

March 9, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Staff,

On Friday, March 6, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) announced a presumptive positive case of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, the first in Marion County and the state of Indiana. On Sunday, March 8, two additional presumptive positives cases were identified by ISDH in Hendricks County.

This news might cause additional concern in the community, especially among parents or guardians with school-aged children. The Marion County Public Health Department is working closely with ISDH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to respond and issue guidance related to the local case. The vast majority of COVID-19 cases have been mild in individuals without underlying medical conditions.

This morning, I hosted a discussion with superintendents and administrators for schools in Marion County to provide an update regarding the COVID-19 case and offer assurances that protecting the public and our children is always our top priority.

At this time, the risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 in Marion County is low. Based on the detailed investigation of this case by ISDH, CDC, and the Marion County Public Health Department, we believe the person who tested positive was infected outside of Indiana and not from local transmission. Additional measures have been put in place to prevent additional spread of the virus from this case.

Anyone traveling for spring break to a country included in CDC's Level 2 or Level 3 Travel Health Notice ([CDC.org/COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid-19)) should self-quarantine for 14 days and contact the Marion County Public Health Department. For more information about this, or to ask other questions about COVID-19, please contact our call center at (317) 221-5500.

Schools are reminded to take recommended steps for cleaning and disinfecting frequently-used surfaces in areas such as restrooms, the cafeteria, classrooms and locker rooms, using products approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Schools must also reinforce good hygiene among students and staff:

- Wash hands using soap and water for 20 seconds. Or, use hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water aren't available.
- Cover all coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hand.
- Stay home when feeling sick and don't return to school until symptom-free for 24 hours.
- Stay away from others who are sick.
- Limit personal contact, such as hugging or kissing, shaking hands and high-fives.

In collaboration with the Mayor's office and ISDH, I will continue to communicate with school administrators to offer any updated specific guidance and answer questions about COVID-19. Our priority is to safeguard your children. Also, if you or your child seeks medical care for flu-like symptoms including cough, fever and shortness of breath, please call your doctor or provider ahead of time before visiting. They can make arrangements that will minimize any potential exposure to other visitors of their facility.

Answers to frequently asked questions about COVID-19 are available at [MarionHealth.org](http://MarionHealth.org). Updated information is also available at [CDC.org/COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid-19).

Sincerely,



Virginia A. Caine, M.D.

Director and Chief Medical Officer

Marion County Public Health Department