



March 9, 2020

Dear Tribal Chair,

An outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, has resulted in an outbreak of respiratory illness in the United States with a few confirmed COVID-19 cases in Nevada. We would like to assure you that the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) is keeping track of this situation and forwarding updated information as received to the Tribal Health Directors through our Tribal Liaison. DPBH is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and our local health authorities. We believe the risk to our community is still low at this time.

Updated information from the CDC on coronavirus in the United States can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and the most up to date information about coronavirus in Nevada can be found at <http://dpbh.nv.gov/coronavirus/>.

Based on the current information, health officials are recommending local communities take the same steps to protect against coronavirus as taken to prevent the spread of everyday illnesses like the common cold or the flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with no less than 60% alcohol.
- 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 mouth and nose with a tissue and then discard. If a tissue is not available use the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The 2019 novel coronavirus is believed to be spread through the droplets of an infected persons cough or sneeze, much as in the way the flu and other respiratory viruses are spread. Symptoms can be fever, cough, or difficulty breathing. At this time, persons considered at risk are those with travel history to a highly infected location, those over the age of 60, especially people with serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or those in close contact with persons infected with novel coronavirus.

While a new type of illness can be scary, we can protect our communities by using simple everyday actions that protect people from other types of respiratory viruses. Our public health professionals are working carefully to avoid the spread in our communities and encourage these simple and effective habits of frequent handwashing, covering every cough or sneeze, and cleaning surfaces frequently. This is important not just to help prevent the spread of coronavirus, but to help prevent the spread of other infections that can lead to illness.

Please contact us if you have any questions or need assistance on COVID-19.