

“The Health Department has been advised that there is a presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in Watertown. The case is not associated with the schools and has no children in the school system. Their case investigation is ongoing and they will provide additional information tomorrow.”

As it relates to Coronavirus, there currently no cases of Corona virus in Watertown.

The Health Department has a phased plan pandemic influenza response plan and it will be moved to different levels as our risk increases. We have a working group that will be meeting weekly to discuss the town's response as the situation evolves. We are in constant contact with the School department and other departments to advise on actions that can be taken to minimize spread. I was also interviewed by Watertown Cable access for their news program and provided information on Coronavirus. Additionally, we are coordinating efforts through the emergency response team.

The Health Department has set up a separate webpage for coronavirus to provide information to the community. We will be working with the Fire Department to get the messaging out using Everbridge. We will also be increasing our messaging through the Webpage and social media, the messaging will be developed by the Health Department and distributed /linked by other town Departments so we are all sharing the same information.

Additionally, we will be providing hand sanitizers to department and promoting precautions in the absence of vaccines, advocating proper hand and cough hygiene, self-monitoring for symptoms of the Virus and highlighting the need to contact medical provider in the event that one has shown the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath

I have been advised that the Governor has declared a State of Emergency which allows for a more coordinated response to the Coronavirus.

We are currently developing signs for posting on town buildings that will allow community members to assess their health and self-exclude from meetings etc. There are signs currently posted on all entrances to Town Hall.

At the current time there is no need to cancel meetings as the risk is from infected individuals is minimal at this current time in Watertown that may change in future as the situation evolves.

Please find attached a copy of an informational flyer on the Corona virus. Also, we will be guided by advice from the department of Public Health and the CDC



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CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION

A new infectious disease known as COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus) was first detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This viral infection has resulted in thousands of confirmed human infections, with the vast majority of cases in China. Other countries, including the United States, have identified a growing number of cases in people who have traveled to China. More recently, transmission has been noted in some countries that has not been directly linked to cases in China, indicating community-level transmission in some places.

There are *no* cases of COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus) and there is no indication of community level transmission currently in Watertown.

The Town of Watertown and the Watertown Health Department have plans in place to address spread of the illness in Town should the need arise. The actions are phased and we will initiate the phases according to community risk.

Information can be found on our webpage at <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/965/CORONAVIRUS>

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

This coronavirus causes a respiratory (lung) infection.

Symptoms of this infection include:

- fever
- coughing
- shortness of breath
- in severe cases, pneumonia (infection in the lungs).

While most people recover from this infection, some infections can lead to severe disease or death. Older people and those with pre-existing medical problems seem to have a greater risk for severe disease.

How does coronavirus spread?

Coronaviruses are respiratory viruses and are generally spread through respiratory secretions (such as droplets from coughs and sneezes) of an infected person to another person. Information about how this novel coronavirus spreads is still limited.

What are the treatments? Is there a vaccine?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19, other than supportive care and relief of symptoms. Currently, there is no vaccine available to protect people from infection with the virus that causes COVID-19.

How can I protect myself?

Although risk to Massachusetts residents from COVID-19 is low, the same precautions to help prevent colds and the flu can help protect against other respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Stay home if you are sick.

Should I wear a mask when I go out in public?

The health risk to Massachusetts residents remains low and we are not recommending that people wear masks when they are in public. Masks can be useful to prevent someone who has a respiratory illness from spreading it to others but there is no hard evidence that wearing a mask protects the wearer

Travel Guidelines and restrictions.

Level 3 Countries (China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea)

Upon entry into the US only China and Iran travelers are reported to MDPH and Local Boards of Health (LBOH) and asked to self-quarantine for 14 days with Health Department supervision.

Travelers from Italy and South Korea are asked to self-quarantine and monitor for symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19, but are not reported to MDPH or LBOH.

Level 2 countries (Japan)

Upon entry to the US, travelers are asked to limit contact with others and to self-monitor for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 for 14 days and are not reported to DPH or LBOH.

While some travelers may have returned from Level 3 countries prior to the new restrictions went into effect, the Watertown Health Department request that any international traveler regardless of country of origin to take daily temperatures for two weeks and monitor for symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 and as long as they are asymptomatic continue business as usual. If symptoms develop please contact your primary care physician (PCP) and report symptoms and international travel history prior to visiting the clinic.

Symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are fever (101.4 F) and/or cough and/or sneezing and/or breathing difficulties or severe breathing difficulties. If the illness justifies a medical emergency please notify the 911 operator of any recent international travel history.

How do you test a person for COVID-19?

Testing for the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is only available through the Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Any healthcare provider who suspects a person is infected with 2019 Novel Coronavirus should call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to discuss testing, at (617) 983-6800.

Should I be tested for COVID-19?

Only those who have been in a place where COVID-19 is occurring, or have had close contact with someone who has it, and are experiencing flu-like symptoms, should be tested.

What should I do if I have visited a place where COVID-19 is occurring or if I had close contact with someone who has it?

As of February 3, 2020, if you have been in China, or you have had close contact with someone who has the virus, you may be asked to avoid contact with other people (“quarantine”), depending on your likelihood of exposure. You should also:

- Monitor your health for 14 days after your last possible exposure.
- Watch for these signs and symptoms:
 - a. fever
 - b. coughing
 - c. shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Other early symptoms could be chills, body aches, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, and runny nose.
 - If you develop any of these symptoms, call your healthcare provider.
 - Before going to your medical appointment, be sure to tell your healthcare provider about your possible exposure to COVID-19.

Where can I learn more about COVID-19?

For updated information, visit the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at their website: www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus

More detailed information and additional guidance is available from the CDC at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

Watertown Health Department Corona virus webpage: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/965/CORONAVIRUS>

For questions

Contact Watertown Health Department at 617-972-6446, your doctor, or clinic.

Contact the DPH Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences at (617) 983-6800.