



COVID-19 and Pandemic Preparedness for Alexandria Communities

March 2020

Alexandria Health Department

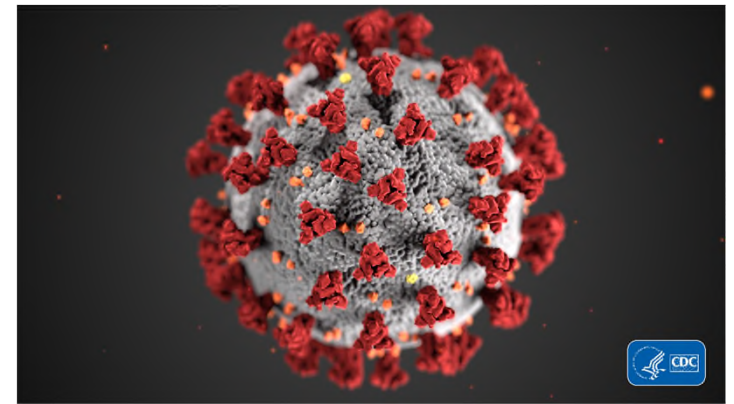
Topics

- COVID-19 - Novel (new) Coronavirus
 - The Disease
 - What You Can Do to Protect Yourself, Your Family, Your Organization
- Alexandria Health Department Actions
- City of Alexandria Actions
 - City COVID-19 Planning Team
 - COVID-19 Unified Command
- Pandemic Preparedness



COVID-19 - Novel (new) Coronavirus

- COVID-19 is the infection caused by a novel (new) coronavirus virus that was first detected in December 2019 in China
- Originally from bats
- COVID-19 is now spreading from person-to-person



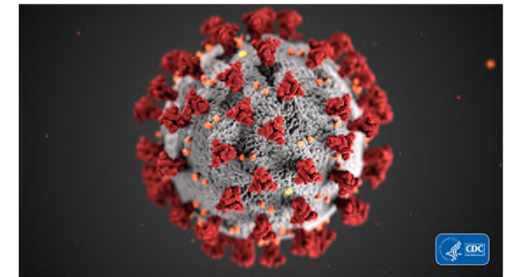
COVID-19 - Novel (new) Coronavirus

- The virus has been detected in many countries including the United States
- The United States government declared a public health emergency in the United States in response to the COVID-19 outbreak



COVID-19 - Novel (new) Coronavirus

- This outbreak poses the potential to be at least as serious as seasonal flu, if not more so
- Because this is a new virus to humans, people will not have immunity to it
 - Illnesses may be more widespread and severe as a result
- But we have lots of things we can do to protect ourselves
 - Later in this presentation!



How is COVID-19 Transmitted from One Person to Another?

Current understanding - COVID-19 spreads the same way seasonal flu does →

Primarily through respiratory droplets

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Touching objects or surfaces (such as doorknobs or tables) that have the virus on it → then touching one's own mouth, nose or eyes
- Close, personal contact with someone who is infectious



Signs & Symptoms of COVID-19 and Severity

Signs & Symptoms: similar to those associated with seasonal flu →

- Fever (≥ 100.4 , or feeling feverish)
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath



Symptoms may include:

- Body aches / fatigue
- Sore throat
- Less common: headache, sputum production (+/- blood), diarrhea



Wide spectrum of severity: from asymptomatic to mild illness to severe/needing hospitalization



How is COVID-19 diagnosed?

- Health care providers assess patients
 - Potential Exposures
 - Signs and Symptoms
- If COVID-19 is a possible diagnosis, the health care provider will
 - Consult Alexandria Health Department
 - Health Department will determine if testing is prudent
- Alexandria Health Department will follow-up and monitor patient as indicated



What is the treatment for COVID-19?

- Most people with illnesses due to this coronavirus recover on their own
- There are currently no specific treatments for coronavirus infections
- For patients who are more severely ill, hospitals provide supportive care
- We are continuing to learn more about this novel coronavirus -- treatment will change



If you get sick (with any illness)...

- Stay home
- Do not return to work until you are fever-free for at least 24 hours (without the use of a fever-reducing medicine)
- Limit your contact with other people as much as possible



If Needing Medical Care Call Ahead!

- Call your doctor/emergency department
- Do not just “show up”
- Tell them your symptoms and if you are concerned about having a pandemic respiratory infection



Stop Stigma

- ❖ Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear or anger towards ordinary people instead of the disease and its associated problems
- ❖ Fight stigma
 - Learn the facts
 - Share the facts
 - COVID-19 does not target racial or ethnic groups; it is spread by respiratory droplets (common to all people)
 - Being Asian does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19
 - Provide social support to everyone



How Can You Protect Yourself? (1/3)

- ✓ Wash your hands frequently, with soap and warm water, for 20 seconds
- ✓ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available



You Have Control - Wash Your Hands!



How Can You Protect Yourself? (2/3)

- ✓ Stay Home when You are Sick (and tell others to stay home when they are sick)
- ✓ Coughing or sneezing into your elbow is better than your bare hands
 - If you cough or sneeze into your hand, use a tissue; then throw the tissue away and wash your hands



You Have Control - Stay Home When Sick - Practice Cough/Sneeze Etiquette!



How Can You Protect Yourself? (3/3)

Don't touch the
T-Zone!

Never put your
fingers in your



eyes,

nose,

or

mouth.

- ✓ Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent the spread of germs
- ✓ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick
- ✓ Avoid shaking hands - use the “Elbow Bump” to greet others instead!



You Have Control

Avoid Touching Face - Clean Frequently Touched Surfaces - Use the Elbow Bump!



Should I wear a mask to protect myself?

- CDC does not currently recommend that the general American public use a facemask
 - Requires training and fit-testing
 - Provides false sense of security
 - Distracts from other proven measures for protection of public (handwashing, isolation when ill, etc)

- CDC does recommend masks for
 - Healthcare workers caring for COVID-19 patients
 - People sick with COVID-19 (some cases, some types)



Protect Yourself from Respiratory Illnesses!

Summary



**Don't touch the
T-Zone!**

**Never put your
fingers in your**



eyes,

nose,

or

mouth.



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Pandemic

- A global epidemic
 - Person-to-person transmission
 - Involving several countries or continents

- Can cause ***significant*** socio-economic disruption
 - Pandemic of 1918 killed 15,679 Virginians and >100 Alexandrians (pop. of 14,557)
 - 2009 H1N1 - significant closings of schools and disruption of social events



Pandemic Preparedness - Do These Now (1 of 4)

Know your neighborhood and community

- Identify neighbors, friends, family and co-workers who may be able to help you prepare for and respond to emergencies.
- Identify neighbors, friends, family, and co-workers who may need help preparing for and during emergencies because they don't understand English well, have special health needs, or are new to the area.
- Volunteer with local groups (including the Medical Reserve Corps; Citizen Corps; schools; civic groups; and houses of worship) to prepare and assist in emergencies.
- Sign up to receive free information from the City of Alexandria government about emergencies such as pandemics and other important issues. You can register at enews.alexandriava.gov.



Pandemic Preparedness - Do These Now (2 of 4)

Understand how your work and your school may be affected

During a pandemic, businesses and schools may not operate as normal:

- Ask your employer and schools about their pandemic plans
- Find out how they will communicate with you during a pandemic
- Find out how family and sick leave will be handled
- Find out if there are plans for people to work and learn from home or elsewhere
- Develop a childcare plan in the event that schools are closed and you still need to go to work



Pandemic Preparedness - Do These Now (3 of 4)

During a pandemic, stores may run out of supplies for long periods of time.
Store medical supplies to last an extra month NOW

- ✓ Prescription medicines for an extra month
- ✓ Medical supplies such as blood sugar measuring strips for people with diabetes for a month
- ✓ Over-the-counter medicines for fever and pain (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- ✓ Other over-the-counter medicines such as those for diarrhea and cough and cold remedies
- ✓ Thermometer
- ✓ Soap / alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol



Pandemic Preparedness - Do These Now (4 of 4)

Store extra food and household items to last for at least two weeks or more

Easily stored food items include:

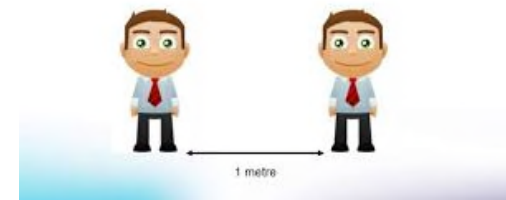
- ✓ Ready-to-eat canned meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans and soups
- ✓ Protein or fruit bars
- ✓ Dry cereal and nonfat dry milk
- ✓ Peanut butter or nuts
- ✓ Dried fruit
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Canned juice
- ✓ Baby food and supplies
- ✓ Pet food and supplies



Social Distancing is Important in a Pandemic

- ❖ Social Distancing May be Recommended or Required
 - ❖ Maintain a distance of 6 feet from other people
 - ❖ Modifications of some government services
 - ❖ Closures (partial or full) of schools and businesses
 - ❖ Limitations of mass gatherings

Social distancing



Travel Guidance

COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

Health Alert:
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

You have traveled to a country with an outbreak of COVID-19 and are at higher risk.
COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person.

Stay Home
Stay home for the next 14 days and monitor your health. Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and watch for symptoms.

If you feel sick and have symptoms:

- Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room.
- Tell the doctor about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick.

Symptoms
Illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure.

Symptoms can include:

- Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Visit the website for more information on monitoring your health and how to contact local public health officials. Visit: www.cdc.gov/COVIDtravel

CS11946-8 February 25, 2020 4:13 PM

CDC is now recommending Social Distancing and Self Monitoring for 14 days if you are traveling from countries with Level 2 or Level 3 Travel Notices

- Check the CDC website for a current list
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>



Travel Guidance

Stay home for 14 days from the time you left an area with widespread, ongoing community spread (Level 2 & 3 Travel Health Notices) and practice social distancing.

Take these steps to monitor your health and practice social distancing:

1. Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also watch for cough or trouble breathing.
2. Stay home and avoid contact with others. Do not go to work or school for this 14-day period. Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work.
3. Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares during the time you are practicing social distancing.
4. Avoid crowded places (such as shopping centers and movie theaters) and limit your activities in public.
5. Keep your distance from others (about 6 feet).

What is Alexandria Health Department (AHD) Doing about COVID-19? (1 of 2)

- ✓ Synthesizes WHO, CDC, VDH surveillance data, information and guidance
 - disseminates this to healthcare providers, partners, and the public
- ✓ Supports healthcare providers
 - how to protect staff and patients
 - how to identify cases
 - consult, approve, arrange testing



World Health
Organization



CENTERS FOR DISEASE
CONTROL AND PREVENTION

VDH VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH
Protecting You and Your Environment



What is Alexandria Health Department (AHD) Doing about COVID-19? (2 of 2)

- ✓ Monitors persons with possible exposures to COVID-19
- ✓ Prepared to investigate possible contacts in the event that Alexandria has a case
- ✓ Coordinates with City of Alexandria to help protect health of residents, businesses, employees and visitors



What is the City of Alexandria Doing? (1 of 2)

Established a City COVID-19 Planning Team

- Health Department
- City Manager’s Office
- Fire/EMS
- Office of Emergency Management
- Police
- Sheriff
- Department of Community and Human Services
- Office of Communications and Public Information
- City Attorney
- Inova Alexandria Hospital
- Alexandria City Public Schools

Overarching Goal and General Functions

- Overarching Goal - assure City’s Strategic Goal of *“protecting the safety, health and security of its residents, businesses, employees and visitors”*

General Functions

- Identify and secure resources to help protect first responders, healthcare workers, schools, businesses and the public
- Develop processes for responding to various levels of COVID-19 infections in the City



What is the City of Alexandria Doing? (2 of 2)

Established a City Unified Command
Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Health Department•Office of Emergency Management•Fire/EMS•Police•Sheriff ----- <ul style="list-style-type: none">•City Manager's Office

Emphases
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•A pre-event Incident Action Plan•Enables the City to respond immediately in the event that COVID-19 directly impacts the City•Prepares City government, business, residents for continuity of operations•Ensure the least adverse impact on quality of life



Events Will Likely Change

➤ UNCERTAINTIES

- Proportion of severe disease (“how bad is it if you get it”)
- Transmissibility (“how easily does it spread from one person to another”)

- ## ➤ PLAN TO ADJUST YOUR PLANS: stay current - ensure your actions reflect current public health recommendations



Be Public Health Ready Remember - You Have Control

- ✓ Wash Your Hands!
- ✓ Stay Home When Sick!
- ✓ Practice Cough/Sneeze Etiquette!
- ✓ Avoid Touching Face!
- ✓ Clean Frequently Touched Surfaces!



For More Information travelers can call:

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Info - **(800) 232-4636 (800-CDC-INFO)**

Virginia Department of Health - **1-877-ASK-VDH3 (275-8343)**

City of Alexandria Information: **311**

Commonwealth of Virginia Information: **211**

If you are interested in becoming a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteer, call our coordinator, Ionela Lutai at 703.746.4978 to find out how.



Additional Resources - Keep Up to Date!

Alexandria Health Department
alexandriava.gov/Health



Virginia Department of Health
vdh.virginia.gov



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
emergency.cdc.gov



US Health and Human Services
phe.gov



Additional
ready.gov/plan

