



For Immediate Release

Date: March 18, 2020

Media Email: COVIDmedia@lakecountyil.gov

Media Phone: 847-377-8099

Health Department Coronavirus Updates

Lake County, Ill. — The Lake County Health Department is reporting 8 new cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Lake County. Since March 11, 2020, a total of 22 Lake County residents have tested positive for the disease. Public health officials continue to urge all residents to take precautions to stay healthy and stop the spread of the virus.

"Social distancing is crucial to help reduce the spread of COVID-19," said Lisa Kritz, Director of Prevention for the Lake County Health Department "While early research shows that 80 percent of those who contract COVID-19 will experience only mild symptoms, we need to be extremely cautious to protect our population with preexisting medical concerns and the elderly. We must work together to ease the burden on our medical facilities to ensure that the most vulnerable are able to get the care they need."

Lake County health officials are expecting a significant increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in Lake County. The Public Health Emergency Operations Center (PHEOC) has been anticipating and planning for this increase.

It is critically important that the community follow prescribed preventative measures such as social distancing and the **3 C's** to avoid getting sick:

- **Clean** hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol;
- **Cover** your cough and sneeze with a tissue or your elbow; and
- **Contain** illness by staying home if you are sick.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Testing availability

Testing is being prioritized for people with symptoms who have high risk of complications. This includes older adults living in congregate settings and those with chronic health conditions like heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes, and those with weakened immune systems. People who do not show any symptoms do not need to get tested.

A number of healthcare providers in Lake County currently have tests available. The PHEOC is working to collect information on the availability of testing in Lake County and will provide updates at www.lakecountyil.gov/coronavirus as it becomes available.

What to do if you are sick

If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or difficulty breathing, stay home. Distance yourself from others in the household and if possible, stay in your own bedroom and use your own bathroom. If your symptoms worsen, call your healthcare provider.

Do not walk into a healthcare facility, urgent care clinic, or hospital before calling. Discuss your symptoms with your doctor. If your doctor believes that you need to be tested for COVID-19, your doctor should call the Lake County Health Department Communicable Disease program to determine if you should be tested.

In accordance with Illinois Department of Public Health guidance, recommendations for reducing the spread of COVID-19 include:

Social Distancing

- Stay home as much as possible.
- If gatherings are necessary, limit the number of people to 10.
- Call to check on family, neighbors, and older adults instead of visiting.
- Check with your healthcare provider about telehealth options.

Nursing Home Facilities

- Restrict all visitation except for certain compassionate care situations, such as end of life residents.
- Restrict all volunteers and non-essential health care personnel (e.g., barbers).
- Cancel all group activities and communal dining.
- Implement active screening of residents and healthcare personnel for fever and respiratory symptoms.
- Additional guidance for long-term care facilities is on the [Illinois Department of Public Health website](https://www.idph.state.il.us/covid-19/).

The Health Department will continue to provide updates as recommendations change.

Additional resources

Visit www.lakecountyil.gov/coronavirus for updates on COVID-19 in Lake County and to sign up for the Lake County Health Department's COVID-19 email newsletter.

People can find more information regarding COVID-19 in Lake County at www.lakecountyil.gov/coronavirus

For government closures visit:

www.lakecountyil.gov/closures

For financial help and other community resources, please call 2-1-1.

For general state and national information, please call the Illinois State Hotline at 1-800-899-3931, or visit the Illinois Department of Public Health website at dph.illinois.gov, or the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at coronavirus.gov.

Visit www.lakecountyil.gov/coronavirus for updates on COVID-19 in Lake County and to sign up for the Lake County Health Department's COVID-19 email newsletter.