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To promote and protect the health and well-being of Kings County residents through education, prevention, and intervention.



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Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Update Kings County Department of Public Health

Dr. Milton Teske, Health Officer for the Department of Public Health, would like to provide updated information regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), as of March 16, 2020, there are a total of 472 cases and 11 deaths in California. The outbreak has now been characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization and increased efforts to contain the spread are encouraged.

Currently, there have been no confirmed cases in Kings County. Until the situation changes in Kings County, the Kings County Department of Public Health will primarily communicate with the community through its website. Therefore, the most recent and current information will be found there. Access this webpage by following this link: <https://www.countyofkings.com/departments/health-welfare/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

On Sunday, March 15, 2020 Governor Newsom introduced additional measures to help slow the spread of the disease, and the Kings County Department of Public Health is supportive of these measures, which includes:

- Home isolation of all seniors in non-essential roles in the state of California ages 65 years and older and those with chronic conditions. He indicated he has 13 taskforces working on logistics, food, water, fuel, and basic supplies.
- Closing bars, nightclubs, and wineries. He indicated restaurants could remain open, but would need to reduce occupancy by half and increase social distancing.
- Limiting visits to skilled nursing facilities, congregate care facilities, and hospital visits to end-of-life visits only.

These measures are in addition to the guidance released by the California Department of Public Health which includes:

- Large gatherings that include 250 people or more should be postponed or canceled. This includes gatherings such as concerts, conferences, as well as professional, college, and school sporting events. On Sunday, March 15, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control recommended even more stringent guidelines suggesting non-essential gatherings of greater than 50 individuals should be postponed or cancelled.

- Smaller gatherings held in venues that do not allow social distancing of six feet of space per person should be postponed or canceled. This includes gatherings in crowded auditoriums, rooms, or other venues.
- Gatherings of individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people. This includes gatherings such as those at retirement facilities, assisted living facilities, developmental homes, and support groups for people with health conditions.
- A “gathering” is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

How long will these limitations apply?

This guidance will remain in place until the threat of widespread dissemination of the disease has been decreased. As with all guidance that relates to COVID-19 response, authorities will revisit this guidance on a regular basis to evaluate the continued public health need for it and to evaluate if any elements need to be changed.

Kings County Department of Public Health continues to encourage residents to take measures to protect themselves and others from getting sick, as with any virus, especially during the flu season. Specifically, the Health Department reminds you of the below steps that you can take to protect your health and those around you:

- Wash hands with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay away from work, school, or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Typically, human coronavirus cause mild-to-moderate respiratory illness. Symptoms are very similar to the flu, including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny Nose
- Shortness of Breath

What should you do if you think you are sick?

- Stay home except for getting medical care.
- Do not go to work, school, or any other public place.
- Do not travel using public transportation.
- Motrin or Tylenol may be used for fever control and body pain (use according to product recommendations).
- Over the counter cough medicines can help with a cough pain (use according to product recommendations).
- Eat a healthy diet including lots of fresh fruit.
- Avoid sodas and other high sugar junk foods.
- Fresh air and sunlight are the best air purifiers, open windows and shades if conditions permit.
- Stay hydrated by drinking lots of fresh water.

Call ahead: If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, and you may have had contact with a person with COVID-19 or recently traveled to areas with the apparent community spread of the virus, call your health care provider or local public health department first before seeking medical care so that appropriate precautions can be taken to address your symptoms and prevent the further spread of the illness.

Who will be tested for COVID-19?

Your healthcare provider will determine the need for COVID-19 testing and order it if necessary. The current criteria for testing include symptoms of a respiratory infection (fever, cough, runny nose, or shortness of breath) and a negative influenza A/B test.

Reliable sources of information

Kings County Department of Public Health (KCDPH) website:

<https://www.countyofkings.com/departments/health-welfare/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) website:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

The World Health Organization (WHO) website:

<https://who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>