

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance for Individuals and Households

Recent Updates:

6/27/20: Link to COVID-19 scam webpage added

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) is asking you to help slow the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). We encourage you to be informed and to review your household plan to help protect your health.

Understand how coronaviruses are spread

When someone with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks the small droplets are produced from their nose or mouth. People can get infected if they breathe in these droplets, or the droplets land on their eyes, nose, or mouth. It may be possible that a person can also get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. Some people get COVID-19 without ever showing symptoms but they can still spread the infection to others.

Know the symptoms of COVID-19

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying. Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Chills
- Congestion or runny nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

Practice Physical Distancing

Public Health is asking everyone to do their part to help slow the spread of novel coronavirus in our community by practicing physical distancing (also known as social distancing). This means staying home, avoiding crowds, and keeping at least 6 feet away from others whenever possible.

How to practice physical distancing

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Avoid any places where a lot of people are together.
- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others.
- Work or study from home, if possible.
- Do not have visitors over or let your children have playdates.
- Call your doctor or dentist before visiting to find out if they offer telemedicine or phone advice. If you or family members are due for routine immunizations, contact your provider to schedule an appointment.
- Avoid non-essential travel.

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- Avoid public transport, if you can.
- Avoid contact with people – instead of shaking hands, come up with other ways to greet people that don't involve any touching or getting closer than 6 feet.

If you do use public transport, shop, go to work, or participate in other activities, take precautions to reduce the risks, such as:

- Limit the amount of time you spend in close contact with others.
- Limit the number of different people you spend time with.
- Keep as far away from others as possible, especially if they are coughing or sneezing.
- Wear a cloth face covering at all times when you are out and around other people. Make sure to use it properly - see Public Health's [Guidance for Cloth Face Coverings](#) for more information. Note, a mask or cloth face cover should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove it without assistance. Infants and children under the age of 2 should not wear cloth face coverings. Those between the ages of 2 and 8 should use them but under adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation. Those instructed not to wear a cloth face covering by a medical provider are also exempt from wearing one.
- Try to go to places at times when they are less busy.
- Avoid touching surfaces in public places, when possible.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- Clean your hands often, especially after touching surfaces in public places and before eating and avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

Additional tips for people with children

- Explain to your children that hand washing can keep them healthy and stop the virus from spreading to others.
- Be a good role model—if you wash your hands often, they're more likely to do the same. See the CDC's guidance: [Handwashing: A Family Activity](#)

How to get food and other necessities

- Have one member of the household go to the store. Go when it is less busy and stock up on essential supplies so that you don't have to go out as often and keep at least 6 feet away from people as much as you can.
- You can use food delivery, drive-thru, or carry out as long as everyone practices physical distancing and restaurants and cafes can now offer eat-in dining. Be sure to follow any rules they have put into place for physical distancing and infection control.
- If you order something for delivery, if possible, pay and tip electronically and ask for the item to be left outside your door. Remove food from delivery bags and boxes and dispose of the packaging. Wash your hands after handling the packaging.
- If you are at higher risk of getting sick from COVID-19, ask for food, medical supplies, and other essential items to be brought to your door through family, neighbors, or delivery services. Call 2-1-1-

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or visit the Public Health [resource webpage](https://ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/resources.htm) (ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/resources.htm) if you need assistance getting food and other essential items.

Additional tips for people with children

- The Los Angeles Unified School District, in conjunction with the Red Cross, provides meals to students through their Grab & Go Food Centers on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Find a location near you at [LAUSD's Resources for Families During School Closure page](#).
- There are also meal distribution sites offered by other school districts throughout Los Angeles County. Search the Student Meal Distribution Sites [here](#) for the address and hours of operation for a site near you.

Tips for coping with physical distancing

- Talk to your employer about options for working from home.
- Exercise at home or outdoors.
- Avoid isolation by using technology and the phone to communicate with friends and family often.
- Take care of one another – check-in by phone with friends, family, and neighbors who are vulnerable to serious illness or have mobility issues. Offer to help, while still following physical distancing guidelines.
- Stay informed through trusted sources for the latest accurate information about novel coronavirus.

Additional tips for people with children

- Help your children stay physically active. Encourage them to play outdoors while practicing physical distancing. Take a walk with them or go on a bike ride. Try indoor activity breaks to stretch or move throughout the day to help your children stay healthy and focused and take advantage of outdoor recreational activities that are now open.
- Help your children stay socially connected. Reach out to friends and family via phone or video chats. Write cards or letters to family members they may not be able to visit.
- **School at home:** Some schools are offering summer learning programs online (virtual learning).
 - Review assignments from the school, and help your children establish a reasonable pace for completing the work. If you face technology or connectivity issues, or if your child is having a hard time completing assignments, let the school know.
 - Have consistent bedtimes and get up at the same time, Monday through Friday.
 - Structure the day for learning, free time, healthy meals and snacks, and physical activity.
 - Allow flexibility in the schedule—it's okay to adapt based on your day.
 - Look for ways to make learning fun using hands-on activities, like puzzles and drawing.
 - Start a journal with your child to document this time and discuss the shared experience.
 - Check out the [LA County Library](#) resources to gain access to the library at home or use curbside pick-up services where available. There are digital books, audiobooks and hosted online events.
 - Consider the needs and adjustment required for each of your children based on their ages. The transition to being at home will be different for preschoolers, K-5, middle school

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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students, and high school students. Talk to them about expectations and how they are adjusting to being at home versus at school.

Take care of your emotional health

- **Take care of the emotional health of yourself and other household members.** Outbreaks are stressful for everyone, but children may respond differently from adults.
- **Watch for signs of stress in your child:** excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, and difficulty with attention and concentration. For more information, see the “For Parents” section of CDC’s [Stress and Coping](#).
- **Take time to talk with your child about the COVID-19 outbreak.** Answer questions and share facts from CDC’s [Stop the Spread of Rumors](#) guide about COVID-19 in a way that your child can understand.
- **Go to CDC’s resources** [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#) or [Talking with Children About COVID-19](#).
- **If you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed,** read [Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#) on the Public Health website. For help, talk to your doctor or call the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at (800) 854-7771.

Teach your family the importance of taking steps to prevent infection at home

- Wash hands often and do it thoroughly. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not share objects such as utensils, cups, food, and drink.

Clean and disinfect surfaces that you touch frequently

- Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs, banisters, countertops, toys, remote controls, faucet handles, and phones. Use the usual cleaning agents and follow the label directions.
- Clean surfaces and items to remove visible dirt and disinfect them to kill germs.
- Follow the instructions on the product labels, including wearing gloves and having good ventilation. Use household cleaners and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface.
- To find out if the product works against viruses, read the product label, call the 1-800 number on the label or visit www.epa.gov.
- A bleach solution can also be used as a disinfectant - mix 4 teaspoons of bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) of water, or for a larger supply, add 1/3 cup of bleach to 1 gallon (16 cups) of water.
- For more information see the Public Health Guide [Preventing the Spread of Respiratory Illness in the Home](#).



Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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Know what to do if you become ill

Look out for symptoms of COVID-19, listed above. If you develop symptoms, call your doctor and follow the instructions in the Public Health [Home Care Instructions for People with Respiratory Symptoms](#), which can be accessed at ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare.

Prepare your household (or review your household plan if you already have one)

- **Make sure that you know phone numbers** for your doctor's office, local urgent care, and ER facilities so that you can call them if you become sick instead of just showing up. Put important numbers on the fridge and in your phones.
- **If you don't already have a healthcare provider**, the County information line 2-1-1 can help you to find one.
- **Make a plan for taking care of family members** who are elderly, disabled, or sick if they or their caregivers become ill.
- **Create an emergency contact list.** Ensure your household has a current list of emergency contacts for family, friends, neighbors, carpool drivers, teachers, employers, and other community resources. Know that you can call the LA County information helpline 2-1-1.
- **Get to know your neighbors.** Talk with your neighbors about emergency planning. If your neighborhood has a website or social media page, consider joining it to maintain access to neighbors, information, and resources.
- **Identify aid organizations in your community.** Create a list of local organizations that you and your household can contact in the event you need access to information, health care services, support, and resources. Consider including organizations that provide mental health or counseling services, food, and other supplies. Know that you can call the LA County information helpline 2-1-1.
- **Have adequate supplies of prescription medications** as well as over the counter medicines to help with cold and flu symptoms.
- **For more information** visit the CDC webpage <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

Report Stigma

The County is committed to assuring that all residents affected by COVID-19 are treated with respect and compassion. We must separate facts from fear and guard against stigma. The outbreak is no excuse for spreading racism and discrimination. If you or someone you know experiences discrimination based on race, nation of origin or other identities, please report it. You can report hate crimes, hate acts, and incidents of bullying in Los Angeles County, whether or not a crime has been committed. Call the Los Angeles County Information line 2-1-1 which is available 24/7, or file a report online at: <https://www.211la.org/resources/service/hate-crimes-reporting-22>.

Know where to get reliable information

Beware of scams, false news, and hoaxes surrounding COVID-19. Visit Public Health's COVID-19 scams webpage (ph.lacounty.gov/hccp/covidscams) for information and resources on how to [avoid COVID-19 health care scams](#).



Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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Accurate information, including announcements of new cases in LA County, will always be distributed by Public Health through press releases, social media, and our website. The website has more information on COVID-19 including FAQs, infographics and a guide to coping with stress, as well as tips on handwashing.

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
Social media: @lapublichealth

Other reliable sources of information about novel coronavirus are:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>
- World Health Organization (WHO, International)
<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

**911 is not for
health information!**