CDC Daily Key Points
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Outbreak
March 17, 2020 as of 10:00pm

Updated text is shown in colored text.

SNAPSHOT

- CDC has reported:
    - 4,226 confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19
    - 75 COVID-19 related deaths
    - 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the US Virgin Islands have reported cases

MAIN KEY POINTS

- On March 16, 2020 President Trump and the White House Coronavirus Task Force issued new guidelines to help protect Americans during the Coronavirus pandemic.
    - The initiative, called "15 Days to Slow the Spread," lays out guidelines for a nationwide effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. It calls for the implementation of measures to increase social distancing between people at all levels of society.
    - This is a massive proactive, preventive response to COVID-19. It aims to slow the spread and blunt the impact of this disease on the United States.
- All segments of U.S. society have a role to play at this time:
    - People across the country are asked to stay home as much as much as possible and otherwise practice social distancing.
    - This includes canceling or postponing gatherings of more than 10 people and closing schools in some areas as determined by local and state governments.
    - It also includes special measures to protect those people who are most vulnerable to this disease.
- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has taken new measures to keep America's nursing home residents safe from COVID-19. These measures are based on the newest CDC recommendations.
    - Those who are sick are asked to stay home and follow the new guidance for when it's OK for them to interact with other people again.
- There is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19 and no medications approved to treat it.
- There is a body of evidence—based on about 200 journal articles—that supports the effectiveness of social distancing measures, both when used alone and in combination with other measures.
    - Much of this data is outlined in CDC's Community Mitigation Guidelines to Prevent Pandemic Influenza — United States, 2017.
    - These recommendations work better when implemented in concert.
- While the new guidelines are recommended for the next 15 days, government leaders will continually reassess the status of the outbreak in the United States. It may be possible to extend these recommended measures for additional periods of time.
- This is a historic, unprecedented outbreak, the likes of which have not been seen since the influenza pandemic of 1918.

SITUATION UPDATE

- 4,226 reported cases of COVID-19 have been detected in all states except West Virginia.
- 245 of these cases occurred through close contact with another case.
- 229 cases occurred in persons who had traveled to international areas with sustained (ongoing) transmission and among their close contacts.
- 3,752 cases are still being investigated to determine the source of exposure.
- As of the evening of March 15, 89 state and local public health labs in 50 states and the District of Columbia have verified they are successfully using COVID-19 diagnostic tests. This includes one or more PHL in 50 states plus D.C. and Guam. (See map showing which states and territories have one or more laboratories that have successfully verified and are currently using COVID-19 diagnostic tests.)
- As of the evening of March 16, 2020, CDC and local and state public health laboratories had tested a total of 31,878 specimens.
- CDC is adapting some of the agency's existing surveillance systems to better track COVID-19.
- The agency will roll out a COVID-19 surveillance report in the coming days.
- On Monday, March 16 CDC reported the first confirmed case in a CDC employee.

CDC GUIDANCE UPDATES

- CDC is reviewing and updating travel notices almost on a daily basis.
  - U.S. citizens, residents, and their immediate family members who have been in China, Iran, the United Kingdom, Ireland or any one of 26 European countries within in the past 14 days can enter the United States, but they are subject to health monitoring and possible quarantine for up to 14 days.
  - CDC also has a Global Level 2 Travel Health Notice recommending older adults and those who have chronic medical conditions consider postponing nonessential travel.
  - On March 17, CDC posted a Level 3 Travel Health Notice for Cruise Ship Travel, recommending travelers defer all cruise ship travel worldwide.
- CDC updated its guidance for specimen collection for testing for COVID-19 to collect a single upper respiratory nasopharyngeal swab (NP) instead of an NP and oropharyngeal swab (OP).
- CDC also posted new guidance on when people who have had COVID-19 and have been isolating at home can discontinue isolating in "Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19."
  - Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation if:
    - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery—defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,
    - At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- CDC posted Guidance for child care settings, including a decision tree on when schools should close.

PANDEMIC INFORMATION

- Pandemics happen when a disease emerges to infect people easily and spreads from person to person in an efficient and sustained way globally.
- This is the first pandemic known to be caused by the emergence of a new coronavirus.
- In the past century, there have been four pandemics caused by the emergence of novel influenza viruses.
    - Pandemic guidance developed in anticipation of an influenza pandemic is being repurposed and adapted for a COVID-19 pandemic.
- The federal government has been working closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, as well as public health partners, to prepare for and respond to this public health threat for months.
- CDC has been implementing its pandemic preparedness and response plans, working on multiple fronts, including providing specific guidance on measures to prepare communities to respond to local spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Pandemics of respiratory disease follow a certain progression outlined in a "Pandemic Intervals Framework."
    - Pandemics begin with an investigation phase, followed by recognition, initiation, and acceleration phases.
    - The peak of illnesses occurs at the end of the acceleration phase, which is followed by a deceleration phase, during which there is a decrease in illnesses.
- Different countries can be in different phases of the pandemic at any point in time and different parts of the same country can also be in different phases of a pandemic.
- Nationally, the United States is currently in the initiation phase, but states where community spread is occurring are in the acceleration phase.
- The duration and severity of each phase can vary depending on the characteristics of the virus and the public health response.
- Public health partners are encouraged to review their pandemic preparedness plans at this time.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Everyone can do their part to help respond to this emerging public health threat:
    - On March 16, the White House announced a program called "15 Days to Slow the Spread," which is a nationwide effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 through the implementation of social distancing at all levels of society.
    - Older people and people with severe chronic conditions should take special precautions because they are at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness.
    - If you are a healthcare provider, use your judgement to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be tested. Factors to consider, in addition to clinical symptoms, may include:
        - Does the patient have recent travel from an affected area?
        - Has the patient been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 or patients with pneumonia of unknown cause?
        - Does the patient reside in an area where there has been community spread of COVID-19?

- If you are a healthcare provider or a public health responder caring for a COVID-19 patient, please take care of yourself and follow recommended infection control procedures.
- If you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and develop symptoms of COVID-19, call your healthcare provider and tell them about your symptoms and your exposure. They will decide whether you need to be tested. Keep in mind that there is no treatment for COVID-19 and people who are mildly ill are able to isolate at home.
- For people who are ill with COVID-19, but are not sick enough to be hospitalized, please follow CDC guidance on how to reduce the risk of spreading your illness to others. People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness.
- If you have been in China or another affected area or have been exposed to someone sick with COVID-19 in the last 14 days, you will face some limitations on your movement and activity. Please follow instructions during this time. Your cooperation is integral to the ongoing public health response to try to slow spread of this virus.

For more information please visit the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak Page at: www.cdc.gov/COVID19.