

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## **Local Health Officials Provide Information on Social Distancing**

Many Humboldt County residents are seeking additional guidance on recommended social distancing measures following school and business closures across the county.

County Health Officer Dr. Teresa Frankovich said, “Social distancing is one of the Public Health tools that’s used to help prevent or slow the spread of an infection within a community.” She added that social distancing can include closing bars or restaurants and cancelling or postponing events and mass gatherings.

All Humboldt County schools are closed or implementing distance learning curriculum due to concerns about community spread of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services Public Health Director Michele Stephens said, “The decision to close a school is made in order to help keep our community safe and healthy. It’s not a snow day. It’s not a playdate. These kids still have an important assignment, which is to keep from spreading the illness to others.”

To further reduce spread of the virus, state health officials urge people 65 years old and older and those with chronic diseases to self-isolate at home. These vulnerable populations are encouraged to maintain outdoor activities to the extent possible but to cancel any non-essential travel or appointments.

“These strategies are an important part of addressing this outbreak; however, they do not replace ongoing measures we can all take to help decrease transmission,” Dr. Frankovich said. Some of the ongoing measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) include washing your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, promoting good hand hygiene, performing routine surface cleaning and staying home when you are sick. Additionally, residents can lower risk of infection by maintaining six feet of distance from others and not congregating, especially in groups of 10 or more.

Stephens said people being tested for the virus should self-isolate at home while awaiting results, and those exposed to someone who tested positive should call Public Health and self-isolate at home for 14 days while they monitor their symptoms.

## **How do I know if I need to get tested?**

St. Joseph Hospital has provided an online assessment tool to help you determine if you need to see a doctor related to COVID-19. To take the assessment, go to:

<https://www.providence.org/patients-and-visitors/coronavirus-advisory>

## **I don't have a provider, where do I go?**

Emergency departments at local hospitals are the last-resort medical facilities for people to go to if they don't have a medical provider. Please call ahead before seeking medical care.

## **How do I clean my space after potential exposure?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided the following recommendations: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fhome%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fhome%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html)

They have also provided a list of recommended cleaning products:

[https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list\\_03-03-2020.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf)

## **I just returned from travel to a place that has COVID-19, what do I do?**

The CDC has provided guidance for people returning from travel to high risk areas and within the U.S. as well. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

## **Should I be self-quarantining or self-isolating?**

People considered to be at a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 should self-isolate and distance themselves from others as much as possible.

If you currently have symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath, etc.), you should stay at home, distance yourself from others, and practice everyday preventive measures: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

## **Is my child's school closed and for how long?**

The Humboldt County Office of Education has a page dedicated to updating that information: <https://hcoe.org/covid-19/>