



NJ TRANSIT POLICE Office of Emergency Management

Situational Awareness



January, 2020

Coronavirus Background Information

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus (named “2019-nCoV”) that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China and which continues to expand. Chinese health officials have reported thousands of infections with 2019-nCoV in China, with the virus reportedly spreading from person-to-person in many parts of that country. Infections with 2019-nCoV, most of them associated with travel from Wuhan, also are being reported in a growing number of international locations, including the United States.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people such as with MERS and SARS which are also coronavirus’.

Multiple organizations including the World Health Organization and the CDC are monitoring the spread of this virus and issuing bulletins through their websites and news outlets. Closer to home, the NJ Department of Health is the lead agency for the State of New Jersey. Governor Murphy yesterday announced information regarding the virus can be found on the DOH website @ <https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>.

NJTPD—OEM is actively monitoring the above sources and is coordinating with our Federal, State and Local Public Health partners.

The following information is a synopsis of the latest information from the CDC and NJ DOH websites.

Source and Spread of the Virus

Early on, many of the patients in the outbreak in Wuhan, China reportedly had some link to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. However, a growing number of patients reportedly have not had exposure to animal markets, indicating person-to-person spread is occurring. At this time, it’s unclear how easily or sustainably this virus is spreading between people.

Illness Severity

Both MERS and SARS have been known to cause severe illness in people. The complete clinical picture with regard to 2019-nCoV is still not fully clear. Reported illnesses have ranged from infected people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill and dying.

Situation In U.S.

Imported cases of 2019-nCoV infection in people have been detected in the U.S. A total of 5 cases in 4 states have been confirmed, 68 suspected cases have been proven negative and others are awaiting results. Initial symptoms are similar to the flu, which raises the number of investigated cases as well as the number of negative results. **No person-to-person spread has been detected with this virus at the time, and this virus is NOT currently spreading in the community in the United States.**

Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (2019-nCoV)

Symptoms* of Novel Coronavirus

Patients with 2019-nCoV have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

* Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure. If you have been in China within the past 2 weeks and develop symptoms, call your doctor.



www.cdc.gov/nCoV

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How does novel coronavirus spread?

Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person to others through:

- The air by coughing and sneezing.
- Close personal contact such as touching or shaking hands.
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

Prevention

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses including the flu. CDC does have specific guidance for travelers.

CDC Recommendations

While the immediate risk of this new virus to the American public is believed to be low at this time, everyone can do their part to help us respond to this emerging public health threat:

- **For everyone:** It's currently flu and respiratory disease season and CDC recommends getting vaccinated, taking everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals if prescribed.
- **For people who may have 2019-nCoV infection:** Please follow CDC guidance on how to reduce the risk of spreading your illness to others.
- **For travelers:** Stay up to date with CDC's travel health notices related to this outbreak.

Transportation Concerns and Forward Leaning Actions

- We are monitoring the global movement of the virus from the World Health Organization and CDC.
- We are forming a Coronavirus task force within the agency.
- We will keep employees informed going forward.
- Right now it is not causing any disruption to surface passenger transportation in the United States.

Sent on behalf of Chief Christopher Trucillo

For more information, please contact:

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