



## Johnson County Public Health Johnson County Emergency Management



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For immediate release

### **Johnson County, Iowa, COVID-19 update for April 1, 2020**

Johnson County Public Health (JCPH) continues to work with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and a number of other local agencies to contain the spread of COVID-19 in our community. As of today, Wednesday, April 1, 2020, there are 76 confirmed positive cases in Johnson County. Thirty-nine have recovered from COVID-19, are no longer considered infectious, and are now under the same recommendations as the general public.

Currently, there is a total of 549 confirmed positive cases in Iowa. There have been a total of 7,304 negative tests to date, which includes testing reported by the State Hygienic Lab and other labs. A status report of monitoring and testing of COVID-19 in Iowa is provided by IDPH and can be found [here](#). In addition, a public hotline has been established for Iowans with questions about COVID-19. The line is available 24/7 by calling 2-1-1 or 1-800-244-7431.

### **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

IDPH is deploying a comprehensive approach to address food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, will continue for all current, and new or returning WIC participants. April's WIC benefits are available for use today, Wednesday, April 1. WIC recipients need to be available by phone for their regularly scheduled appointment that is typically held at their regular WIC clinic site. Staff will call at the scheduled appointment time. Watch for normal text reminders regarding appointments so you are ready to take the call. Patience and flexibility is appreciated during this temporary change.

All in-person classes are suspended for now, but the breastfeeding peer counseling program is available by phone. JCPH Clinical Services can be reached at 319-356-6042 or [wicappt@co.johnson.ia.us](mailto:wicappt@co.johnson.ia.us).

### **Tips for purchasing WIC Items at stores**

- Please be patient. Stores want to provide what you need, but are extremely busy and working hard to stock the shelves.
- Check current hours and arrive at the store earlier in the day. It may help you find the products needed.

- Practice social/physical distancing by putting physical space between yourself and other people. Maintain a distance of six feet. Cover your cough. Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Contain yourself at home when sick.
- At this time WIC food purchases can only be redeemed at WIC-approved stores.
- WIC foods will be available throughout April. There is no reason to stockpile food. Both the benefits and food products in stores will be available.
- If you are having issues finding specific WIC foods, call your WIC clinic 319-356-6042 or the state WIC office at 1-515-281-6650 for assistance.

### **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers**

JCPH is developing a list of those who could support health care in the event that more help is needed. Those with a health or medical background or training not currently working as an essential worker in the health care system can sign up for the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) by registering online through i-SERV at <https://www.iaserv.org>. On the website, there is a red plus sign by "Add Organizations." Select "Iowa Medical Reserve Corps Organizations" and a list of counties will appear below. When volunteers are requested, the MRC Volunteer Coordinator will help those who have registered find roles that are suited to them.

### **JCPH investigation process**

Many in the community have asked about JCPH's investigation process related to COVID-19 cases. A positive test for COVID-19 will be reported from any lab to IDPH per State law. That report triggers an alert to JCPH through the state disease surveillance system. JCPH Disease Prevention Specialists Jennifer Miller and Jake Riley explain the investigation process in this video:

<https://www.facebook.com/JClowaPH/videos/1290277061168804>. (You do not have to have a Facebook account to view the video.)

### **Safer at home**

Remember, the best way to protect yourself and prevent getting sick is to avoid being exposed in the first place. Staying home is the safest thing for everyone. However, staying home does not mean having people in your house who don't live there. Neighbors, friends and extended family should not be visiting your home under any circumstances. Interactions with people not living in your home should be done by phone, email, social media or a video application.

### **Social distancing is for everyone**

Social distancing is for everyone, including children. When visiting parks or other outdoor spaces, it is important that all members of your household physically distance themselves six feet from other people. Children should not be playing in groups with other children. You should not invite other children into your home or yard. If you are allowing this, you are not protected and you are not protecting your friends, family and neighbors. You or your children could pass COVID-19 to someone who is at greater risk of getting seriously ill—someone who is elderly or has underlying health conditions.

Thank you to all Johnson County residents who are making big and small sacrifices in their daily lives to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Information about COVID-19 in Johnson County is available at [www.johnson-county.com/coronavirus](http://www.johnson-county.com/coronavirus).