



## **Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 16, 2020

While no positive cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed officially in the Quad Cities, public health officials are operating under the assumption that the virus already has spread throughout the community. Public health, emergency management, health care providers and local municipal, county, and elected officials spent the weekend and Monday further implementing emergency plans to combat the infectious disease pandemic and keep as many Quad Citians as possible from becoming seriously ill.

Please make smart choices. Your actions today will impact the community as a whole. Please keep in mind our at-risk population, the elderly, and our health care workers. Our actions help protect those who need it most. We need all of us to flatten the curve.

Information so far suggests that most COVID-19 illness is mild. However, older people and people of all ages with severe chronic medical conditions, such as heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes, seem to be at higher risk of developing serious illness. It is crucial that we limit contact with older people and those with certain health conditions.

As of 3 p.m., The Illinois Department of Public Health is reporting 105 cases in 15 counties in Illinois.

Also as of 3 p.m., the Iowa Department of Public Health is reporting 22 cases in 7 counties in Iowa.

Simple actions can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses and preserve health care resources:

- Wash your hands
- Avoid touching your face
- Cover your cough or sneeze.
- Stay away of gatherings of more than 50 people
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects

As the virus and public health messaging has taken root in our communities, public officials began implementing social distancing measures. What does it mean when people say practice social distancing? Right now, it means:

- Keep at least 6 feet between you and others. For many adults, that is their arm span.
- Avoid shaking hands or hugging as a social greeting.
- Consider avoiding social gatherings/community events where you cannot maintain a 6-foot space between you and others.
- It is nearly impossible in large group settings to maintain recommended social distancing. As a result, Quad City organizations are encouraged to postpone social gathering/community events of 50 people or more.

- Consider shopping at non-peak hours and take advantage of delivery or pick-up services with retailers.
- Illinois restaurants are closed for dine-in services, but many restaurants are offering take-out and delivery options.
- Follow the visitor guidance of hospitals and nursing homes/assisted living centers.
- If you have traveled to an area where there is known community-spread, consider self-isolating for 14 days when you get home.
- Stay at home if you are feeling sick.
- If you are an older adult, or have an underlying health condition, stay home as much as you can.
- Currently, there are no recommendations to cancel small family and social gatherings, but this could change in the future.

**Other points:**

- Many municipalities and public buildings are limiting access to services. Before visiting a city or county building, please call ahead or check the organization's website to see if your need can be met over the phone.
- The Rock Island County Jail has suspended family and friend visitation until further notice. The Rock Island County Sheriff's Department will announce when visitations have resumed.
- The Scott County Jail has not suspended visitation at this point.
- The Women, Infant and Children (WIC) programs in both Illinois and Iowa are making temporary changes to reduce the number of clients who must come into the clinics. Enrolled clients may not be required to visit the WIC clinic to receive services. Their benefits may extend past the initial certification date if their infant or child was present at the initial certification visit. For WIC enrollment and certification processes, telephone interviews may be conducted and paperwork may be accepted via email or postal mail at the Rock Island County WIC clinics. Clients currently enrolled in Iowa WIC Services have the option to certify by these methods at the Davenport Community Health Care locations. Clients should call their WIC clinic for further details.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory illness and is not transmittable in the water supply. The water supply is safe in the Quad Cities and there is no need to stock up on bottled water.
- In light of Illinois Gov. Pritzker's announcement of the closure of bars and restaurants beginning Tuesday, March 17, we are aware that there are some people in our community who are choosing to go out and celebrate St. Patrick's Day today (Monday). We encourage people to celebrate in their own homes, thereby doing everything they can do to protect our community.
- While we understand that the public is scared and seeking information, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) has compiled excellent resources. Specific guidance is available for businesses, social service providers, health systems, first responders, schools, among others. Please consult [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or the websites for both the Illinois and Iowa Departments of Public Health before calling the local health departments for advice.