
January 31, 2020

Dear Atlanta Public Schools and Partners:

The Fulton County Board of Health (FCBOH) is closely monitoring the outbreak of the 2019-nCoV (novel coronavirus) occurring in China and regularly coordinating with the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) regarding evolving guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). FCBOH will share information with healthcare providers and community partners as we receive it to ensure that everyone is aware of the most up-to-date guidance and situation.

- Currently, there are no confirmed cases of coronavirus anywhere in Georgia; however, the situation could change as additional patients are evaluated. Recommendations are being developed but much information is unknown. Clinicians/Health Departments/CDC are working together to determine criteria for testing.
- According to the CDC, the 2019n-CoV virus does seem to be able to spread from person-to-person although it's not clear how easily this happens. Limited person-to-person spread among close contacts has been detected with this virus in the United States.
- We understand that school staff, parents, and the community are concerned about the health and safety of our children; however, it is important to understand the risk of disease transmission and not impose unnecessary restrictions on persons who do not present an immediate health risk.
 - Students, faculty or staff whose family members have traveled from China in the last 14 days do not need to be excluded from school.
 - Students, faculty or staff who have traveled from China in the past 14 days and do have a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing should seek medical care, and should contact their healthcare provider and inform them of their travel history before visiting the healthcare facility.

Healthcare providers are asked to be alert and:

- **IDENTIFY** any patients who present with signs and symptoms of possible infectious diseases (fever, cough, and shortness of breath) and gather travel history information, including international and out-of-state.
- **ISOLATE** symptomatic persons who have symptoms of fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath. Patients should be managed in a manner that prevents disease spread in the healthcare setting:
<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/isolation-guidelines-H.pdf>
- **INFORM** public health. Report infectious diseases by calling DPH at 404-657-2588 (during business hours), or 1-866-PUB-HLTH after hours or weekends
<https://dph.georgia.gov/sites/dph.georgia.gov/files/GA%20Notifiable%20Disease%20Poster%207-2018.pdf>

Please also be aware that this year, seasonal influenza (the flu) has been severe and is still widespread in Georgia. The FCBOH recommends the following to avoid becoming ill with ANY respiratory virus:

- Wash 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 eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when sick, and keep children home when sick
- Cough or sneeze into tissues, then put tissues in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Please contact the Fulton County Board of Health, 404-613-1205 if you have any questions regarding or concerns regarding infectious diseases, or visit our website, at FultonCountyBOH.org.

In Health,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Elizabeth Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

S. Elizabeth Ford, M.D., M.B.A
Interim District Health Director
Fulton County Board of Health
10 Park Place, SE, Atlanta, GA 30303