



Monitoring and Response to COVID-19

McCormick County School District

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel (*new*) Coronavirus. The disease it causes has been named “**Coronavirus Disease 2019**” (*COVID-19*). Please remember, **the risk to residents of South Carolina remains low** at this time.

Stopping the spread of the virus through everyday practices is the best way to keep people healthy. Symptoms may range from mild to severe and are similar to a cold or influenza. They include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Who is at risk?

Of the current known cases, children appear to be the least at risk. Those most at risk are the elderly, immunocompromised, or adults with certain pre-existing conditions. More information on **COVID-19**, such as prevention, treatment, and how it is spread, is available on the website maintained by the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**: cdc.gov/coronavirus/

Is COVID-19 active in South Carolina?

No. Currently, (*March 4, 2020*) there are no known cases in South Carolina, North Carolina, or Tennessee. The **CDC** keeps current a map tracking confirmed **COVID-19** cases in the U.S. on its website: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html

What is MCSMD is doing to prepare for possible COVID-19 cases?

According to guidance given by the **CDC**, in communities like ours, where **COVID-19** is **NOT** active, the most important thing for school districts to do now is plan and prepare.

MCSMD considers steps that would be taken to control the outbreak, in concert with governmental agencies such as the **DHEC** and the **CDC**, and provide continuity of service to students.

How will MCSMD respond if there is a local outbreak?

The stepped response found in the **MCSMD Emergency Plan** is meant to correspond to the seriousness of a local outbreak. Educational responses may range from:

- increased communications about keeping symptomatic students home;
- to coordinated student handwashing and increased cleaning of hard surfaces such as doorknobs and desks;
- to cancellation of extra-curricular events;
- up to and including school closure.

Should a case of coronavirus be confirmed by **DHEC** among our students or staff, MCSMD will immediately notify all parents and provide recommendations and next steps. In any situation, such as a community-wide quarantine that required the closure of all schools for more than just a few days, MCSMD would make every effort to continue providing educational programming in an age-appropriate manner. Doing so is important to maintain learning and to provide students with a sense of normalcy and a positive focus during a stressful situation.

What is MCSMD doing now in response to the spread of Coronavirus?

In addition to monitoring both the spread of **COVID-19** and any recommendations by the **CDC**, here are the steps MCSMD is taking to prepare for this possible emergency. Please remember, **the risk to residents of South Carolina remains low** at this time.

- Reviewing our Emergency Operating Plans
- Monitoring field trip destinations to ensure students are not traveling to or through cities experiencing an outbreak (*as defined by the CDC*)
- Reminding students and staff about respiratory etiquette and handwashing
- Reminding parents to keep students at home who have symptoms of a respiratory illness
- Developing information-sharing systems specific to this potential outbreak with other organizations and governmental agencies
- Monitoring absenteeism and notifying local health officials about large increases in student or staff absences
- Strengthening procedures to isolate and send home students and staff who are sick at school as soon as symptoms present
- Enhancing existing environmental cleaning (*MCSMD uses products proven effective in killing coronaviruses*)
- Creating communications plans specific to the potential outbreak for use with the school community (*like this one*)

COVID-19

If you have recently traveled to an area that has COVID-19 transmission and are experiencing symptoms mentioned below, call ahead to your health care provider before seeking medical care.



What is it?

- A new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, China
- It has the potential to cause severe illness and pneumonia in some people

How is it spread?



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

Who is at risk?



Travelers to and from certain areas are at increased risk as are the close contacts of those who are ill



Current risk to the general public is low



See travel guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html

What are the symptoms?

Illnesses can be mild, or in some cases be severe enough to require hospitalization. Symptoms of this respiratory illness primarily include:



Fever



Cough



Shortness of Breath

How is it prevented?

Similar to prevention of other respiratory illnesses, including the flu:

- **Wash hands** often
- **Avoid touching** eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- **Avoid contact** with sick people
- **Stay home** while you are sick; avoid others
- **Cover mouth/nose** with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing

