



Ford County Public Health Department

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For Immediate Release

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Ford County Public Health Department Asking People at a Higher Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19 to Stay Home

Ford County Public Health Department (FCPHD) is asking those who are at a higher risk of getting very sick from Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to stay home. Those at a higher risk include older adults, age 65 and older, and people with serious medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease. According to FCPHD Administrator, Lana Sample, "While COVID-19 is a new disease and we are learning more about it every day, we do know older adults and people with serious medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports if you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 it is extra important to take actions to reduce your risk of getting sick with the disease. Due to this knowledge and recommendation, the Illinois Department on Aging recently requested all Area Agency on Aging service providers to suspend all gathering activities, such as congregate meals and other social activities. This request also included service providers suspend all face-to-face visits with clients. FCPHD has suspended such visits and is encouraging all high-risk persons stay home, except to seek medical care and get needed items like medicine and food. When possible, have food and medicine delivered. While face-to-face visits have tentatively ceased, FCPHD continues to remain in contact with clients through telephone calls. For any high-risk client, FCPHD is encouraging you to avoid coming to the FCPHD office. FCPHD recommends calling the office during normal business hours to speak with staff and get assistance. For additional guidance, refer to the following CDC and FCPHD recommendations:

- Stay home as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed. When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often.
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
- Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary medications to have on hand in case there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community and you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time. If you cannot get extra medications, consider using mail-order for medications.
- Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.
- Have enough household items and groceries on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home for a period of time.

For more information on COVID-19, visit the FCPHD website (www.fordcountyphd.org) or contact the FCPHD office at (217) 379-9281.