



# Coronavirus, COVID-19

## Partner Agency Response

### March 12, 2020

Central California Food Bank is carefully monitoring developments regarding the global spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

It is important to note that we hear a lot from the media – some of the information is accurate, some is outdated, and some information is wrong. We want to make sure you know the facts. As of 03/12/2020 there are 1,323 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States, and 3 cases in the Central Valley (CCFB service area), where there are 26 million cases of flu in the United States this season. Although the numbers are low, healthcare professionals are working to learn about the epidemiology, prevention, and best treatment practices for COVID-19.

To ensure you have the most accurate information, please review the main FAQs provided by the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) that we have provided below.

While we are in prevention phase, CCFB is asking employees, volunteers, and agency partners to help reduce the risk of transmission by following the risk reduction guidelines provided herein. CCFB is taking the health of our employees, volunteers, and partner agencies seriously. Please carefully read the following pre-emptive measures and provide these guidelines to all on-site volunteers at your food pantry.

Early Thursday morning, Gov. Newsom called for the cancellation or suspension of all public gatherings over 250 individuals. Because most of our distributions do not meet this threshold, and are held outdoors, CCFB is not currently recommending its partner agencies to suspend food pantry services. However, if you feel you need to make any changes to your food distribution schedule, please inform your Agency Relations Coordinator and develop a plan to communicate any changes to your distribution to your clients. Additional precautionary measures for distribution methods can be found on pages 2 and 3.

Please contact your Agency Relations Coordinator with concerns or questions.

#### RISK REDUCTION GUIDELINES For Partner Agency Staff and Volunteers:

- 1) Please engage in regular and frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This remains one of the best methodologies to reduce the spread of viruses. If you do not have access to soap and water, alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain 60%-95% alcohol can be used as an alternative, but soap and water should be your first choice. It is especially important to

clean hands after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.

- 2) We know that winter brings lots of colds, etc. If you are coughing and sneezing, please cover your nose and mouth with a tissue and throw tissues away in trash baskets.
- 3) If you are experiencing symptoms (detailed symptoms below), seek medical attention. **If you have a fever and are ill, you must refrain from volunteering.**
- 4) **Do not come to volunteer, or allow any agency pantry volunteers to participated if you/they are actively ill or are not fever-free for 24 hours.** If ill, take time off, rest and get healthy.
- 5) The CDC is currently not recommending any precautions if you travel domestically. We are actively monitoring the CDC's recommendations and will keep you informed when/if this changes. For volunteers who are traveling internationally (for vacations) to or through a country that has been designated with a Level 2 travel notice, we ask that you refrain from volunteering for 14 days upon your return if your position permits. Currently countries with Alert Level 2 travel notice include China, Iran, Italy, Japan, and South Korea. Countries that are identified as Watch Level 1 notices include Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, and Taiwan.
- 6) Start thinking about your home readiness. Make sure you have a thermometer and over-the-counter flu medicine pre-purchased. Make sure you have plenty of food and water. If there is a widespread outbreak in the United States, you may not want to be out in public, and there may be some suspension of or alteration in commercial food delivery services.

## Food Pantry Services – Precautionary Measures

The following measures are preventative, they are encouraged but not required by CCFB at this time.

- 1) Create an alternate delivery system such as a drive through distribution where clients pull up in their cars and volunteers deliver a prepackaged bag to their car.
- 2) Prepackage bags and pass out food at the door.
- 3) Pre-bag produce so people are not touching produce in self-select models.
- 4) Request that clients wear gloves, or require them to wash their hands / use sanitizer before selecting their food products.
- 5) Tell sick clients to stay home and ask a friend or neighbor to pick up their groceries.
- 6) Extend hours or open an additional day so clients are spread out and there isn't congestion in the space or in the line.
- 7) Limit the number of people in a food pantry space, and encourage individuals to stand 6 feet apart-do not overcrowd.
- 8) Encourage frequent cleaning and disinfecting of counters, handles on carts (if using grocery carts), door knobs / handles, pens, computers stations, etc.
- 9) Temporarily postpone any food demos or cooking classes and refrain from offering food samples.
- 10) Alter your client intake process. Such as allowing food staff and volunteers to fill out any forms or paperwork on behalf of their clients. Clients must be able to view and verbally verify the information documented is correct. Staff and volunteers cannot sign on behalf of a client.

Oasis client intake reporting is still required, before choosing to implement any changes, you should contact your Agency Relations Coordinator.

# Center for Disease Control and Prevention FAQs

## Q: What are the symptoms and complications that COVID-19 can cause?

A: Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever<sup>1</sup>, cough, and difficulty breathing. Read about [COVID-19 Symptoms](#). For confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases, reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

CDC believes at this time that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. This is based on what has been seen previously as the incubation period of [MERS-CoV](#) viruses.

CDC does not recommend travelers wear facemasks to protect themselves from COVID-19. You may choose to wear a mask, but it is more important that you take these steps.

### **We recommend that everyone follow everyday prevention practices:**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- 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 product.
- 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 that contains 60%-95% alcohol.

CDC provides recommendations on postponing or canceling travel. These are called travel notices and are based on assessment of the potential health risks involved with traveling to a certain area. A list of destinations with travel notices is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

**Warning Level 3:** CDC recommends travelers avoid all nonessential travel to destinations with level 3 travel notices because of the risk of getting COVID-19.

**Alert Level 2:** Because COVID-19 can be more serious in older adults and people with chronic medical conditions, people in these groups should talk to a healthcare provider and consider postponing travel to destinations with level 2 travel notices.

**Watch Level 1:** CDC does not recommend canceling or postponing travel to destinations with level 1 travel notices because the risk of COVID-19 is thought to be low. If you travel, take the following routine precautions:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean your hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%–95% alcohol. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.
  - It is especially important to clean hands after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.

### Q: How does the virus causing Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19), spread?

A: This virus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The first infections were linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now spreading from person-to-person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. Currently, it's unclear how easily or sustainably this virus is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the [spread of newly emerged coronaviruses](#).

### Q: Can someone who has had COVID-19 spread the illness to others?

A: The virus that causes COVID-19 is [spreading from person-to-person](#). Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

How long someone is actively sick can vary so the decision on when to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with doctors, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials and involves considering specifics of each situation including disease severity, illness signs and symptoms, and results of laboratory testing for that patient.

Current [CDC guidance for when it is OK to release someone from isolation](#) is made on a case-by-case basis and includes meeting all of the following requirements:

- The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The patient is no longer showing symptoms, including cough.
- The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Someone who has been released from isolation is not considered to pose a risk of infection to others.

### Q: Why might someone blame or avoid individuals and groups (create stigma) because of COVID-19?

A: People in the U.S. may be worried or anxious about friends and relatives who are living in or visiting areas where COVID-19 is spreading. Some people are worried about the disease. Fear and anxiety can

lead to social stigma, for example, toward Chinese or other Asian Americans or people who were in quarantine.

Stigma is discrimination against an identifiable group of people, a place, or a nation. Stigma is associated with a lack of knowledge about how COVID-19 spreads, a need to blame someone, fears about disease and death, and gossip that spreads rumors and myths.

Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear or anger towards ordinary people instead of the disease that is causing the problem.

**Q: Does CDC recommend the use of facemask in the community to prevent COVID-19?**

A: CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms.

This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for [health workers](#) and other [people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings](#) (at home or in a health care facility).

**Q: Will warm weather stop the outbreak of COVID-19?**

A: It is not yet known whether weather and temperature impact the spread of COVID-19. Some other viruses, like the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months but that does not mean it is impossible to become sick with these viruses during other months. At this time, it is not known whether the spread of COVID-19 will decrease when weather becomes warmer. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing.  
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