



WASHINGTON STATE FUSION CENTER

CORONAVIRUS FACT SHEET FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

BASIC FACTS

WHAT IS A CORONAVIRUS?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). This most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

WHAT IS A COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus—severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in China, in December 2019.

INCUBATION AND SYMPTOMS

The “incubation period” means the time between being infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus and beginning to have symptoms of the disease. Estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range from 1-14 days. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

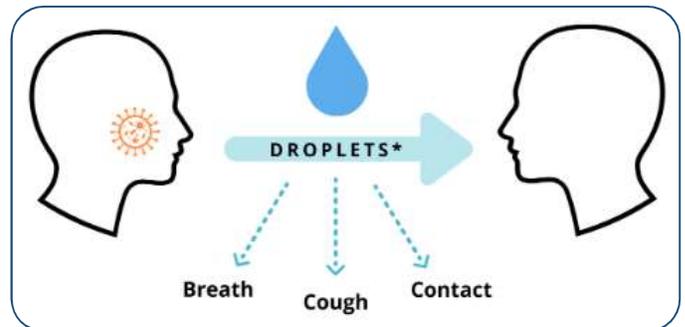
- Fever
- Dry cough
- Nasal congestion
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty breathing

VIRUS TRANSMISSION

INFECTIOUS PERIOD

The infectious period is unknown, but possibly up to 10-14 days. People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?



- Via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- It may be possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

STAY INFORMED

Receive the latest COVID-19 information and updates:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Washington State Department of Health \(DOH\)](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Webinar: Interim Guidance for EMS and 911](#)
- [Interim Guidance for EMS Systems and 911 PSAPs for 2019-nCoV in the United States](#)
- [EMS Infectious Disease Playbook](#)
- [US Department of Labor OSHA – COVID-19 Control and Prevention](#)



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PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. Most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. The CDC recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- **Agencies should evaluate their plans and approaches to performing their work when a significant portion of their workforce is unable to come into work**
- **Agencies should strongly suggest or require that employees not come to work if they are sick**
- **All vehicles and workspaces should have disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer, and use these frequently on shared and high-touch surfaces and hands. Use EPA-registered cleaning sprays or wipes following the directions on the label. Cellular phones and duty-related personal equipment should also be regularly disinfected.**
- **Encourage officers not to touch eyes, nose and mouth.**
- **Encourage all officers to create additional opportunities to wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.**
- **Encourage all officers to wear gloves while responding to medical calls, traffic collisions, and when conducting searches. Change gloves often especially if torn. Officers should not touch clothes or skin with hands while wearing gloves.**
- **If possible, fit-testing for N95s and use of N95s on medical calls with respiratory complaints. N95 use must be OSHA/DOSH compliant and part of a proper respiratory protection program. It is not suggested to use N95s on all calls.**
- **In areas where Law Enforcement responds to medical calls, consider limiting the agency's response to non life-threatening, lower priority medical calls – particularly those of a respiratory nature to reduce risk of exposure.**
- **Encourage officers not to eat in their vehicles or workspaces.**
- **Remind officers to maintain appropriate distancing when dealing with individuals or crowds.**



This coronavirus fact sheet was coordinated with and reviewed by the Washington State Department of Health.