

Preparing for Potential Infection in West Virginia Communities

Since February 2020, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health has been following an increase in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. The Bureau for Public Health monitors Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates, hospital admissions, and other data to determine the potential risk to citizens in West Virginia from the virus.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath

PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSMISSION

- Occurs via small droplets from the nose or mouth of the infected person when they cough, sneeze, or exhale.
- Maintain 2 meter (6 ft) distance between yourself and anyone coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel sick. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

PREVENTION

- Isolate sick and diagnosed individuals.
- Wash hands after handling potentially contaminated items such as food, trash and laundry.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces.
- Don't share food, drinks, etc.

The ill person should eat/be fed in their room, if possible. Non-disposable food service items should be handled with gloves and washed in hot water or in a dishwasher. If possible, dedicate a lined trash can for the ill person.

WHEN CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- Wear disposable gloves. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 only. **Wash hands** immediately after gloves are removed.
- For soft (porous) surfaces cleaning, use products with the EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims that are suitable for porous surfaces. A list of EPA-approved cleaning materials is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.
- **CLEANING** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Cleaning does not kill germs, but removes them and lowers the risk of spreading infection.

WHEN CLEANING AND DISINFECTING (CONT.)

- **DISINFECTING** refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces *after* cleaning. It can further lower risk of spreading infection.
 - For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Do not mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
 - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.

LAUNDRY

- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person. Discard after each use.
- If gloves are not used when handling dirty laundry, be sure to wash hands immediately afterwards.
- If possible, do not shake dirty laundry. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air.
- Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance for surfaces or use a liner.

For additional information on COVID-19, please visit our webpage at: www.coronavirus.wv.gov

Questions and concerns can also be directed to the 24/7, toll-free COVID-19 information hotline at 1-800-887-4304