

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

What if I am Sick?

If you are sick and have respiratory symptoms, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, **stay home unless you need medical attention**. Remain in your home until you feel better and have no symptoms. Keep in mind there is no treatment for COVID-19 and people who are mildly ill can isolate at home. While at home, as much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people. If you need medical attention, **contact your health care provider** who will evaluate whether you can be cared for at home or need to be hospitalized. If you determine you need to go to the emergency room, call ahead and let them know you are coming so the medical team can take the proper precautions prior to you entering the facility.

Do I need to be tested?

Consider the following:

1. Within the last 14 days, have you traveled to a country for which the CDC has issued a Level 2 or 3 travel designation?; (Currently China, Iran, South Korea, and most of Europe.)
2. Have you had contact with any person who is showing symptoms for COVID- 19 within the last 14 days, OR with anyone with known COVID-19?; and
3. Do you have any symptoms of a lower respiratory infection (e.g., cough, fever, or shortness of breath)?

If “Yes”, contact your healthcare provider for medical assessment.

Why can't I be tested if I want to?

IDPH and local health departments have implemented heightened surveillance to identify and test patients most likely to have COVID-19. Public health experts are communicating with and educating health care providers and other public health partners about the current situation. At present, there is a limited supply of testing nationwide; therefore, the testing focuses on those most likely to have COVID-19 including those that have traveled to areas that CDC has issued a Level 2 or 3 travel designation or those that have had contact knowingly with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.

Are schools closing?

Following extensive state-level analysis of coronavirus spread in various countries and social distancing measures that were put in place, the State is taking the precautionary measure of closing all K-12 schools in the state of Illinois from March 17 through March 30.

The Pritzker administration is working to ensure critical support functions remain available to students across the state—including their access to food, child care and safe environments.

On Thursday, the Illinois State Board of Education was granted a waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to continue providing meals to students in non-group settings. Students receiving free and reduced priced breakfasts and lunches will be able to receive grab-and-go meals each day, with some districts having the ability to deliver and others offering parent pick up.

Gov. Pritzker has assured school administrators that the state will issue no penalties as a result of this closure.

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus/schools-guidance>

Events

In Illinois, all large-scale events exceeding 1,000 individuals must be cancelled until April 11. We are encouraging that community events of 250 or more be cancelled or postponed until May 1, including personal and social events. Citizens should consider this in their personal lives and consider refraining from attending events of this size if they are not cancelled or postponed.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/Pages/news-item.aspx?ReleaseID=21245>

Business/Employer Guidance

The State encourages businesses across the state to take advantage of teleworking capabilities. Every business that can have employees work remotely should consider doing so immediately. For those that cannot, we encourage employers to take proper precautions to keep individuals safe in the workplace. This includes reminding staff to stay home when sick or with a fever; considering a plan for teleworking where feasible; remaining flexible on leave policies; and promoting robust mitigation approaches, such as hand washing, cleaning, and offering hand sanitizer.

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus/business-guidance>

Elections

Yes, the election will proceed as scheduled on Tuesday, March 17. This is a fundamental function of government, and the state is committed to making sure the election proceeds with as little disruption as possible. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to expand hours for early voting over the weekend to reduce the number of people who would need to vote on Election Day. Voters who have not already submitted a vote by mail application can pick up a vote by mail ballot through Monday at their local election offices.

Aging Population and those that are sick/immunocompromised

Those that fall into these categories should take extra caution when attending gatherings of any size and avoid exposure to large groups of people whenever possible.

Nursing homes and assisted living facilities

The state has implemented new staffing procedures and strict guidelines restricting visitors at state-operated long-term care facilities and is also working closely with private nursing home and assisted living associations on the adoption of similar guidelines.

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus/long-term-care-guidance>

Travel Restrictions

The latest travel updates are available on CDC's web page

<https://www.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

Is government closed?

The state government will remain open and operating to ensure essential services will continue to be provided. The James R. Thompson Center in Chicago will be closed to people who don't have business with the state in the building for the foreseeable future.

We at the Illinois Department of Public Health understand and hear your concerns. Please know the State of Illinois is working with its partners to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Illinois. These measures will continue to evolve as the

ongoing pandemic changes. Please continue to visit our COVID-19 website at <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus> as it is continually updated.