



# Eastern Idaho Public Health

1250 Hollipark Drive • Idaho Falls, ID 83401 • Phone: (208) 522-0310 • [www.EIPH.Idaho.gov](http://www.EIPH.Idaho.gov)

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 14, 2020

Contact: Mimi Taylor, PIO  
Office: (208) 533-3155

### **Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) Preparing for Potential Coronavirus (COVID-19) case in Eastern Idaho**

(SE Idaho) – The current outbreak of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19, formerly 2019-nCoV) was first identified in China in 2019 and has now spread internationally, impacting an increasing number of countries, including the United States. As with the evolving nature of disease outbreaks, we expect more confirmed cases in the United States in the coming days and weeks. The goal of our public health response is to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the United States. We are working vigorously and proactively, in conjunction with many partners, to achieve this. As of today, 15 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in the United States with zero deaths. None of the cases have been in Idaho.

While COVID-19 is a new (or novel) coronavirus, disease outbreaks like this are not new territory in public health. EIPH is monitoring the national and international situations very closely and we have response plans and relationships in place within our jurisdiction to respond to these types of public health events. A big part of that is working with partners – from county emergency managers, to area health care providers and hospitals, law enforcement, first responders, state public health (Idaho Department of Health and Welfare), and the other six public health districts in Idaho.

The general risk in Idaho for a COVID-19 infection is fairly low at this point. However, public health officials want people to be aware so they can take appropriate precautions to protect themselves and their families from this virus. Following are recommended steps the public can take to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.

- Stay informed – the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is updating its website daily with the latest information and advice for the public ([www.cdc.gov/ncov](http://www.cdc.gov/ncov)).
- It is recommended at this time to avoid any nonessential travel to China. This is in support of the Level 4 Travel Advisory that was implemented by the U.S. Department of State on February 2, 2020.
- If you have recently returned from China and you feel sick with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, seek medical care. **Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.**

- More-

- Since there is currently no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment for this virus, it is important to remember to take every day preventative actions that are always recommended to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.
  - » Avoid people who are sick and if you are sick, limit contact with others as much as possible.
  - » Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.
  - » Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - » Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.
  - » Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol- based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.
  - » Make sure you are up-to-date on all recommended vaccinations.

For more in-depth information about COVID-19, please go to the following websites:

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

If you would like to schedule an interview to discuss the information in this release, please contact Mimi Taylor, Public Information Officer, at 208-521-6722.

# # #