

RECOMMENDED GENERAL PUBLIC PRECAUTIONS

In the face of the rapidly changing status of the Novel Coronavirus, we will need to be mindful and intentional on how we interact with our environment both in the community and at work. Standard contact precautions have already been communicated throughout the Agency, however here are some helpful ideas on ways you may help to prevent exposure.

- 1) Consider the surfaces that we frequently touch, and that are frequently touched by others. These include:
 - Money
 - Door Handles
 - Shopping cart handles
 - Arms of chairs
 - Toys
 - Toilets
 - Phones
 - Electronics
 - Bedside tables
 - Television remotes
 - Bank machines
 - Debit/Credit machines
 - Elevator buttons
 - Public tables
 - ETC.

Practicing hand hygiene each and every time you come in contact with frequent touch surfaces will go a long way in order to prevent the spread of the virus. Pack Lysol wipes and take them with you when possible. Keep hand sanitizer on your person when you are in public spaces and avoid touching anything as much as possible. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. Clean high-touch surfaces frequently with regular household cleaners or a diluted bleach solution.

- 2) Avoid Mass gatherings

Mass gatherings are highly visible events with the potential for serious public health consequences. They can amplify the spread of infectious diseases and have the potential to cause additional strain on the health care system when held during outbreaks. The transmission of respiratory infections such as influenza has been frequently associated with mass gatherings. Mass gatherings include large meetings, conferences, sporting events, religious events, national and international events.

3) Social Distancing

Social distancing measures are approaches taken to minimize close contact with others in the community and include: maintaining distance from others, avoiding large gatherings and community settings that are crowded, quarantine and self-isolation at the individual level as well as other community based approaches (e.g. avoiding crowding, workplace measures and closures, public/mass gathering cancellations).

It is crucial that individuals follow quarantine and self-isolation recommendations properly to prevent transmission of COVID-19 to others in the home setting or in the community. It is recommended that all individuals in the community plan ahead by maintaining a supply of essential medications, home supplies and extra non-perishable food in the event they require voluntary quarantine or self-isolation.

Social Distancing Techniques:

- Maintaining a minimum 2 meter distance from others.
- Not shaking hands, hugging or touching another person when greeting them.
- Not going out of the home setting whenever possible.
- Not using public transportation (e.g. buses, subways, taxis).
- Having supplies delivered home instead of running errands (supplies should be left on the front door or at least a 2 metre distance maintained between people).
- If leaving the home setting cannot be avoided maintain a 2 metre distance from others.
- Voluntary home quarantine ("self-isolation") is recommended for an asymptomatic person, when they have a high risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19, (i.e., through close contact with a symptomatic person or their body fluids). They are asked to self-isolate in the home-setting to avoid contact with others in order to prevent transmission of the virus at the earliest stage of illness (i.e., should they develop COVID-19).
- Protective self-separation is recommended for a person who is at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (e.g., older adults, those with chronic underlying medical conditions or immunocompromised) when the virus is circulating in their community.
- Voluntary avoidance of crowded places is recommended for a person who is asymptomatic and who is considered to have had a medium risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. This involves avoiding crowded public spaces and places where rapid self-isolation upon onset of symptoms may not be feasible. Examples of these settings include mass gatherings, such as concerts and sporting events; not including hospitals (for HCWs) and schools.