



## **FAQs: Schools**

### **What are the symptoms that 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), can cause?**

Patients with 2019-nCoV have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. The 2019 novel coronavirus is concerning because it can cause lung infection (pneumonia).

### **How does the virus spread?**

It's too soon to know where exactly 2019-nCoV came from or how easily it spreads. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so.

### **What if a student is sick with fever and respiratory symptoms?**

At this time, residents of Illinois are at low risk of becoming infected with 2019-nCoV, unless they have recently traveled to Wuhan or have come in close contact with someone who was ill who recently traveled in that area. Even if an ill student has traveled to Wuhan, or has had contact with an ill person who has traveled there, respiratory illness may be due to a variety of other more common causes, including influenza and other common viruses.

### **One of our students is an exchange student from China. Can they return home?**

CDC recommends that travelers avoid non-essential travel to China. The [CDC's Travelers' Health webpage](#) should be consulted for current information.

### **What if we think a student may be infected with 2019-nCoV?**

If a student has recently traveled or been exposed to someone who traveled to or from Wuhan, China and is experiencing fever, cough or difficulty breathing, contact your local health department. Call ahead before taking the child to a doctor's office or emergency department to prevent any potential spread.

### **If we have a student who has been ill at school and is now a person under investigation (PUI), what do we tell parents?**

In general, continue to follow your usual procedures for notification of parents/guardians whose children are ill at school. The local health department will follow up with schools who need more specific guidance.

### **Should we be concerned about classroom pets or other animals and 2019-nCoV?**

CDC recommends that people traveling to China avoid animals both live and dead, but there is no reason to think that any animals or pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this new coronavirus.

### **How can our school prevent infections with 2019-nCoV and other respiratory diseases?**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. However, there are vaccines to prevent other common respiratory viruses such as seasonal influenza. Additional information on vaccines can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/index.html>.



The best way to prevent infection is to take precautions to avoid exposure to the virus, which are similar to the precautions you would take to avoid the flu. IDPH always recommends everyday 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

**Additional information on 2019-nCoV outbreak is frequently updated on the [CDC website](#).**