

## **COVID-19 (2019-nCoV) ‘Coronavirus’ Information and Guidance for Law Enforcement and Corrections**

**Author: Central District Health Department**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

Over the past several weeks, we have been carefully monitoring the activity of Covid-19 (previously called the ‘novel Corona-19 virus’). You have probably seen this in the quarantine and isolation of those who have either been exposed to or who have symptoms of Covid-19. Currently, we are not aware of any Covid-19 virus in our district. However, the CDC tells us that it is not a question or ‘if’ but rather ‘when’ the Covid-19 virus will be spread through communities in the United States. This virus is new, and we will learn much more about it over time. We think it is wise for us all to prepare now in order to better manage the changes we may need to make in our daily activities in the future. We will not have a vaccine for Covid-19 for up to 6-months, but there are measures we can take now.

The sphere of Law Enforcement and Corrections pose unique challenges for the control of communicable diseases due to the requirements for security and the confinement of individuals. Keeping a virus OUT is easier than managing it WITHIN a corrections facility. However, as COVID-19 spreads we must prepare for the possibility that the Law Enforcement and our Corrections facilities may be directly impacted by cases affecting detainees or staff contracting the virus.

Non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI) are proven to be the most effective measures to prevent the spread of viruses such as flu and COVID-19.

Additional steps in preparation include the following:

- Make sure your emergency contact lists are up to date – and test them.
- Plan for what you would do if you had to restrict operations due to a shortage of staff for a week or longer in terms of continuing to provide services.
- Cleaning of food preparation and eating areas, inmate transport, cells, equipment such as cuffs etc. with suitable cleaning agents.
- Promote and enforce hand washing with soap before inmate mealtimes for both staff and inmates.
- Ensure all staff have regular access to hand washing and hand sanitizer where permissible for security.
- Ensure a protocol is in place for screening new detainees using advice from ICE and the CDC and that measures are in place to isolate potential cases BEFORE they enter an inmate population – if you have custodial negative air-flow rooms make use of them!

- Identify potential points of contamination for people coming in or out of your facility such as visitation and put suitable cleaning measures in place for surfaces and the people.
- Continue to follow information and advice from CDHD – stay informed.
- Encourage staff to stay at home if sick – consider how this may be impacted by your sickness management policies.

Regularly washing hands and ‘basic’ hygiene measures like coughing into an elbow continue to be the most effective measures to prevent the spread of viruses and other germs. Preparation now can aid in delaying the spread of the virus and can reduce the impact of the virus. Each community setting will need to consider taking steps that are best suited in reducing the impact of Covid-19. We continue to prepare for the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

#### Further Information

CDC: Checklist for Law Enforcement for Pandemic Flu

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/pdf/lawenforcement.pdf>

CDC: Checklist for Corrections Facilities for Pandemic Flu <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/pdf/correctionchecklist.pdf>

Department of Labor: Occupational Safety and Health Administration

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html>

CDC No-Pharmaceutical Interventions for Workplace Administrators and Management

<https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/workplace/workplace-administrators.html>

CDC Getting you Workplace Ready for Pandemic Flu <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/gr-pan-flu-work-set.pdf>

WHO: Health in Prisons

[http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/99018/E90174.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/99018/E90174.pdf?ua=1)