

News Release
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On Wednesday, March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic and subsequently Friday, March 13, the President declared a National Emergency. Most recently, we learned of community spread COVID-19 in Dallas County, Iowa. The Iowa Department of Public Health has now instructed us to practice social distancing. Each of these actions has dramatically increased the anxiety in people.

This is not the time to panic. We must remain calm so we can make good decisions. We have heard and seen people hoarding toilet paper, paper towels, hand sanitizer, disinfectants and now food. We have asked people to have enough supplies to maintain their homes for approximately two weeks. We must be sure there are still enough supplies available for low-income people. We need to be sure supplies are available for the elderly and those with health conditions who truly need to avoid crowds. Be mindful of our local businesses because they require the same cleaning products, toiletries, etc. as we do for their offices and stores so they can maintain a healthy shopping or dining environment for us.

Many of us will not get sick with COVID-19. Those who do may experience a fever, cough or shortness of breath. If you develop these symptoms, you are asked to call your healthcare provider to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19. If you have symptoms, you are asked to call your clinic or hospital before arriving so they can instruct you on safe entry. It is important to maintain the health and safety of all healthcare personnel.

It continues to be important for each of us to be responsible by covering our coughs and sneezes with our sleeve or elbow, to wash our hands frequently, and to stay home when we are sick. Due to the instructions on avoiding crowds and practicing social distancing, some businesses are making changes to the way they do business. If possible, conduct your business over the phone or online. This reduces your chances for possible exposure.

Winneshiek County currently does NOT have any cases of COVID-19. This may change quickly and so it is important that you seek information from trustworthy sources. Our local media has done a tremendous job of getting information to you just as quickly as we get it to them. To them, we thank you.

For more information on COVID-19, how to clean, travel guidelines, please call 211, or go to www.cdc.gov or www.idph.iowa.gov.