

COVID-19: Updated Guidance

Coronavirus Disease 2019, (COVID-19) is an expanding global outbreak of respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Under the leadership of Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), the City of Chicago and its partners have been working for months to monitor the disease spread globally and prepare the city. Everyone has a role to play in staying healthy and keeping their family and community safe.

As of March 12, the following guidance is recommended for 1.) Large Gatherings/Events 2.) Schools 3.) Long Term Care Settings and 4.) Workplace Settings.

Large Event Guidance

Recommendation: Based on the rising case counts in the US and Illinois as of March 12, 2020, and evidence of low-level community transmission in the Chicagoland area, the following recommendations are provided for large event cancellations. Large gatherings are defined as events that bring large numbers of individuals together to a set location for a specific event / function at the same time, and do not include the everyday use of locations such as airports, restaurants or museums. Of note, such recommendations would be likely to change as case counts increase, and/or the level of community transmission increased.

Community Event Cancellations:

- 1,000 or more attendees: All events of 1,000 people or more will be banned for the next 30 days.
- 250-1,000 attendees: Strongly recommend canceling events based primarily on the population that historically attends the event (e.g. many attendees are age 60 and greater, are known to have underlying medical conditions, or are likely to have travelled from Travel 3 countries in the last 30 days).
- 10 or more attendees: Strongly recommend canceling events if all attendees are from vulnerable populations.

Community Events:

- Any individual with respiratory illness or fever must avoid large gatherings and must stay home. This message must be prominent in any communication/promotion of events.
- Individuals over 60, and those with significant underlying conditions, should avoid large events. This message must be included in communication/promotion of events.
- Identify mechanisms to encourage frequent hand hygiene.
- Promote [social distancing](#) as possible.

School Guidance

CDPH recommends the following guidance to help school administrators understand how to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 within school communities and facilities. It also provides information regarding procedures in the event a case is identified within a school community.

- Implement [social distancing](#) approaches as appropriate.
- Actively monitor absenteeism rates among staff and students. CDPH can use absenteeism rates to help guide decisions.

*This version was released on 03/12/2020. It may be updated with new guidance.
Please visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus to find the latest version.*



- If a confirmed case occurs in a staff member or student and the patient was symptomatic while in the school, close school short-term (e.g. 2-3 days) to allow for cleaning (CDC guidance) and give time for CDPH to complete a contact investigation and assess for transmission in the setting. Schools should always consult with CDPH before closing a school.
- Implement robust personal and environmental [mitigation](#) approaches as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.
- Implement frequent communication with school community regarding efforts to keep staff and students safe.

Long Term Care Settings Guidance

Long term care facilities are COVID-19 high-risk settings due to their congregate nature and the underlying health conditions associated with many of their residents. In an effort to keep staff and residents safe, CDPH recommends the following guidance:

- Staff with respiratory illness or fever must stay home from work. Visitors with respiratory illness or fever must not visit and must stay home. This message must be prominent in all communications and posted prominently.
- Strictly limit visitors, including those under age 18, who can carry other viruses. Develop [mechanism](#) to actively monitor for and exclude visitors with respiratory illness. Exceptions to strict visitation policies can be made on a limited individual basis only for palliative care/hospice or other unusual situations.
- Develop [mechanism](#) to monitor staff and residents for symptoms. Actively monitor for and exclude any staff with symptoms.
- Implement [social distancing](#) approaches as appropriate.
- Promptly report any COVID-19 case or cluster of unexplained pneumonia to CDPH/your local health department.
- Promote robust personal and environmental [mitigation](#) approaches. [hyper link](#)
- Implement frequent communication with staff and residents regarding efforts to keep staff and residents safe.
- Separate guidance will be provided to healthcare settings.

Workplace Setting Guidance

CDPH recommends the following guidance to help limit COVID-19 exposure and spread in the workplace. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of COVID-19.

- Staff, contractors, and others with respiratory illness or fever must stay home. This message must be prominent in all communications.
- Implement [social distancing](#) approaches as appropriate.
- Consider teleworking options where appropriate and feasible; work now to get these in place, thinking not just about returning travelers but about protecting staff with underlying health conditions or those who are older.
- Limit large meeting gatherings.
- Implement flexible leave policies and liberalize sick leave policies as much as possible.
- Promote robust personal and environmental [mitigation](#) approaches.
- Cancel non-essential [travel](#).