



Communities & Community Organizations

A new disease is spreading globally. Idaho is working to be as prepared as possible for the possible spread of COVID-19/Coronavirus in our communities.

Public health officials will decide what interventions are appropriate at each step as we navigate this outbreak together. However, there are things everyone can do to help limit and prevent exposure to disease. These include personal protective steps for everyday use, community containment, and environmental measures to control viral disease outbreaks and pandemics.

What can you do?

Handwashing, Cough Hygiene, Disinfect Surfaces, Remain Home

⇒ There are easy ways people can reduce their chances of getting sick, or avoiding spreading a virus to someone else: Washing hands or use hand sanitizer frequently, covering coughs and sneezes, regularly disinfecting common surfaces such as tables and doorknobs, and staying home when sick.

Specific considerations for community organizations:

- Make sure your staff and volunteers have access to handwashing facilities, hand sanitizer, tissue, and disinfection products.
- If possible, set up a handwashing facility or sanitizing station available to the public you serve. If you cannot do this, provide hand sanitizer, tissues, and a way to dispose of the tissues. You may also wish to distribute sanitizer, tissues, or cleaning products to those you serve.
- If you operate a public facility or offer services to the public or to people who may not have access to their own sanitation facilities, contact your local health department to ask about setting up a disinfectant station or a handwashing/sanitizing station.
- Educate your staff and volunteers on the importance of these practices to limit the spread of disease.
- Disinfect your facility regularly, including spaces where the public gathers and workspaces.
- Put up posters or offer other items that explain the importance of these practices. Find posters, social media, and other educational materials to print and use from www.doh.wa.gov.

Updated March 06, 2020

Questions?

Please call 1-866-736-6632

Social Distancing

⇒ When diseases are spreading in a community, reduce how big the outbreak can get by practicing and encouraging social distancing. Stay at least 6 feet away from each other, especially if someone may be sick. Coughs and sneezes can travel this distance, and their droplets may contain a virus.

Specific considerations for community organizations:

- Support social distancing among your staff and volunteers. Depending on what you do, some options may be allowing telecommuting, scheduling staggered hours/shifts, or spacing workers further apart at the worksite. For religious organizations, work with your religious leaders to encourage appropriate distancing preventive measures for your faith.
- Consider ways you can support distancing among your members or the community you serve. You may be able to cancel services or events that are not critical to your community's well-being or move them to a larger or outdoor space, offer distance or online options, or meet with people individually instead of as a group.
- Keeping distant from others may be difficult or impossible for particular groups you may serve, or even for your staff and volunteers. This may be due to cultural or religious norms, or people may feel anxious, worried, or fearsome due to being socially distant from others. Be prepared to discuss with them why these measures are important to keeping them healthy and reassure them it's for the well-being of the community.
- Communicate and post messaging about the importance of these measures in an accessible location or share messages on social media and other communication platforms. Go to www.doh.wa.gov to find educational items you can print, share, and use.

Isolation and Quarantine of Sick Persons

- When diseases are spreading in a community, preventing contact between well and sick people can reduce the chance of spreading the illness further. Isolation and quarantine are used to prevent the spread of illness. **Isolation** means someone is sick. **Quarantine** means someone has been exposed to the disease. People needing isolation or quarantine will be asked to stay home, at a health care facility, or at another designated isolation facility. This may happen to community members you serve, or to one of your employees or volunteers. Local health officers have the legal authority to request a sick person isolate themselves during an outbreak.
- Consider if your community or organization can provide a service to individuals in isolation or quarantine, such as dropping off meals or supplies. Make sure to drop off items outside the home and avoid direct contact with individuals who may be sick.

Specific considerations for community organizations:

- Support your employees, volunteers, members, or clients if they are being isolated or quarantined. Because this can make some people feel anxious, you may offer them social connection via phone or internet, or offer support to their family while they're separated. Do not attempt to break their isolation requirements or interrupt their medical care. Do not visit the person unless you are authorized to do so by the health officer.
- If you receive a health alert from public health officials about isolation or quarantine activities, please display it and share it with your members, staff, volunteers, and clients.