

HEALTH ALERT



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For Immediate Release:

January 26, 2020

Public Health Confirms First Case of 2019 Novel Coronavirus in Los Angeles County

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) has confirmed the first case of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Los Angeles County. The infected person presented themselves for care once they noticed that they were not feeling well and is currently receiving medical treatment. There is no immediate threat to the general public, no special precautions are required, and people should not be excluded from activities based on their race, country of origin, or recent travel if they do not have symptoms of respiratory illness. Los Angeles residents, students, workers, and visitors should continue to engage in their regular activities and practice good public health hygiene as this is the height of flu season across the County. Public Health is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal, state and local agencies to monitor this novel coronavirus that has emerged from Wuhan, China over the past few weeks. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.

Additional information about the case:

- This person is a returning traveler from Wuhan City, China.
- The person has been confirmed to have this new strain of coronavirus (2019-nCoV) by the CDC.
- The person is currently receiving appropriate care at a local hospital. In order to protect patient privacy/confidentiality, Public Health is not releasing the location.
- Public Health officials are working to identify persons who may have had close personal contact with this individual, including any friends, family members or health care professionals, to monitor them for signs and symptoms of illness and to take measures to prevent spread of the virus.

This is the only cases of 2019 novel coronavirus in LA County. There are currently 4 cases in the United States.

Public Health issued multiple health advisories beginning in early January informing local healthcare providers in LA County of the current situation. Public Health will continue to provide updates and work with local healthcare providers as the situation evolves.

“LA County is well prepared to manage cases and suspected cases of novel coronavirus. We are working closely with our federal, state and local partners to provide healthcare providers and the public with accurate information about actions we are taking to reduce the spread of novel coronavirus and to care for those who are ill. As with other respiratory illnesses, there are steps that everyone can take to reduce the risk of getting sick from circulating viruses, including coronavirus. This includes remaining home when ill, washing hands with soap and water frequently, and getting vaccinated against flu,” said Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd, Director of Public Health. “Because novel coronavirus is new, we are learning more each day about transmission

patterns and incubation periods. We will keep everyone informed as more information becomes available. The risk of transmission of coronavirus in LA County remains low,” she added.

“Public Health, in collaboration with local healthcare, state, and federal agencies, including the California Department of Public Health and CDC, proactively trains for these scenarios and has protocols in place to protect both local communities and healthcare workers,” said Muntu Davis, MD, MPH, Health Officer, Los Angeles County. “We have a strong public health and health care system committed to protecting our communities.”

Health care professionals are reminded to use appropriate infection control practices at all times. Public Health will continue to provide updated information about the diagnosis and management of cases of novel coronavirus to health care providers and all hospitals in the County and relevant partners to both identify and contain any future cases.

A multi-agency press conference is happening today at 11:00AM at the Public Health Administration Building, where members of the media will be able to ask questions. For more information about 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), visit our website at <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov> and the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

WHEN: Sunday, January 26, 2020
Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

WHERE: 313 N. Figueroa Ave
Los Angeles, CA. 90012

WHO: Barbara Ferrer, PHD, MPH, MEd, Director
Los Angeles, County Department of Public Health

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH, Health Officer
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Sharon Balter, MD, Director of Acute Communicable Disease Control
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Chinese and Spanish spokespeople available for interviews

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The Department of Public Health is committed to promoting health equity and ensuring optimal health and well-being for all 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health comprises nearly 4,500 employees and has an annual budget of \$1.2 billion. To learn more about the LA County Department of Public Health and the work they do, visit PublicHealth.LACounty.gov, and follow Public Health on social media at twitter.com/LAPublicHealth, facebook.com/LAPublicHealth, and youtube.com/LAPublicHealth.

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*Los Angeles County Department of Public Health works to protect health,
prevent disease, and promote health and well-being.*