

Jackson County Health Department
March 23, 2020 – Coronavirus Disease Update

Current # of confirmed individuals with COVID-19 in Jackson County: 1 (as of 3/23 at 7:30am)

Current # of confirmed individuals with COVID-19 in Illinois: 1,049 (as of 3/22/20; increased 249% over 3 days)

Please note there are several types of [common coronaviruses](#), such as ones that cause the common cold. The novel (new) coronavirus is the one of greatest concern, which causes Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Actions to Take:

- 1) If you have symptoms that are *imminently threatening* to your life (such as extreme difficulty breathing), call 911. Otherwise, if you have symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, coughing and breathing difficulties, please be aware these are also common symptoms of most respiratory diseases. **Contact your healthcare provider to discuss possible diagnoses of such symptoms prior to paying them a visit.** Only a healthcare provider can request that you be tested for COVID-19; **the general public should not contact the health department and ask to be tested.**

Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH) has established a 24-hour COVID-19 hotline at 1-844-988-7800.

Clinicians will answer questions, assess each caller and advise on next steps for evaluation or potential testing in accordance with current guidance from CDC and IDPH.

- 2) [Be prepared](#) for the potential of COVID-19, seasonal flu and other respiratory diseases by doing the following:
 - Follow the Governor's [Stay at Home executive order](#). The longer people do not comply, the longer the need for the order remains. You can still go out for grocery shopping, pharmacy, medical appointments, and to take care of others; otherwise, please remain at home through April 7th. If you do go out, put space (6 ft, if possible) between you and other individuals who don't live in your home. Severely limit group interactions.
 - [Wash hands](#) frequently with soap and warm water. Use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content whenever handwashing is unavailable;
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes, by placing your face into your elbow or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue directly into the trash;
 - [Disinfect frequently touched surfaces](#) (door handles, countertops, etc.) with products that can kill human coronavirus (such as Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, etc.).
 - Stay home when you are ill (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, vomiting, or diarrhea). Do not risk spreading your illness to friends, co-workers or classmates.
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- 3) Have supplies on hand (including food and medications) for at least two weeks, in case you must stay home due to disease spread or home quarantine. Talk with your pharmacist about ordering 90-day supplies of prescription medications and have your credit card on file so it could be charged if others might need to pick up your medications for you. There are no specific medications yet for treating COVID-19, but over-the-counter medications to reduce fever, ease coughing, and improve breathing can help.

- 4) Stay informed on COVID-19 using trusted sources of information, including the [CDC](#), [Illinois Department of Public Health](#), [JCHD](#), and healthcare providers. Follow JCHD on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Please refrain from sharing unsubstantiated stories and rumors about potential human cases of COVID-19. Every day by late afternoon IDPH issues a news release on the number of known cases in the State, including the county of residence.

In addition, the Illinois Department of Public Health has a hotline that residents can call with general COVID-19 questions. The phone number is 1-800-889-3931, or you can email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV. **DO NOT** call the hotline asking to be tested. Follow the underlined instructions near the top of this page.

If you are feeling anxiety about COVID-19, you may contact the free Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990. Their trained and compassionate staff are available 24/7, and provide multilingual and confidential support. You can also reach the Helpline by texting **TalkWithUs** to 66746. Also, remember to speak with your children about COVID-19, as children respond differently to potentially stressful situations.

Schools:

Gov. Pritzker declared that all public and private schools be closed March 17 through March 30 (**extended through April 7th**). Schools are still able to provide meals to students through various means.

Long Term Care Facilities:

JCHD has disseminated several emails to long term care facilities containing guidance for COVID-19 preparedness and response. Such facilities have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 outbreaks in other states and countries. They should be implementing current guidance which includes restricting visitors under 18, screening incoming staff and visitors for illness, and limiting social activities. In addition, they should be monitoring residents/patients for signs of respiratory illness and having them seen by a healthcare provider when appropriate.

Bars and Restaurants:

Gov. Pritzker declared that all bars and restaurants remain closed March 16 (end of business day) through March 30 (**extended through April 7th**). Delivery, carry out and curbside service are allowed. See the Jackson County Health Department [website](#) for additional guidance.