COVID-19 (Corona Virus) – Emergency Preparedness Plan

Human Resources

The health, safety and well-being of all children, youth and families we serve within our Child Welfare Services parameter as well as our staff is a high priority. This document serves to outline our process to promote prevention of this illness and also steps to follow if the COVID-19 virus infects a staff member at any of our sites.

The Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS) plan for children, youth and families served by LCFS is contained in the Child Welfare Services Emergency Preparedness Plan written to address COVID-19. This plan addresses safety and well-being for staff employed by LCFS across the State of Illinois.

LCFS Agency Wide

LCFS advises all LCFS employees to take preventive measures to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus and other communicable diseases as instructed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). To ensure employees are made aware of the symptoms of COVID-19, how the virus is transmitted and precautions that should be taken to avoid getting or spreading the virus, supervisors shall discuss the COVID-19 Human Resources Emergency Preparedness and Child Welfare Emergency Preparedness Plan with employees and post the attached COVID-19 Stopping the Spread of Germs poster, 2019 Coronavirus Fact Sheet, COVID Stay Home if You’re Sick poster and COVID-19 Wash Your Hands poster in appropriate locations within the office. This will be discussed monthly thereafter until the threat of COVID-19 subsides. Supervisors are to document this discussion in their meeting notes.

Prevention:

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness 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 diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **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 using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
  - Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
    - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
    - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Symptoms:
The following symptoms may appear *2-14 days after exposure.*
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath

Employees should stay home and call a doctor if they or anyone in their household:
  - Develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19.
  - Have traveled from an area with known widespread infection of COVID-19.

Transmission:

Person-to-person spread:
  - The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
  - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?
  - People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
  - Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Spread from contact with contaminated surfaces or objects:
It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

How easily the virus spreads:
How easily a virus spreads from person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious (spread easily), like measles, while other viruses do not spread as easily. Another factor is whether the spread is sustained, spreading continually without stopping.
The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community (“community spread”) in some affected geographic areas.

**Treatment:**

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

**Workplace Safety Issues**

**What to do if an employee has tested positive for Covid-19:**

If an employee tests positive for Covid-19 that employee and any employees who have worked closely with that employee, the supervisor(s) should send employee(s) home for a 14-day period of time to ensure the infection does not spread.

- Before the employee departs, the supervisor must have the employee(s) identify all individuals who worked in close proximity (three to six feet) with them in the previous 14 days to ensure you have a list of those who should be sent home.
- When sending the employees home, do not identify by name the infected employee or you could risk a violation of confidentiality laws.
- Contact a cleaning company to undertake a deep cleaning of your affected workspaces. If you work in a shared office building or area, you should inform building management so they can take whatever precautions they deem necessary.

**Supervisor notification procedures:**

- Supervisor notifies Regional Director via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- Regional Director notifies Associate VP Child Welfare AND HR via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- Associate VP Child Welfare notifies Chief Operating Officer via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- HR notifies Corporate Leadership via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email

**What to do if an employee has a suspected but unconfirmed case of Covid-19:**

Take the same precautions as noted above.

- Treat the situation as if the suspected case is a confirmed case for purposes of sending home potentially infected employees.
Communicate with your affected workers to let them know that the employee has not tested positive for the virus but has been exhibiting symptoms that lead you to believe a positive diagnosis is possible.

**Supervisor notification procedures:**
- Supervisor notifies Regional Director via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- Regional Director notifies Associate VP Child Welfare AND HR via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- Associate VP Child Welfare notifies Chief Operating Officer via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- HR notifies Corporate Leadership via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email

**What to do if an employee self-reported that they came into contact with someone who had a presumptive positive case of Covid-19:**

Take the same precautions as noted above.
- Treat the situation as if the suspected case is a confirmed case for purposes of sending home potentially infected employees.
- Communicate with your affected workers to let them know that employee is asymptomatic for the virus but you are acting out of an abundance of caution.

**Supervisor notification procedures:**
- Supervisor notifies Regional Director via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- Regional Director notifies Associate VP Child Welfare AND HR via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- Associate VP Child Welfare notifies Chief Operating Officer via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email
- HR notifies Corporate Leadership via phone call (social distancing) with follow-up in email

**HIPAA Issues**

**Can I disclose the name of an employee that may have or has Covid-19:**

No, the government recently sent a stern reminder to all employers that they must still comply with the protections contained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule during the Covid-19 coronavirus outbreak.

1) Identification of youth and staff who exhibit signs of coronavirus and/or similar symptoms:
Reporting

The following information will be reported to DCFS on a daily basis by the appointed Primary and Backup Reporters that are referenced below.

a. Total Number of Employees at the site
b. Number of Persons absent because of illness or quarantine.
c. Number of Persons absent with confirmed COVID-19.

LCFS – Northern Region
Primary Reporter  Arlene Mitchell  Arlene.Mitchell@illinois.gov
Back Up          Darrin Holt    Darrin.Holt@illinois.gov

LCFS – Central Region
Primary Reporter  Shelley Husemann  Shelley.Husemann@illinois.gov
Back Up          Darrin Holt    Darrin.Holt@illinois.gov

LCFS – Southern Region
Primary Reporter  Kris Martin   Kris.Martin@illinois.gov
Back Up          Darrin Holt    Darrin.Holt@illinois.gov
COVID-19 (Corona Virus) – Emergency Preparedness Plan

Child Welfare Services

The health, safety and well-being of all children, youth and families we serve within our Child Welfare Services parameter, as well as, our staff and staff of our partners is a high priority. This document serves to outline our process to promote prevention of this illness and also steps to follow if the COVID-19 virus infects a staff member or recipient of services in any of our programs, at any of our sites or at STAC our emergency shelter. This plan is an addendum to and supplements Executive Policy Transmittal 2010-04, Emergency Preparedness Plan.

The Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS) plan for staff and volunteers is contained in the Human Resources Emergency Preparedness Plan written to address COVID-19. This plan addresses safety and well-being for children, youth and families served by any of our Child Welfare Programs across the State of Illinois.

Foster Care Services / Intact Family Services:

LCFS advises all foster families and intact families take preventive measures to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus and other communicable diseases as instructed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Heath (IDPH). To ensure families are made aware of the symptoms of COVID-19, how the virus is transmitted and precautions that should be taken to avoid getting or spreading the virus, Child Welfare Specialists shall discuss the COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness Child Welfare Plan with and provide the attached COVID-19 Stopping the Spread of Germs poster, 2019 Coronavirus Fact Sheet and COVID Household Checklist at the next scheduled home visit. This will be discussed monthly thereafter until the threat of COVID-19 subsides. Child Welfare Specialists are to document this discussion in a contact note in SACWIS and discuss any barriers caregivers identify in achieving a successful plan with their supervisor.

Prevention:

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness 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 diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- 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 using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

**Symptoms:**

The following symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure.**

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Foster parents should call a doctor if they or any of the children in their home:

- Develop **symptoms, and have been in close contact** with a person known to have COVID-19.
- Have traveled from an area with known widespread infection of COVID-19.

**Transmission:**

Person-to-person spread:

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the eyes, mouth or nose of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
- Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
Spread from contact with contaminated surfaces or objects:

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

How easily the virus spreads:

How easily a virus spreads from person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious (spread easily), like measles, while other viruses do not spread as easily. Another factor is whether the spread is sustained, spreading continually without stopping.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community ("community spread") in some affected geographic areas.

Treatment:

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

Children / Youth at High Risk:

While COVID-19 infection appears to have most seriously affected older adults, it is anticipated that youth with chronic illnesses such as pulmonary, cardiac and neuromuscular disease, as well as those with compromised immune systems such as those with HIV, cancer or on immunosuppressive medications – will be more likely to develop life-threatening complications if infected with the coronavirus.

Caregivers to youth with these types of chronic conditions should be especially vigilant to follow infection control procedures including hand hygiene, frequent cleaning of shared objects and surfaces and avoidance of contact with others that are ill. These children should be fully vaccinated against all vaccine preventable diseases, unless contraindicated by their condition. In addition, all caregivers and close contacts should also be fully vaccinated to reduce the risk of spreading illness to medically compromised youth. Should a medically high-risk youth develop symptoms concerning for COVID-19, their physician should be contacted immediately.
What to do if you think a youth in care, a foster parent or parent may have the Coronavirus (Covid-19)?

If a child, youth, foster family member, relative caregiver or parent is suspected of having, or is diagnosed with the virus, immediately notify the child / families Child Welfare Specialist / LCFS. The agency will then follow the notification protocol outlined below.

What to do in case of a school or school district shut down:

LCFS is aware that child care may become a hardship for foster parents in the case of a school or school district shutdown. Foster parents should contact their assigned Child Welfare Specialist or Supervisor to discuss possible arrangements for daycare in this situation. When the Child Welfare Specialists discuss these Covid-19 concerns with foster parents at monthly visits, the subject of back up daycare in case of school closure should be discussed and a plan made.

Contact of Children, Youth and Families:

It is imperative that in-person contact with children, youth and families occurs at the normally prescribed frequencies, unless a child or household member in a family is quarantined or suspected / diagnosed as having COVID-19. As stated above the information regarding COVID-19 should be discussed at the next regularly scheduled visit and monthly thereafter until the threat subsides.

Parent / Child visits should continue to occur as scheduled. Staff may want to reconsider visits being held in public places and possibly move these visits to an office or home setting. If a child or parent is suspected / diagnosed as having COVID-19 other alternatives for contact between the parent(s) and child should be explored (supervised video chat / phone contact.)

What to do in case of a family being Quarantined or a General Quarantine:

If a child, youth of family is quarantined and therefore a Child Welfare Specialist is not able to visit the home in person, video chat / phone contact should be made with that family at least weekly during the quarantine.

If there is a general quarantine and LCFS staff must work from home, the Child Welfare Specialists must still make contact with the children and families on their case load by video chat or phone during the quarantine.

What to do if a child, youth or family LCFS serves is suspected of having or is diagnosed as having Covid-19?

The assigned CWS or Supervisor must contact and notify:
1. Agency Performance Team.
2. DCFS Nurse.
3. The DCFS Guardians Office.
4. Foster Home Licensing (if this is a foster home)
5. LCFS management (Director and Associate VP for Child Welfare).

The LCFS nurse shall be contacted as well for consultation, the Regional LCFS nurses are listed below:

Northern Region: Lakesia Perry lakesia_perry@lcfs.org 708-539-4485
Central Region: Debra Buck debra_buck@lcfs.org 217-544-4631 #115
Southern Region: Sarah (Jolene) Green sarah_green@lcfs.org 618-231-5797

Southern Thirty Adolescent Center (STAC):

All staff and residents at STAC should be made aware of the symptoms of COVID-19, how the virus is transmitted and precautions that should be taken to avoid getting or spreading the virus. The attached COVID-19 Stopping the Spread of Germs poster and these prevention guidelines shall be posted in all common areas at STAC and the Nurse will discuss with the residents on a regular basis. Symptoms and treatment should be discussed with all staff weekly at staff meetings. This should occur until the threat of COVID-19 subsides.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **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 using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

STAC shall maintain a supply of products needed such as Hand Sanitizer, Disinfectant Spray / Wipes, Household Cleaner and Facemasks (for ill residents).
• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe. – All frequently touched objects and surfaces shall be cleaned a minimum of 3 times per day.

**Symptoms, Transmission and Treatment** – See information above.

**What to do if a resident / youth of STAC has symptoms of or is diagnosed with Covid-19?**

Follow the CDC guidelines above under Symptoms and Treatment and contact a Doctor immediately. If a youth / resident is suspected of having, or is diagnosed with the virus, immediately notify the youth’s assigned Child Welfare Specialist, The Executive Director of STAC and the STAC nurse is to be contacted immediately to assist.

If any resident in STAC’s care is under evaluation for or has confirmed infection with COVID-19, the following steps should be followed:

• The youth should be immediately removed from the facility and evaluated by a healthcare professional.
• In consultation with state or local health department staff, the healthcare professional should assess whether it is appropriate for the youth to be cared for in their residential facility.
• Considerations for care at a residential facility include whether:
  o The patient is stable enough to receive care outside of a hospital.
  o Appropriate caregivers are available at the residential facility.
  o There is a separate bedroom where the patient can recover without sharing immediate space with others.
  o The facility has access to appropriate, recommended personal protective equipment (gloves, facemasks, gowns) and are capable of adhering to precautions recommended as part of home care or isolation (e.g., respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, hand hygiene).
  o If there are other residents who may be at increased risk of complications from COVID-19 (immunocompromised or high risk health conditions) healthcare providers may recommend the patient not return to the facility until well.
• The Executive Director of STAC or the STAC Nurse should contact and inform:
  o Agency Performance Team / Residential Monitoring
  o DCFS Nurse.
  o The DCFS Guardians Office.
  o DCFS Licensing
  o LCFS management (Associate VP for Child Welfare).
What to do in case of a youth being Quarantined at STAC, STAC being Quarantined, or a General Quarantine:

In any of these cases of quarantine, the Executive Director along with the STAC Nurse will work with local health officials to determine if quarantine at the facility is feasible and how the facility is to be staffed during such quarantine.

The executive director / designee will contact the following to inform that STAC is on quarantine which will limit STAC’s ability to accept new residents and limit DCFS and other agencies Child Welfare staff from visiting the facility during the quarantine.

1. DCFS – APT / Residential Monitoring
2. DCFS – Shelter Services Staff
3. DCFS – Licensing Staff
4. The assigned Child Welfare Specialist / Supervisor for all youth residing at STAC.

Community Outings / Recreational Activities:

All community outings and recreational activities held off site are being suspended until the threat of COVID-19 subsides.

Parent and Family Visits with Residents:

Visits between residents and parents and other family members must be coordinated by the assigned Child Welfare Agency from DCFS or Private Agency. All visits must be held in the community away from STAC. If the visits are to be supervised it is the responsibility of the Child Welfare Specialist to arrange for this supervision.

Visitors:

Only STAC, LCFS, DCFS or assigned staff from other POS agencies are allowed to be on site at STAC until the threat of COVID-19 subsides.
Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19
What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?


How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of
- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should
- 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.

What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don’t go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19
The Illinois Department of Public Health offers these guidelines to prepare your household for an outbreak of any infectious disease.

Please stay calm and prepare, seek out accurate information, and be kind, staying mindful of actions that could perpetuate any discrimination or stigma associated with COVID-19 or other infectious diseases.

**For additional information, please visit dph.illinois.gov**

### PREVENTION

- Use personal prevention protection methods at all times, whether at home, work, school, community events, or elsewhere:
  - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; dry hands with a clean towel or air dry hands.
  - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are unavailable.
  - Cover your mouth with a tissue or sleeve when sneezing or coughing.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Stay home when you are sick.
  - Avoid contact with people who are sick.

- Keep soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues on hand. Make them easily accessible at home and carry with you when possible.

- Keep household cleaning spray or wipes readily available. Always use according to label instructions.

- Clean “high-touch” surfaces daily. These include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.

- Don’t share personal items such as water bottles.

- Keep informed of recommendations of public health officials at www.cdc.gov, dph.illinois.gov, and your local health department web site.

**Note:** The use of face masks by people who are not sick is not recommended to protect against respiratory diseases. Face masks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent spread of the disease and by health care workers and others taking care of someone in a close setting.
PLANNING

- Keep an adequate supply of water, food, and pet food in your home. If you take prescription drugs, contact your health care provider, pharmacist, or insurance provider about keeping an emergency supply at home.

- Talk to caregivers about backup plans in the event a primary caregiver becomes ill.

- Meet with immediate family, relatives, and friends to discuss possible needs in the event of an infectious disease outbreak.

- Talk with neighbors about planning. Join neighborhood information webpages or emails.

- Plan ways to care for people at higher risk, including the very young, older people, people with chronic diseases, and people with compromised immune systems.

- Identify community organizations that may be able to help if you need information, health care services, support, or other resources.

- Create an emergency contact list of family members, friends, neighbors, health care providers, teachers, employers, and others.

- Keep a working thermometer and respiratory medications, like decongestants, expectorants, and analgesics (ibuprofen, acetaminophen) on hand.

- Choose a room and a bathroom (if possible) in your home that could be used to separate family members who become sick.

- Learn about the preparedness plans of your children’s childcare facilities, schools, and/or colleges.

- Plan for childcare should schools temporarily close.

- Ask about your employers’ preparedness plans, including sick-leave policies and telework options.

- Be prepared to cancel or postpone your attendance at large events, such as sporting events, conferences, and worship services, and to stay away from crowds.

- Be prepared for cancellation or disruptions of public transportation services.

- Be prepared to cancel non-essential travel plans.

- Get a flu shot this season if you haven’t already. It won’t protect against COVID-19, but it can help protect against flu or lessen symptoms if you get it, lessening the strain on health care facilities.