



## Region 9 Education Cooperative

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143 El Paso Road  
Ruidoso, NM 88345

Phone: (575)257-2368  
Fax: (575)257-2141  
<http://www.rec9nm.org>

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Dear Region 9 Staff,

This letter is intended to provide you with general information about the novel coronavirus and precautionary measures we can implement in our workplace.

A more detailed guide on facts and measures about the COVID-19 is attached for your reference.

Even though the COVID-19 has not hit the State of New Mexico yet, according to the New Mexico Department of Health, we are driving proactive measures to ensure the health and safety of all of our staff.

In order to prevent the spread of germs, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends stressing good hygiene practices such as:

1. Covering your coughs and sneezes,
2. Vigorous washing of hands on a regular basis, and
3. Clean and sanitize your work area daily.

To this end, Region 9 has purchased cleaning supplies (gloves and clorox wipes) and thermometers and we will make these resources available for employees of all departments. R9's leadership team is currently working on a contingency response plan in the event of the coronavirus actually arriving in our area.

In consideration of Region 9's policy 606 (Health Requirements):

"Any employee who is infected with any acute communicable disease dangerous to the public health shall absent themselves from employment activities during the prescribed period of recovery."

We recommend and encourage staying home if you are not feeling well or experience any of these symptoms: fever, cough and shortness of breath.

It is up to all of us to prevent and control an outbreak of the novel coronavirus. As for now, we encourage everyone to stay calm, safe and informed through reliable sources such as:

- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website
- World Health Organization Coronavirus homepage
- New Mexico Department of Health website.

We will continue to be observant and proactive about this issue. Thank you in advance for doing your part in addressing this situation in the best way possible.

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

## How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- 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.

## What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

