

## BACKGROUND

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) virus, and we are learning more about it every day. At this point, the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes it. Stopping transmission (spread) of the virus through everyday practices is the best way to keep people healthy.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL?

It's important for individuals to consistently follow preventive measures to help stop or slow the spread of respiratory infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Measures include:

- **Cover** coughs or sneezes with your elbow – do not use your hands!
- **Clean** surfaces frequently, such as countertops, light switches, cell phones and other frequently touched areas. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- **Contain** – if you are sick, stay home until you are feeling better. If you have symptoms of respiratory illness consistent with COVID-19, treat it as if you have disease (see below).



## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO AS AN EMPLOYEE?

The preventive measures listed above should also be used in your place of work. If your employment requires that you work in multiple locations (utility workers, protective services, etc.), additional precautions should be used to limit exposure such as:

- **Question** resident(s) for history of possible exposure to COVID-19 (phone call before service).
- **Observe** and ask about signs and symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue) before entering residence.
- **Practice** hand hygiene and wear personal protective gear or alternatives outlined below.
- **Maintain** social (physical) distancing inside and outside the location.
- **Limit** what you touch! Have resident open doors, cabinets etc. Avoid touching your face.
- **Prepare** a collection bag outside the residence to dispose of used personal protective equipment (PPE).
- **Disinfect** tools after exiting residence.
- **Launder** work clothing routinely and often.
- **Follow** all guidance provided by your employer.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND ALTERNATIVES

Maintaining 6-feet social distancing remains critical in slowing the spread of the COVID-19. As of April 3, 2020 the CDC is now advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or [made at home](#) from common materials can be worn in public settings where other social distancing measures may be difficult to maintain. Non-healthcare workers should wear these alternative PPE items as part of their protection routine **AND** should continue to emphasize and rely heavily on social (physical) distancing and the additional measures outlined above.



## RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- DHHR Public Health Coronavirus Information Hotline: 1-800-887-4304
- [Click here](#) for information on what to do if you were exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19.
- If you are waiting for test results or have tested positive for COVID-19 [visit](#).
- Find information on what to do if you are sick [here](#).
- Stay up to date on COVID-19 in the U.S. and worldwide: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19).

