



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Health Officials Announce First Coronavirus Disease Cases Outside Chicago and Cook County

Illinois is currently reporting 19 cases

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Kane County Health Department (KCHD), and the McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) today announced the first Illinois residents outside of Chicago and Cook County to test positive at the IDPH laboratory for coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The cases include a Kane County woman in her 60s and a McHenry County teen, neither of whom had a history of travel to an affected area and no connection to a known case of COVID-19. Public health officials are identifying and contacting all close contacts.

“As we anticipated, the number of cases in Illinois is increasing and now includes the first cases outside of Chicago and Cook County,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “The State of Illinois continues to take action to reduce spread of COVID-19 in Illinois and we again want to encourage people to start thinking and preparing now in the event they are not able to go to work, if schools are closed, if public transportation is not available, and how else their lives will be disrupted by this outbreak.”

Currently, there are 19 individuals in Illinois who have tested positive for COVID-19. At least one case acquired the virus in the community, but probably more. As IDPH continues to conduct surveillance testing, additional cases will be identified, and we will have a better understanding about the amount of virus circulating in Illinois communities.

In addition to the cases in Kane and McHenry counties, new cases include individuals in:
Cook County:

- 70s – male
- 60s – female
- 40s – female
- 40s – male

Chicago:

- 40s – male
- 40s – male

-more-

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Public health officials are still investigating the travel history of these individuals and any potential contact with a known COVID-19 case. These most recent cases are in isolation and are doing well.

Steps to help minimize the risk of spread:

- **Everyone:** Use the same daily health precautions you would for flu including washing your hands frequently using soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering your cough and sneeze, and staying home when sick.
- **Health care:** Screen patients and visitors for symptoms of respiratory illness such as fever, cough, and difficulty breathing; wear proper personal protective gear such as gowns and masks when needed, and have employees stay home when sick.
- **Day cares, schools, universities:** Review emergency plans, absenteeism policies, and cleaning procedures; identify strategies for alternative learning mechanisms such as on-line programs; and consider postponing or cancelling student exchange programs.
- **Businesses:** Review emergency and continuity of operation plans, revisit sick leave policies, and assess schedule flexibility.
- **Community and faith organizations:** Review emergency plans and communicate with community members if events and services are changed, postponed, or cancelled.

For information about how you, your school, your workplace, and your community can prepare, please visit [Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Communities](#). For general questions about COVID-19, call the hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov.

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