

## **2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Announcement** **January 28, 2020 10:00 AM**

Eastern Illinois University continues to communicate and work closely with local, state, and national public health organizations regarding the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) concern. Health and Counseling Services staff are following updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and the Illinois Department of Public Health at <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus/faq>.

As of 7:00 p.m. Monday, January 27, the CDC reported 5 confirmed cases of the virus, with one being in Illinois. All five diagnosed cases reported having recently traveled to Wuhan City, China. At this time, the CDC anticipates additional cases of the virus to be highly likely connected with travel to the areas hit by the virus in China.

Eastern Illinois University has implemented planning and response to this public health concern. We worked to identify those individuals at potential risk. At this time, those who have been identified do not appear to be at an increased risk for having or transmitting 2019-nCoV.

With the start of the Spring 2020 semester on January 13<sup>th</sup>, the overwhelming majority of our new and returning students have been on campus for more than 14 days. It is currently thought that the incubation period is between 2 and 14 days, during which time an infected person is contagious. At this time, no student presenting to the medical clinic has been suspect of carrying the 2019-nCoV virus. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in Wuhan City or people who have traveled to Wuhan and, less so, other parts of China.

Based on other coronaviruses, 2019-nCoV is thought to be primarily spread via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. Beginning Friday, January 24, medical clinic staff began screening all students for 2109-nCoV who presented with fever and/or respiratory symptoms. All appropriate students will continue to be masked. The use of a surgical mask is a precautionary measure for multiple respiratory illnesses, including influenza and the 2019-nCoV coronavirus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest the following ways to protect yourself and others from catching or spreading the coronavirus infection and influenza

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/about/prevention.html>):

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick (i.e. within 6 feet).
- Stay home and avoid close contact with others if you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.

If Eastern Illinois University students believe they may be at risk for influenza or coronavirus infections, they should call the EIU Health and Counseling Services Medical Clinic at (217) 581-3013. Staff, faculty, and members of the Charleston and surrounding communities should contact their regular health care provider.

Health and Counseling Services staff will continue to monitor CDC and IDPH notices as well as communicate with the Coles County Health Department, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and members of the Coles County Health Coalition. We will continue to work closely with these organizations to ensure the public health of the campus and community.

Updates regarding 2019-nCoV will be available on-line at <https://www.eiu.edu/health/2019-nCoV.php>.

Sincerely,

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