Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?
Persons in Isolation have shown signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and are either awaiting test results or have tested positive. Persons who have been quarantined are believed to have come in close contact with the virus but are currently showing no signs or symptoms.

Quarantine Questions:

Do I need to quarantine?
You should home-quarantine for at least 14 days after return from travel from the following locations:

- Travel to one of the following states on or after March 15: California, New York, Washington state and Florida.
- Travel to one of the following states on or after March 23: Illinois, New Jersey.
- Travel to Louisiana or the entire state of Colorado after March 27.
- Visited one of the following counties in Colorado on or after March 8: Eagle Co., Summit Co., Pitkin Co., Gunnison Co. o These counties include the following large or notable locations (not an all-inclusive list): Vail, Avon, Breckenridge, Keystone, Copper Mountain, Aspen, Snowmass Village, Basalt, Crested Butte, Kebler Pass
- Traveled on a cruise ship or river boat cruise on or after March 15, 2020
- Traveled international on or after March 15, 2020
- Received notice that you were a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 patient.
- Were previously told by a public health agency that you should self-quarantine
- Please note there are exceptions for those in a critical infrastructure sector.

How do I home quarantine?
Home quarantine means staying home and not attending work or any other location where you might come within 6 feet of another individual. The 14-day quarantine applies to those who are asymptomatic for the entire period. Individuals in home quarantine who develop symptoms of COVID-19 (which include a fever of at least 100.4 degrees F, cough and shortness of breath) should call your healthcare provider and let them know of your symptoms before going in to be evaluated.

I am part of a critical infrastructure workforce. Am I required to quarantine?
KDHE recommends everyone should quarantine but recognizes that those who work in critical infrastructure sectors are needed to continue operations during this pandemic. Public health, hospitals, clinics, pharmaceutical and food supply, along with others are defined as critical infrastructure sectors by the Department of Homeland Security (https://www.cisa.gov/critical-infrastructure-sectors).

I traveled in an airport in one of the states that has a travel quarantine, but didn't leave the airport. Do I need to quarantine?
No. If your travel was only to the airport (for example, a layover), you do not need to follow the quarantine orders. If you left the airport for any period of time, you would be subject to the 14-day quarantine.

I'm supposed to travel somewhere soon. Should I cancel my trip?

We cannot tell you whether or not you should cancel your trip. The CDC recommends that all people postpone or cancel non-essential travel and avoid prolonged exposure to large groups of people. You should be aware that individuals who travel outside the United States, or to certain states with the U.S., may be expected to home quarantine for at least 14 days after return to Kansas. Anyone who chooses to travel at this time may face delays or quarantines when trying to get back into the state and may not be able to return to their daily life immediately upon return.

My school/employer is requiring me to be tested before they will let me come back to work. How can I get tested?

Asymptomatic people cannot be tested for COVID-19. Those with a travel history may be recommended to home-isolate for 14 days after returning to Kansas (see above). If your employer will not let you come back to work, you can contact your county health department, who can provide you with a letter to give to your employer indicating that you are not eligible for testing since you are not symptomatic.

I drive a semi-truck and traveled through one of the states that requires quarantine. Do I need to quarantine?

If you simply drove through a state with minimal stops and no extended period of stay you do not need to fulfill the quarantine period. It is always a good idea to monitor your symptoms just in case.

A family member traveled to one of the quarantine-required areas, but we live together. Do I need to quarantine too?

Only the individuals who have traveled are required to fulfill the quarantine period. Household members who live with them should practice social distancing from those quarantined individuals but are not quarantined themselves.

Why isn't this other state on your list of quarantine locations?

KDHE is constantly evaluating whether or not other locations need to be added to the list of travel-based quarantines. A variety of factors are used to determine this list, but is based on CDC guidance of community transmission.

I recently traveled to Johnson County. Do I need to quarantine?

The state does not have a quarantine order for visitors to any county in Kansas. We are aware that some counties have taken the extra step to instruct residents to quarantine if they have visited certain counties in the state. Questions about this quarantine order should be directed to that county health department.

Stay Home Order Questions:

What is a "stay home" order?

A stay home order is an order that residents stay home except for tasks and traveled deemed "essential." In general, these "essential" activities include things like:

- Obtaining medical care or medicine
- Necessary services and supplies for maintaining a household, like food, pet food, and supplies
- Outdoor activities that do not involve groups, like walking, running and hiking
- Caring for family members and vulnerable populations in other households
- Any activity related to an essential organization. These organizations include things like:
  - Hospitals, pharmacies and other healthcare facilities
  - Childcare facilities
  - Government operations
  - Food, beverage, to-go restaurant orders
  - Critical infrastructure construction and projects

- o Financial institutions
- o Grocery stores
- o Gas stations & auto repairs
- o Hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, exterminators and other household maintenance
- o Laundry providers
- o Hotels and motels
- o Essential travel

Where can I view the Stay at Home Order?
https://governor.kansas.gov/governor-kelly-issues-temporary-statewide-stayhome-order-in-ongoing-effort-to-combat-covid-19/.

Am I/my business/my employer considered an essential business?
Please visit https://governor.kansas.gov/keff/.

Testing and Test Kit Questions:

Who can be tested for COVID-19?
Due to widespread shortages of testing supplies, the Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratory (KHEL) will prioritize specimens from individuals who meet one of the following criteria:

- Healthcare workers and first responders with COVID-19 symptoms;
- Potential clusters of unknown respiratory illness, with priority given to long-term care and healthcare facilities;
- Hospitalized patients with no alternative diagnosis;
- Individuals over the age of 60 with COVID-19 symptoms, with priority given to people who reside in a nursing home, long-term care facility, or other congregate setting, and
- Individuals with underlying health conditions that would be treated differently with a COVID-19 infection.

Commercial reference labs may have different requirements for testing. You will need to contact the company directly to find out those requirements.

What does it cost for a COVID-19 test?
KDHE does not charge for testing. However, providers may assess collection fees and private labs may assess charges. You should check with your provider for information concerning any tests.

What are the private reference labs that can-xzdo testing?
We are aware that the following are testing in Kansas: Quest, Lab Corp, Mayo and Viacorp Eurofins.

I heard that Johnson County will only test people who are hospitalized. Is that true?
Yes. Due to a short supply of testing materials, only those with very serious symptoms of COVID-19 will be tested in Johnson County. Individuals who have mild or moderate symptoms not requiring hospitalization should stay home, isolate themselves, and stay there until 72 hours after the fever disappears and symptoms subside, or 7 days after the onset of symptoms, whichever is longer.

It has been X amount of days. Why hasn't my sample been tested yet?
The time it takes to complete a sample can depend on a number of factors. The test itself takes between 4 – 6 hours to complete, but there are pre-testing procedures that must take place. Additionally, the method of transport of the sample to the lab will also determine how long it takes to complete the test. Patients awaiting test results should stay in contact with the healthcare provider who took the sample regarding the results. KDHE cannot release results to anyone via email or over the phone.

How can I be tested?
Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 who believe they need to be tested should contact their healthcare provider or doctor to be evaluated. KDHE cannot provide medical evaluation or provide direct testing; KDHE will only accept test requests from healthcare providers or local health departments. The COVID-19 test is not effective on asymptomatic individuals and cannot be used as a screening tool. Only those experiencing COVID-19 symptoms will be tested.

I was recently tested and wondered if you could give me my results?
If you were recently tested for COVID-19 and are waiting for your results, you should contact your healthcare provider. The test results will be sent to them and they will give them to you. KDHE cannot release the results to you over the phone due to HIPAA restrictions. The test can take up to 3 days to get results back. Your provider can log into EpiTrax to view the results faster than waiting for notification from KDHE.

Childcare Questions:

I'm having trouble finding child care and I need to go back to work. What are my options?
You can contact Child Care Aware of Kansas at 1-877-678-2548 if you need help finding licensed child care options. Additionally, the following child care arrangements do not require a license from KDHE:
- Children receiving care in their own home
- Children cared for by relatives
- Anyone (friend, teacher, relative) caring for 2 children for less than 20 hours per week

Should I close my daycare? What are you recommending for daycares?
KDHE is currently recommending that child care operations continue operating at this time. However, local health officers may choose to make more stringent guidelines for local communities, up to and including mandatory closures. Childcare providers should be in close contact with their county health department to stay up to date with the latest guidance. Child care facilities may voluntarily choose to close for a period of time.

KDHE Child Care Licensing will not issue blanket exceptions to increase capacity or eliminate other health or safety requirements. Child care facilities may not operate at alternate locations without a temporary license. Existing child care facilities must continue to operate within the terms of their license and comply with requirements.

More information on daycare guidance can be found here:
http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/Interim_Guidance_for_Child_Care_Facilities_Licensed_by_KDHE_03_19_2020.pdf

Employee/Employer/Business Questions:

I'm worried that my business isn't making an employee quarantine/My job has an unsafe work environment/My coworker is sick and won't leave.
County health officers have the authority to enforce quarantine orders in their county. If you are concerned bout work environment, you should contact your county health department, who can put you in touch with your county health officer.

I am required to go into people's homes for work. What should I do?
The KDHE website has guidance for people who visit homes regularly for a living. It includes how to assess the situation before going into the home and reassessing once in the home. You can find that guidance here: http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/Guidance_for_Workers_Who_Go_Into_Homes.pdf

I have to be quarantined for 14 days and I don't have enough leave at work to cover it. Is the state going to pay my wages since I have to be quarantined?
If you are not working or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, you may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. The UI program was established to protect those who are unemployed due to no fault of their own. It is designed to be a short-term assistance program and may be able to help those whose employment has been adversely impacted by COVID-19. Contact the Kansas Department of Labor in your area with questions or to get more information at www.dol.ks.gov/covid19response.

I need help filing for unemployment. Can you help me?
All questions regarding unemployment need to be directed to the Kansas Department of Labor.

General Questions and Guidance:

Are there two strains of the COVID-19 virus?
Yes. The strains are identified as Type L and Type S. Type L is a more aggressive strain of the virus and accounts for 70% of cases, and appears to be more prevalent in early outbreaks. Type S is older and less aggressive, accounting for 30% of cases and becomes more prevalent as an outbreak progresses. These strains are still being analyzed by the CDC and World Health Organization and require further study.

Do my symptoms match COVID-19, or is it something else?
You can use the chart located here when people talk about their symptoms:
http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/Cold_vs._Flu_vs._Allergies_vs._Coron avirus.pdf

Where can I get a big picture view of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kansas? The KDHE website has a map that is regularly updated that gives a variety of data regarding COVID-19 in Kansas. You can find it here: https://public.tableau.com/profile/kdhe.epidemiology#!/vizhome/ COVID-19Data_15851817634470/KSCOVID-19CaseData

Where can I find a mask? The stores are all sold out. I want to wear one to protect myself when I go out in public.
The CDC does not recommend that healthy individuals wear masks to prevent infection of COVID-19. In general, when people think about wearing a mask for protection, they are thinking about thin surgical masks. These masks do not filter out the particles that cause COVID-19, as the particles are very small, so they do not protect against the virus. Additionally, research has shown that people who wear masks tend to touch their face more often than people who are not wearing a mask, which increases the risk of infection.

N95 masks are not recommended to be worn except by healthcare workers who have been fit-tested and trained to properly don and doff (put on and take off) the mask. Fit-testing ensures that the masks properly filter out the particles that they are intended to, and proper training on removing the masks ensures that the virus doesn't spread to other people and surfaces. Since the general public is not fit-tested or trained to use N95 masks, their use is also not recommended.

How does novel coronavirus spread?
Health experts are still learning the details about how this new coronavirus spreads. Other coronaviruses spread from an infected person after they start to show symptoms to others through:
- the air by coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes
- in rare cases, contact with feces

What are the symptoms of 2019-nCoV?

Patients with COVID-19 have reported mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of: fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

What are severe complications from this virus?
In severe cases, infection can cause bronchitis, pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. From what we know so far, illness seems to be more severe in older individuals and in people with other health conditions.

How can I help protect myself and my family?
This virus is not widely spreading in the United States right now, but the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include:
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- To keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should:
    - 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.
- Currently, there are no vaccines available to prevent novel coronavirus infections.

Is it safe to open packages that have arrived from China?
Yes. Coronaviruses in general only live for a few hours on surfaces. Packages coming from China have likely spent a very long time getting to the US so it is unlikely that any viruses have survived. Coronaviruses can be killed by regular disinfection.

Is there a vaccine?
There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Is there a treatment?
There are no medications specifically approved for this novel coronavirus. Most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own by drinking plenty of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medications. However, some people have developed pneumonia and require medical care or hospitalization.

What is a close contact?
A close contact is a person who has been within about 6 feet of a person with confirmed novel coronavirus infection for a prolonged period of time (more than 10 minutes) or has had direct contact with body fluids from a person with confirmed novel coronavirus infection.

What is a person under investigation (PUI)?
A person under investigation (PUI) is an ill person with possible novel coronavirus infection. We consider a PUI to be someone who meets one of these criteria. If a person is considered a PUI, KDHE will coordinate with the local health department and/or health care provider to collect samples for testing.

What is a confirmed case?
A confirmed case is defined as a person who has tested positive for 2019 novel coronavirus. Currently, testing can be done at the Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories for Kansas residents. If the result

is positive at the Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories, then confirmation testing will need to be done at CDC.

Should I be concerned about pets or other animals and 2019- nCoV?
While this virus seems to have started from an animal source, it is now spreading from person-to-person. CDC recommends that people traveling to China avoid animals both live and dead, but there is no reason to think that any animals or pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this new coronavirus. To date, CDC has not received any reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19. At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals including pets can be infected with or spread COVID-19. However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals.