

# County of Santa Clara

## Public Health Department

Public Health Administration  
976 Lenzen Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
San José, CA 95126  
408.792.5040



February 3, 2020

Dear Administrators:

The County of Santa Clara Public Health Department has received confirmation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of two cases of novel coronavirus. The first case was confirmed on Friday January 31, and the second on Sunday February 2. Both cases had traveled to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before they became ill and have been self-isolating at home. The cases are not related to each other. We are reaching out to anyone who may have been in close contact with either case to determine whether they were exposed to the novel coronavirus. All exposed close contacts are being quarantined at home and monitored for symptoms.

To date, we do not have any evidence to suggest that that novel coronavirus is circulating in Santa Clara County or the Bay Area, and public health departments are working hard to keep it that way. As we have been communicating, the situation is evolving rapidly, and we anticipate this pace of change to continue.

One change is that a recent published report has documented asymptomatic transmission of the virus. Asymptomatic transmission is when a person who does not yet have symptoms nevertheless spreads infections to others. How often this occurs is not known, but if asymptomatic transmission does occur, it would likely occur in the day or two before the infected individual starts showing symptoms.

This evidence of asymptomatic transmission is in part why the federal government has made the decision to formally quarantine all travelers returning to the US from Hubei province (where Wuhan city is located), China, and to ask people returning from other parts of China to voluntarily self-quarantine for 14 days since their last day in China.

Because of the concern of asymptomatic transmission, especially from travelers who returned from Hubei province, we are now asking schools, students and student health centers to do the following:

1. If you have students or staff who have been in Hubei province within the last 14 days, please ask them to immediately return home and call the public health department during regular business hours (408-885-3980, M-F 8-5) so that we can provide guidance on monitoring themselves carefully for symptoms for the 14 days since their last day in China.
2. Family members of travelers who visited Hubei province within the last 14 days do not need to quarantine at home, but they should monitor for symptoms and avoid attending large gatherings.
3. Students or staff who have been to other areas of mainland China (this excludes Hong Kong) within the last 14 days should also not come to school. They should monitor themselves for symptoms for the 14 days since their last day in China. Per federal guidance being released today, they should also call the public health department during regular business hours (408-885-3980, M-F 8-5) for further guidance.

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Cindy Chavez, Dave Cortese, Susan Ellenberg, S. Joseph Simitian  
County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

In any case, if they become symptomatic within 14 days since their last day in China with fever (including chills or night sweats), cough, or shortness of breath, they should call a healthcare provider and let them know their travel history and symptoms.

**For Student Housing:**

In case you have a student who develops a respiratory illness within 14 days of returning from China and lives in group housing, please plan and identify housing options to isolate ill students.

**Please do not require** a physician's clearance to return to work or school for students, employees, and other staff who have returned from traveling and are not sick after they complete their 14-day quarantine. We are receiving communications that this is happening, which is impacting the medical system and preventing doctors from seeing patients who are ill.

**We encourage all students and staff to take common-sense precautions to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases, including common illnesses like colds and flu:**

- Encourage all students and staff to stay home when they are sick.
- Those who have a fever at school should go home immediately and stay there for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
- Separate sick students and staff from others in a separate place, until they can be picked up to go home.
- Promote hand hygiene through education and availability of soap, hand sanitizers, and tissues.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Encourage proper cough etiquette—cough or sneeze into a tissue, sleeve, or arm. Do not use your hands.
- Perform routine surface cleaning, particularly for high-touch surfaces.
- Consider not attending or hosting large gatherings. This is where cold, flu, and other respiratory viruses are often spread.

The Public Health Department has a webpage dedicated to novel coronavirus in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese at [sccphd.org/coronavirus](http://sccphd.org/coronavirus). We will keep the webpage updated as we know more. We will monitor the developing situation and inform you of any additional public health recommendations. We deeply appreciate your partnership in communicating this information to students and families. We also greatly appreciate everyone's efforts in staying informed, calm, and thoughtful as we all do our part to help keep our communities safe.

All the best,



Sara H. Cody, MD, Health Officer and Director  
County of Santa Clara Public Health Department

**Sample Email to Students and Staff:**

Subject: Education about Novel Coronavirus

Dear Students and Staff:

The County of Santa Clara Public Health Department has received confirmation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of two cases of novel coronavirus. One case was confirmed on Friday January 31, and the second on Sunday February 2. Both cases had traveled to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before they became ill and have been self-isolating at home. The cases are not related to each other. Public Health is reaching out to anyone who may have been in close contact with either case to determine whether they were exposed to the novel coronavirus. All exposed close contacts are being quarantined at home and monitored for symptoms.

To date, there is no evidence to suggest that that novel coronavirus is circulating in Santa Clara County or the Bay Area, and public health departments are working hard to keep it that way. As we have been communicating, the situation is evolving rapidly, and we anticipate this pace of change to continue.

**What do you need to do?**

**If in the last two weeks** you have traveled to mainland China, watch for symptoms. Symptoms include fever or feeling feverish or chills, and cough or shortness of breath. If you experience these symptoms, self-isolate and immediately call your college student health services at **(insert your number)**.

**We encourage all students and staff to take common-sense precautions to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases, including common illnesses like colds and flu:**

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- Those who have a fever at school should go home immediately and stay there for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
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We also greatly appreciate everyone's efforts in staying informed, calm and thoughtful as we all do our part to help keep our communities safe.