



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) General FAQs

Updated March 20, 2020

Napa County Public Health staff are receiving many questions from the public about COVID-19. This document contains answers to the most commonly asked questions.

Background Information

COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that first caused an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. This virus has not been seen in humans before and understanding of it is still evolving. COVID-19 is spreading person-to-person and community spread is being detected in a growing number of places, including California. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) publicly characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic. On March 12, the Napa County Public Health Officer declared a local health emergency. More detailed information about the virus can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Coronavirus website.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Businesses

What statewide or local orders currently apply to businesses?

At 12:00 AM on 3/20/2020, a Shelter at Home order went into effect for Napa County. This Order requires that people stay home unless they are engaged in certain "Essential Activities". Essential activities and essential businesses are addressed extensively in the [Shelter at Home FAQs \(Spanish\)](#). Businesses may have activities that fall into both essential and non-essential categories. During the period that the order is in place, businesses must only engage in essential activities and take steps to ensure social distancing measures are followed. Governor Newsom also issued a [Shelter at Home order](#) for all of California effective the night of March 19, 2020.

What resources are available for employees and employers during this time?

The state of California has compiled extensive information for both employers and employees. This includes recommendations for prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, to benefits for workers impacted by the medical or economic effects of COVID-19. Please visit the Napa County coronavirus website <https://www.countyofnapa.org/Coronavirus> and click on [Employers](#) for the most updated guidance.

Environmental Cleaning

Are there any special recommendations for cleaning?

Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects on a regular basis. Common household cleaners – such as bleach wipes or alcohol – are effective against other coronaviruses and will likely also be effective against COVID-19. In the absence of these products, wiping down surfaces with soap and water also likely will eliminate the virus. Healthcare facilities should refer to guidance from the [CDC Infection Control Recommendations](#).

Masks

Do I need to wear a mask?

The CDC does not recommend that well people use masks to prevent respiratory illnesses like COVID-19. Frequent handwashing and staying away from people who are sick are the most effective strategies to prevent infection among the public. Health care providers are trained to use masks properly, and there is evidence that they are effective in clinical settings. If you are sick or if you are caring for someone who is sick, your doctor may recommend that you use a mask in specific situations.

Prevention and Preparedness

What should I do to prepare my family for an outbreak of COVID-19 in our community?

Community transmission of COVID-19 within the United States will become more widespread over time and Napa County Public Health will continue to update public guidance as the situation changes. Right now, we continue to recommend that people take basic steps to get prepared.

- Step up your hygiene game. Hand washing, covering coughs, and staying home when sick are the most important things you can do to protect yourself and others.
- Try to keep a 30-day supply of essential medicines.
- Get a flu shot if you haven't already. The flu is circulating and the symptoms are similar to COVID-19.
- If possible, have extra essential household items (e.g., diapers for small children, laundry detergent) and food staples on hand.
- Have a support system in place for elderly family members.

I have an elective procedure scheduled in my local hospital. Should I postpone?

Healthcare facilities have begun to postpone elective procedures. Furthermore, the [Shelter at Home FAQs \(Spanish\)](#) suggest that people postpone non-essential medical care at this time.

Should I cancel my event or mass gathering?

All non-essential events and gathering should be canceled at this time. At 12:00 AM on 3/20/2020, a Shelter at Home order went into effect for Napa County. This Order requires that people stay home unless they are engaged in certain "Essential Activities". Essential activities and essential businesses are addressed extensively in the [Shelter at Home FAQs \(Spanish\)](#). This order

is in effect until April 7, 2020.

Why did Napa County declare a Public Health emergency?

Although we do not have confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Napa County at this time, this declaration will allow the mobilization of County resources, accelerate emergency planning and response, and allow for future reimbursements by the state and federal governments.

Why can't I visit my family member in their residential care facility?

A Health Officer order has been issued to restrict visitors to long-term residential care and skilled-nursing facilities. This is necessary to protect older and medically fragile adults residing in these facilities, who are particularly vulnerable to severe disease or death from COVID-19. Outbreaks in such facilities have occurred in other states with severe consequences for the residents and staff. Please work with both your family member and the facility to determine the best alternatives to face-to-face visits. **A Shelter at Home order is in effect from 12:00 a.m. on March 20, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 7, 2020, or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer. This order requires that people only leave their homes for essential activities.**

Symptoms and Diagnosis

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are **fever, cough, and shortness of breath**. Some people with COVID-19 develop viral pneumonia. Diarrhea and vomiting sometimes occur but are less common. The majority of people infected with the virus experience mild to moderate symptoms. Some people become infected with the virus, but do not experience symptoms.

How long does it take to show symptoms?

Public Health Officials believe symptoms appear between 2 days and 14 days after exposure to the virus. **The average time from exposure to symptoms based on early studies is about 7.5 days.**

How long do symptoms last?

Early studies in China suggest that mild infections resolve in about two weeks, while more severe infections may take three to six weeks to resolve.

What do I do if I don't have a doctor, am uninsured, and/or don't have a primary care provider?

Call Ole Health at 707-254-1770 and tell them you are experiencing symptoms. You can also enroll in [Covered California](#) right now and get your account approved by the local Medicare office.

Important Information from Ole Health: In order to manage the daily changes, shift to telephonic visits, and to keep staff and patients safe and adhere to social distancing, Ole Health is temporarily consolidating sites; as of 3/18/20, the Calistoga location and the optometry services are CLOSED. County Campus is closed as of 3/20/20; those patients and staff will transition to South Napa Campus; Fairfield site changes are being evaluated. Saturday and evening clinics have been closed until further notice.

The 1141 Pear Tree Lane and 300 Hartle Court locations in Napa are both open; and the St Helena clinic is open; and the Fairfield locations are open, as well. This information is updated on Ole Health's website as well as our social media: <https://www.olehealth.org/covid-19/>.

What do I do if I am sick with symptoms of COVID-19?

Stay at home and separate yourself from other people and animals in your home as much as possible. If your symptoms are severe enough that you require medical attention, call ahead before visiting your doctor and follow their instructions so that you do not expose others. Do not go to the Emergency Department unless you are having a medical emergency. Stay at home except to get medical care and do not go to work, even if you are an essential service worker. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing or taxis. More detailed information about preventing the spread of COVID-19 is available on the [CDC website](#).

What do I do if someone in my household has symptoms of COVID-19?

If someone in your home becomes ill with a fever and a cough, that person should ideally have their own room and bathroom. The person should be monitored for emergency signs, such as difficulty breathing or persistent chest pain/pressure. Caregivers should avoid sharing personal items and practice good hand hygiene. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has detailed [guidance](#) on caring for someone at home. People in the same household as the ill person should ideally quarantine themselves and not leave the house even for essential activities. To avoid further spread of the virus in the community, household members with exposure to a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case should stay in self-quarantine for 14 days after the sick person has recovered (see question below).

I have had symptoms of COVID-19 but I am feeling better, when is it safe to be around others in my household or resume essential activities?

If you have symptoms, but either have not been tested or will only be tested once (for confirming infection).

Use the [three items](#) below to determine if you are still contagious. (Note: due to very limited testing supplies, [most people will fall into this category](#))

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) AND
- other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND
- at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared

If you have tested positive and you will be tested again to determine if you are still contagious.

Use the three items below to determine if you are still contagious.

- You no longer have a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) AND
- other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND
- you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart.

What groups are at higher risk of severe disease from COVID-19?

People who are at the highest risk of severe disease include those who are: over age 60 AND/OR have underlying illnesses (high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, and cancer) AND/OR have a compromised immune system. People in these groups should consider taking extra steps to protect themselves. While adults under age 60 are at lower risk of severe disease and death, the CDC was reporting as of 3/19/20 that 40% of people sick enough to be hospitalized due to COVID-19 were between the ages of 20 and 54. On March 20, a Shelter at Home order went into effect for Napa County.

On the same day, a Governor's Executive Order to Shelter at Home was also issued. All residents should stay at home except to participate in [essential activities](#).

Why are there not enough COVID-19 tests for everyone who wants one?

Napa County has been following guidance and has tested every case that has met the CDC requirements. Public Health agencies across the country, including Napa County, have received many questions about the availability of testing for the coronavirus (COVID-19) and understand that the current situation is creating stress and anxiety for many. It is true that testing supplies are still limited not only in California, but across the United States. This means that testing must be prioritized based on the risk to the larger community if cases were to go undetected. An example of high priority areas are hospitals and long term care settings, both to protect our healthcare workforce and our community members that are at highest risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19. There is currently no FDA approved treatment for COVID-19, so guidance for those with mild to moderate illness will not change based on laboratory test results. Those with symptoms of fever or cough should isolate themselves at home and follow guidelines for home care. Federal and State officials continue to work to make additional lab testing kits available. Napa County will continue to work with federal and state agencies and our health care community to provide guidance and information as it becomes available. [Lab testing FAQs](#) and [data on the number of tests conducted](#) are available at www.countyofnapa.org/coronavirus.

Transmission (Spread)

How is the virus spread?

The virus seems to spread mainly from person-to-person through droplets produced by coughs or sneezes, much like the flu. It may be possible to get the virus by touching a surface with the virus on it and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth, but that is still not currently believed to be the main way the virus spreads. [A study in the New England Journal of Medicine](#) found that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was detectable in aerosols (tiny droplets that occur when people cough or sneeze) for up to three hours, up to four hours on copper, up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to two to three days on plastic and stainless steel. Although the virus can survive on surfaces for hours to days, it is killed by commonly used disinfectants, including soap and water.

What is the risk of transmitting COVID-19 through wastewater from hospitals treating COVID-19 patients?

There is minimal risk of wastewater contamination from COVID-19. Management of laundry and waste at hospitals is performed in accordance to CDC guidance.

Travel

Should I cancel my travel plans?

[During a Shelter at Home order you should leave your home only to carry out essential activities Shelter at Home FAQs \(Spanish\)](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has the most up to date travel information; people with upcoming trips should regularly check the CDC website. A Warning Level 3 means that travelers should avoid all nonessential travel to an area, an Alert Level 2 means that older adults and those with chronic medical conditions should consider postponing nonessential travel, and a

Watch Level 1 means that the CDC is watching an area but does not recommend canceling or postponing travel. For groups at higher risk, CDC recommends avoiding all non-essential travel. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all persons defer any travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide because of the increased risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission onboard ships.

If you need accessibility assistance,
Please contact ADAcoordinator@countyofnapa.org or (707) 259-8744.