



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rush County taking steps to prepare for COVID-19

DATELINE – The Rush County Health Department is working with county leaders and state - health officials to ensure all appropriate steps are taken to protect residents if a case of COVID-19, a respiratory disease first identified in Wuhan, China, is confirmed in Indiana.

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) has identified several presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 around the state. As the number of cases around the world increases, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that individual risk of contracting COVID-19 is dependent on exposure. For example:

- People in communities where ongoing community spread with the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated, though still relatively low, risk of exposure.
- Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Travelers returning from affected [international locations](#) where community spread is occurring also are at elevated risk of having been exposed.

COVID-19 is thought to be spread through respiratory droplets between people in close contact (within 6 feet) when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Symptoms include cough, fever and shortness of breath. The majority of illnesses are mild, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes or lung disease, and those with weakened immune systems are at greater risk.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include cough, fever and shortness of breath. Anyone who experiences symptoms compatible with COVID-19 is urged to contact a healthcare provider by phone and discuss recent travel or exposure to someone who has recently traveled to an impacted area so that appropriate evaluation can occur and infection control steps can be taken if the patient requires medical care. There is no vaccine and no treatment for COVID-19.

The best ways to protect yourself from any respiratory illness are to:

- 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 touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Hoosiers are encouraged to educate themselves about this disease by obtaining information from credible sources such as the state health department and CDC. Individuals seeking the latest updates about COVID-19 are encouraged to subscribe to the ISDH COVID-19 website at <https://on.in.gov/COVID19>.