



Town of Middleton

Board of Health

195 North Main Street
Middleton, Massachusetts 01949
978-777-1869
FAX 978-774-0718
www.middletonma.gov



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

January 29, 2020: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information

[According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health \(DPH\)](#), there has been one confirmed case of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV or COVID-19) in the state. The person who contracted the virus was returning from Wuhan, China and sought medical care shortly after his arrival in Massachusetts. According to the DPH, the person is at home and recovering.

The risk of the 2019 novel coronavirus remains low for people in Massachusetts, according to the DPH. Middleton health officials wish to remind residents that the flu is a far more prevalent concern as approximately [10% of the U.S.](#) population (estimated 29 - 41 million flu illnesses) has experienced the influenza virus (flu) this season; however, that they should continue taking precautions to stay healthy from all types of diseases. Derek Fullerton, Middleton Public Health Director said, *"I want residents to know that the risk of contracting the 2019 novel coronavirus is low, and the virus is not currently spreading among the public in the United States,"*

It is important to know the facts about coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors. For information on sharing [Facts, Not Fear visit the CDC Coronavirus Disease Page](#)

Traci Mello, RN, Middleton Public Health Nurse advocated, *"at this point time, it's important to know this information":*

[According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), imported cases of the 2019 novel coronavirus in travelers have been detected in the U.S. Person-to-person spread of the virus also has been seen among close contacts of returned travelers from Wuhan, but at this time, the virus is not currently spreading in the community in the United States.

According to the DPH and CDC, symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus include fever and respiratory illness, such as coughing and difficulty breathing. Symptoms of the virus are similar to those of seasonal flu.

The Middleton Health Department wishes to provide residents with recommended actions from the CDC to take to protect themselves and others from the illness:

- Wash hands frequently, with soap and water, for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizing gels and liquids if soap and water are not readily available.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Try to avoid close contact with anyone who is sick.
- When sick yourself, stay home to protect others.
- Always cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect areas and objects that are touched frequently, such as desks, phones, door handles, etc.

The DPH is also advising anyone who has traveled to China within the past two weeks to monitor their health for symptoms of the virus for 14 days after arriving back in the United States, and to contact their healthcare provider should they develop symptoms. Before going to a medical appointment, anyone who believes they might have the virus is asked to first tell their healthcare provider about their possible exposure to the 2019 novel coronavirus.

The Tri-Town School Union Public Schools are closely monitoring the latest news and updates and working with the Tri-Town Health Departments, DPH, and CDC for proper guidance and recommendations. The Tri-Town School union sent communication to all families and staff on 2/28/2020 related to Coronavirus and their proactive steps they are taking as a school district.

Public health officials are continuing to learn more information about this latest strain of coronavirus, and for the most up-to-date information, visit the DPH's website [here](#) or the CDC's website [here](#).

Respectfully,



Chief Health Strategist
Public Health Director
Town of Middleton



Traci Mello, RN, MSN
Public Health Nurse
Town of Middleton