



Kane County Health Department Provides COVID-19 Advice for Businesses

February 20, 2020 – The Kane County Health Department (KCHD) is actively monitoring the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued interim guidance for businesses and employers in non-healthcare settings. This guidance is designed to help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, in non-healthcare settings. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of COVID-19.

Employers can use strategies now to prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illness, such as:

- Actively encouraging sick employees to stay home
- Separating sick employees
- Emphasizing staying home when sick, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene by all employees
- Performing routine environmental cleaning
- Advising employees before traveling to take certain steps – check the CDC’s Traveler’s Health Notices website for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which you will travel

Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for how to conduct a risk assessment of their potential exposure. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform

(more)

Kane County Health Department Provides COVID-19 Advice for Businesses – page 2

fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for how to conduct a risk assessment of their potential exposure. Employers should be ready to implement strategies to protect the workforce from COVID-19 while ensuring the continuity of operations. An infectious disease outbreak response plan should include possible work-related exposures and health risks to employees. The plan should also explore flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and work hours in accordance with human resource policies.

Interim guidance for businesses and employers to plan for and respond to COVID-19 is now available on the CDC website at: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html)

For the general public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low at this time. Some people, like healthcare workers caring for COVID-19 patients and other close contacts of COVID-19 patients, will have an increased risk of infection.

The Kane County Health Department is in regular communication with local health care providers to monitor this situation and remains ready to investigate any potential cases of novel coronavirus within Kane County. For additional information and current updates on the novel coronavirus situation, please visit the KCHD website at KaneHealth.com.

Current state and federal guidance provides that symptoms include the following: fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Primary risk factors include a history of travel to Wuhan City, China or close contact with a person positive for COVID-19 while that person was ill.

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Kane County Health Department Provides COVID-19 Advice for Businesses – page 3

Contact your doctor or health provider first to report a suspected illness. They may advise you to take quarantine precautions upon arrival at their facility to prevent the spread of infection to other patients. Health providers will contact KCHD in the event that a case of novel coronavirus is suspected.

It is important to remember that the flu season is ongoing and the influenza rate is currently high. There is potential to confuse symptoms of influenza with other viruses. State and federal officials advise that only those individuals who have traveled through the affected areas or have been exposed to individuals who were positive for novel coronavirus are considered at risk.

As in all viral cases, it is advised to wash your hands frequently, avoid interacting with people who are sick and make sure you are up to date on your immunizations. Although it has no known effect on coronavirus, it is not too late to get a flu shot to protect yourself. Shots are available at the KCHD, 1240 N. Highland Ave. in Aurora, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information, visit KaneHealth.com or call 630-208-3801.

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