

HAZEN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparedness and Response

There is global concern and uncertainty due to the novel coronavirus disease (known as COVID-19). We understand there may be anxiety, and we care about our community. HPS continues to work with health officials to monitor and respond accordingly.

Here are some of the actions that each of us can take to ensure that we all stay as healthy as possible:

Stay informed: [ND Department of Health](#) and the [US Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)

Practice daily preventative care: [Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

Remain calm: While the progression of COVID-19 is still emerging, the CDC is reporting that for the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to the virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.

HOTLINE: For questions related to COVID-19, the public can call the NDDOH health hotline at 866-207-2880 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Is HPS aware of any students, faculty, or staff who have been exposed to COVID-19?

We know of no members of the HPS community who have been exposed to COVID-19.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the name for the disease caused by the recent spread of a Novel Coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a member of a large family of viruses. Many of them infect animals, but some coronaviruses from animals can evolve (change) into a new human coronavirus that can spread from person-to-person. This is what happened with the current novel coronavirus which causes the disease known as COVID-19. Diseases from coronaviruses in people typically cause mild to moderate illness, like the common cold. Some, like the SARS or MERS viruses, cause serious infections like pneumonia. The name of this new virus is SARS-CoV-2; the disease caused by this virus is known as COVID-19.

How does the virus spread?

- 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.

- 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 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](#).

How can I protect myself from acquiring the virus?

- 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.
- 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.
- Be aware that facemasks are not recommended for healthy individuals.

What is HPS doing to respond to COVID-19?

- Staying in regular communication with state health officials. Regularly monitoring national and state organizations, including the Center for Disease Control (CDC), North Dakota Department of Health, ND Department of Public Instruction, and Custer Health.
- Monitoring and reacting to changes in travel recommendations from official government agencies.
- Keeping our community informed by sharing best practices and expert guidance on public health infection control.
- Educating our students about best hygiene practices and encourage them to stay home if they are not feeling well.

Has HPS implemented any travel restrictions?

Not at this time but prior to returning to school after international travel, we advise you to follow the procedures in place from the North Dakota Department of Health for proper steps regarding any self-monitoring that could be required.

If you have personal travel plans, monitor the travel recommendations at travel.state.gov and cdc.gov for updated information.

How is HPS reducing the risk of exposure?

Our crisis management response team is responsible for preparing, monitoring, and reacting to the spread of this disease. The team is following the guidance of health officials to help in its efforts of preparation and response. We have provided information about the international COVID-19 outbreak and the steps being taking along with recommendations on how to minimize the risk of acquiring infection for this as well as the common cold and influenza. The CDC also provides guidance on this topic at these sites.

- [How COVID-19 Spreads](#)
- [COVID-19 Symptoms](#)
- [Prevention and Treatment](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick With COVID-19](#)
- [Other Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19](#)

Is HPS restricting visitors to schools?

Because US health officials still consider the risk of contracting COVID-19 in North Dakota to be low, there has been no reason to restrict visitor access to the schools.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illnesses with symptoms of:

- fever
- shortness of breath
- cough

The CDC believes that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. The illness can be more serious for individuals with a weakened immune system, the elderly, or those with underlying respiratory problems. It could result in bronchitis and pneumonia.

What if I am immunocompromised or have another chronic medical condition?

According to the CDC, it is possible that older adults and people with underlying chronic medical conditions such as immunocompromising conditions, chronic lung, heart or kidney disease, may be at risk for more severe outcomes related to COVID-19. It is recommended that if you have any underlying chronic medical condition, you consult with your doctor on ways to protect yourself.

It is currently the flu season in the US, and advice for those with chronic medical conditions is the same as always: Prevention is key! Wash your hands, avoid those who are coughing or sneezing, do not touch your face and clean frequently touched objects and surfaces. A mask is currently not recommended if you are immunocompromised, but you should always check with your doctor about what's best for your specific situation.

What to Do if You Are Sick

Anyone who has returned from an affected region within the past 14 days and is sick with fever and a cough, or difficulty breathing, should call their healthcare provider's office to inform them of recent travel and symptoms. Students with symptoms should call their primary healthcare provider.

What other resources are available to learn more about COVID-19?

There are a variety of regularly updated resources available to those who want to learn more about COVID-19:

- [US Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)

- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)
- [North Dakota Department of Health](#)
- [US Department of State](#)<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china>
- [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#)