



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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News release

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Kenosha County Division of Health continues to closely monitor COVID-19, formerly known as coronavirus

KENOSHA – The Kenosha County Division of Health, along with state and federal partners, continues to closely monitor the outbreak of the COVID-19 respiratory illness – formerly referred to as coronavirus – that was first detected in Wuhan, China, and continues to expand.

As of Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020, the Kenosha County Division of Health is not following any COVID-19 suspects or identified travelers to mainland China that require public health intervention.

The State Epidemiologist declared COVID-19 a Category I reportable disease as of Feb. 4, 2020. This declaration requires that the local public health departments must be notified immediately (within 24 hours) upon identification of a confirmed or suspect case.

While public health authorities consider this a serious public health concern, based on current information, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 to the general American public is considered low at this time.

Locally, Kenosha County Health Director Dr. Jen Freiheit said her staff is on weekly conference calls with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where they keep abreast of the latest and ever-changing information.

Public health nurses are poised and ready to conduct investigations, if needed, Freiheit said.

Recent media reports have stated that Americans should be prepared for severe disruptions as the threat of a pandemic looms larger. There is no vaccine nor are there any medications to treat it, hence the need for non-pharmaceutical interventions should the situation grow to severe pandemic levels.

The CDC suggests schools and businesses prepare their Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) for internet schooling and teleworking if necessary. Health care providers may need to boost telemedicine services.

“In addition, if you live with someone who is infected with COVID-19, you may need to quarantine yourself at home and avoid mass gatherings.” Freiheit said. “These tactics are not yet necessary, but we want to ensure Kenosha County residents are prepared for these types of interventions to stop the spread. Preparation is the key.”

Freiheit added that at the same time, there is little evidence to support wearing a mask by people who are not ill while in the community.

The Kenosha County Division of Health continues to promote standard precautions such as hand washing, using hand sanitizers, and covering your cough with your sleeve not your hands.

Influenza vaccine is still available for all age groups, as we are close to peak influenza activity for the season.

Freiheit urged people to refrain from visiting public areas if they are experiencing any flu-like symptoms such as fever, general malaise, coughing or sneezing, and to avoid sharing any household items or utensils.

DHS is providing updates on 2019 novel coronavirus, including case counts, on its [Outbreaks and Investigations webpage](#). It will be updated by 2 p.m. each day. Wisconsin’s last pending COVID-19 result just recently came in negative.

At this time, it is still not clear how easily COVID-19 spreads from person-to-person. Common signs of infection include fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, kidney failure, and even death. This can present much like other common respiratory illnesses also circulating at this time.

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