

# COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) Information for Early Childhood Care Providers

February 27, 2020

*The Ohio Department of Health recognizes ECE professionals as important partners in the health of communities. The families of the young children in your care rely on you for valid health information and advice. ODH is sharing current, valid information with you so that you are informed and can help keep your families informed. As always, if you have questions, please feel free to contact us.*

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### Current Situation

- **There are no confirmed cases COVID-19 in Ohio.** The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and local health departments will investigate newly reported possible cases (in people referred to as Persons Under Investigation or PUIs).
- **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to consider the health risk from COVID-19 to be low among the general public in the U.S.** However, COVID-19 continues to be an issue of concern nationally and internationally, and there is the increasing possibility that eventually community person-to-person spread will occur here.
- As of February 24, 2020, the CDC reports 14 cases of COVID-19 detected and laboratory-confirmed in the U.S., with 12 related to travel and two from person-to-person spread. Additionally, the CDC reports 45 cases of COVID-19 in people repatriated to the U.S. by the Department of State. These include three from Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, and 42 from the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

## General Information and Precautions

- Currently, you are only at risk if you (1) are displaying symptoms; and (2) have traveled to China in the 14 days before feeling sick or have been in contact with someone who has confirmed COVID-19. By and large, travel history is key.

- People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 have reported symptoms including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing that may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days after exposure to the virus. At this point you are more likely to catch the flu or a common cold, which both show some of the same symptoms.
- ODH recommends precautions used for reducing the risk of infection for other illnesses, such as flu. Encourage staff, children, and families to follow these precautions at all times.
  - Frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid contact with people who are sick.
  - Stay home when you are sick (except to visit a health care professional) and avoid contact with others.
  - Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
  - Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

## Preparedness for Childcare Settings

Administrators are encouraged to prepare for the possibility of community-level outbreaks in the U.S. by:

- Staying informed about COVID-19 through the CDC, the Ohio Department of Health and your local health departments.
- Sharing prepared CDC fact sheets/posters with families and staff. These can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>.
- Sharing the [CDC travel fact sheet](#) with families and staff who recently traveled back to the U.S. from China. It can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/communication-resources.html>.
- Reviewing and updating emergency operations plans and implementing as needed.
- Encouraging families to keep children home when they are sick and encouraging staff to stay home when they are sick.
- Alerting your local health department about large increases in absenteeism, including among staff, due to respiratory illnesses.
- Establishing procedures for separating sick children and staff from those who are not sick and for sending sick children and staff home as soon as possible.

More information on coronavirus disease 2019 can be found on the [CDC](#) coronavirus website at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) and the [ODH](#) coronavirus website at [www.odh.ohio.gov](http://www.odh.ohio.gov).

[Click here for CDC fact sheets for families](#)

[Click here for CDC fact sheet for those travelling from China](#)

[Click here for the CDC  
coronavirus website](#)

[Click here for the Ohio  
Department of Health  
coronavirus website](#)

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