



Shawano-Menominee Counties Health Department

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Preparing your Workplace for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

COVID-19 is a novel (new) type of coronavirus that was first found in Wuhan, China. The virus began spreading to people in December 2019. It has spread to more than 100 countries internationally, including the United States. The World Health Organization declared it a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Governor Evers declared a Public Health Emergency in Wisconsin on March 12, 2020.

Why are Health Experts concerned? Why do I need to be concerned?

Health experts are concerned because little is known about this new respiratory virus. It can cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people. Currently there is no vaccine to prevent a person from getting the virus and there is no treatment for this virus. This coronavirus is easily spread and has caused people to be hospitalized and die.

The United States and the State of Wisconsin's main strategy in decreasing the spread of the virus is reducing opportunities for exposure by encouraging people to keep distance from each other.

Community spread across the United States is expected and will cause interruptions for child care, schools, workplaces, and community events. As the COVID-19 disease begins to spread in Wisconsin communities, state and local public health officials will consider community interventions such as temporary closures of child care facilities and schools, workplace social distancing measures such as replacing in-person meetings with teleworking, and modifying, postponing, or cancelling mass gatherings.

Currently, the illness is not known to be widespread in Wisconsin, but we are asking people to take time now to prepare for widespread illness in the future.

What can you do to prepare?

Businesses are a critical partner in reducing community spread in their communities. Steps you can take to do your part to get your workplace ready:

- **Create a Business Continuity of Operations Plan**

The plan maps out how you will provide critical services if you have a number of employees who are sick or unavailable. Get [Your Workplace Ready for Pandemic Flu](#) from the Centers for Disease Control can aid you. The goal of the plan is reduce employees from getting sick, protect customers from getting sick, and maintain business operations.

- **Explore how employees can work from home**

Having employees work from home will help in the spread of the virus and minimize absenteeism due to illness.

- **Help employees plan ahead and be ready**

The Centers for Disease Control has [Resources for Home](#) to help people plan and be prepared.

- **Have sick employees stay home**

Encouraging sick employees to stay home helps to avoid other employees and customers from getting sick.

- **Review your leave policies**

Explore options to support parents who may need to stay home for a sick family member or care for children if child care and schools are cancelled.

- **Reinforce employees hand hygiene**

Place posters that encourage employees to wash their hands frequently, sneeze and cough into a tissue or their elbow. Make tissues and hand sanitizer readily available. ([CDC poster](#))

- **Perform routine cleaning**

Work with cleaning staff to make sure workplaces are cleaned and disinfected frequently and correctly. ([CDC cleaning](#))

- **Monitor travel guidance**

Be aware of travel guidance both international and domestic where there is widespread of coronavirus. People who have traveled to places with active COVID-19 in the past 14 days are asked to self-monitor and self-quarantine themselves for 14 days upon return. If symptoms, like fever, cough, or breathing problems occur, they are asked to contact their local health department and health care provider for possible testing.

Share CDC's [FAQ for travelers](#) and [State of Wisconsin's Department of Health Services FAQs](#) for Travelers regarding questions about employees who plan to travel or have recently traveled. Ensure employees notify you if they become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment.

- **Notify your local health department if you think an employee has or has been exposed to coronavirus**

In Shawano or Menominee Counties, call the Shawano-Menominee Counties Health Department if you have concerns about an employee who may have been exposed to coronavirus and you are looking to take action to reduce exposure in your workplace. We will work with you to determine what actions you are to take without unnecessarily alarming employees. The general phone number is 715-526-4808.

For Tribal members, please contact:

- **Ho-Chunk Health and Wellness Clinic:** 715-284-9851
- **Menominee Tribal Clinic:** 715-799-3361
- **Stockbridge-Munsee Health and Wellness Center:** 715-793-4144

- **Use credible resources to guide your decisions and in sharing information with employees**

Keep yourself and employees informed. Good sources of information include:

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) and [Resources for Home](#).
- State of WI Department of Health Services [Guidance for Employers](#) (scroll down on the webpage)
- Shawano-Menominee Counties Health Department [Coronavirus](#) website