

February 7, 2020

Dear Lake County School administration and staff, student, and parent/guardian,

The Lake County Health Department has been working with our federal and state partners to monitor and continuously share updated information about the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

The 2019-nCoV virus was first identified in Wuhan City, China, and has rapidly spread across China. The Illinois Department of Public Health is now recommending that **any student returning from mainland China on February 3, 2020, and onward should not attend school for 14 days after return date.** Absences should be excused. Alternate arrangements should be considered (i.e., online class assignments). Family members should not work if they also traveled. Please see attached memo for details.

The Lake County Health Department should be notified of individuals who have returned from mainland China (call M–F 8am-5pm: 847-377-8130, after 5pm or on weekends call 224-355-5675). Students who returned from mainland China prior to February 3, 2020 can remain in school.

Coronaviruses usually cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory illness, like the common cold. Symptoms may include fever, cough, or shortness of breath. If you or your child develops symptoms after travel to mainland China or after exposure to someone known to be infected with 2019-nCoV, please stay home and call your doctor for evaluation.

Currently, the Lake County Health Department believes the immediate risk to the public remains low. Lake County residents, students, visitors, and workers **do not** need to change their behavior or use masks or gloves.

Follow these tips to reduce your risk of an infection caused by any virus:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- If no tissue is available, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- 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 sanitizer.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may contain germs.

Sincerely,

Sana Shireen Ahmed, MD
Medical Epidemiologist
Communicable Disease Program
847-377-8130