



## Ford County Public Health Department

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For Immediate Release

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### **Ford County Public Health Department Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Update**

On Tuesday, March 24, 2020, Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced 250 new cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Illinois. Currently, IDPH is reporting a total of 1,535 cases in 32 counties in Illinois. The age of cases ranges from younger than one to 99 years. Ford County Public Health Department (FCPHD) continues to work closely with IDPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other state and local partners to monitor and respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. At this time, there are no confirmed cases in Ford County. While there are currently no known cases, FCPHD wants the public to know what symptoms to monitor, and the steps to take if someone suspects to have been exposed to COVID-19.

#### **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

According to the CDC, reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases. The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after being exposed to COVID-19.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

#### **How is COVID-19 diagnosed?**

Diagnosis occurs through laboratory testing. Health Departments do not order COVID-19 testing. Physicians will collect samples for testing.

#### **Who should be tested for COVID-19?**

Ideally, everyone who wanted a test would be able to get one, but right now, that's not possible. At this time, testing through IDPH is only recommended for individuals who are at risk of serious illness, like people over 60 or with underlying medical conditions. If you are in generally good health and have mild symptoms, stay home and take care of yourself like you would for a cold or the flu. Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home. This is called isolation. Those with mild symptoms are able to safely recover at home. You should contact your healthcare provider to report your symptoms. Do not visit an emergency room or doctor's office without calling ahead. Your doctor will help make the decision if you should get tested for COVID-19. Follow any care instructions from your provider. Seek medical attention if your symptoms worsen, like difficulty breathing. Whether you notify your doctor, or need to call 911, make sure you report that you have, or may have COVID-19.

**How long do I need to stay isolated if I have or might have COVID-19?**

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you should remain under home isolation for at least 7 days after you first became ill, or 72 hours after your fever has resolved and symptoms are improving, whichever is longer. If your doctor has directed you to stay isolated longer, you need to follow their direction.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 but have not tested positive for COVID-19, or been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should also stay home and away from others for 7 days after your symptoms started OR until 72 hours after your fever is gone and symptoms get better, whichever is longer.

**Is there treatment for COVID-19?**

There is no treatment for COVID-19. For most people, the illness is generally mild and can be safely managed at home. Speak with your doctor about ways you can manage COVID-19 symptoms.

FCPHD encourages residents, businesses, agencies, and community and faith-based leaders to stay updated on local COVID-19 information and guidance by visiting FCPHD's website ([www.fordcountyphd.org](http://www.fordcountyphd.org)) and Facebook page. FCPHD recommends visiting these sites often to get updated information and recommendations specific to your population. You can also access financial assistance program information for individuals and businesses affected by COVID-19.