



Cambridge  
Public Health  
Department

March 5, 2020

Dear Cambridge Employers:

We are writing to you about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and how it may impact your organization over the coming weeks. Public health and city officials in Cambridge are closely monitoring events in Massachusetts, the U.S., and around the world.

On March 4, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued updated guidance and recommended procedures for travelers returning from “high risk” or “Level 3” countries, which may impact your organization:

- **Travelers returning from China or Iran (level 3)**, are asked to self-quarantine (“stay home”) for 14 days upon return to the U.S. and will be monitored by Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) staff. Foreign nationals may not travel from China or Iran to the United States.
- **Travelers returning from Italy and South Korea (level 3)** are asked to self-quarantine for 14 days upon return to the U.S. and self-monitor for symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Per CDC guidance, CPHD will not be monitoring these individuals during the 14-day self-quarantine period.
- **Returning travelers from Japan (level 2)** are asked to limit contact with others and self-monitor for symptoms.
- **For additional guidance from the CDC:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/>

At this time, **the risk to people in Cambridge is low** unless they have recently traveled to any of the countries identified by the CDC. Other groups at elevated risk of exposure are residents who have recently visited areas of the U.S where there is ongoing community spread of the virus, health care workers caring for COVID-19 patients, and close contacts of people with COVID-19.

### What Your Organization Can Do

Organizations play an important role in preventing the spread of respiratory illnesses and protecting individuals from social stigma and discrimination. Here are some important actions you can take now to prepare for the potential spread of COVID-19 in the community.

#### Be extra vigilant about everyday health practices

- Employees and those you serve should **wash their hands often for at least 20 seconds** with soap and then rub hands until they are dry. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes.** Throw tissues away and clean your hands afterwards.
- **Avoid sharing personal items with others**, such as cups, plates, and utensils.

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### **Perform routine environmental cleaning**

- Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, countertops) with the regular cleaning products. Then disinfect “high touch” surfaces and objects with a disinfectant (e.g., Lysol, Clorox) or a bleach solution.
- Provide disposable disinfectant wipes so that commonly used surfaces and objects can be wiped down by staff and clients/students before each use.
- For detailed COVID-19 cleaning and disinfecting guidance, see: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

### **Establish procedures for employees, clients, and students who are sick:**

- Establish procedures to ensure staff, clients, or students who become sick at your organization or arrive sick are sent home as soon as possible.
- Keep sick individuals separate from others until they can leave.
- Remember that organizations are not expected to screen employees or clients to identify cases of COVID-19. The majority of respiratory illnesses are not COVID-19. If this situation changes, the Cambridge Public Health Department will provide guidance.

### **Organization-Specific Information**

#### **Businesses**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>

#### **Schools and Child Care Programs**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>

For the most current information, please visit the following COVID-19 websites:

- **CDC:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
- **Massachusetts Department of Public Health:** <https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- **Cambridge Public Health Department:** <http://cambridgepublichealth.org/services/diseases-conditions/coronavirus.php>

If employees or clients have any health-related concerns or questions, they should contact their doctor’s office or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at 617-983-6800.

Sincerely,



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Cambridge Public Health Department