



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

March 2, 2020

TO: ALTSA All-Staff

FROM: Bill Moss, Assistant Secretary
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

SUBJECT: Information concerning COVID-19, or the 2019 novel coronavirus

As most of you are aware from this weekend's local and national news reports, we have confirmed cases of coronavirus, or COVID-19, at a nursing homes in Washington, Life Care Center of Kirkland. At this point we have two confirmed cases at this nursing home (one resident and one staff). Multiple staff and residents at the facility currently have respiratory symptoms (not confirmed to be coronavirus). The facility management is monitoring and working with the local, state and federal public health care teams.

ALTSA has been working with the DSHS emergency management team to keep all of us safe. We have been monitoring the progress of the outbreak around the clock through the weekend and to date ongoing. Changes are fluid. We will continue to communicate with you via email, our emergency line (1-866-374-7367), and [Duty Station Status Report](#).

Please use extra precautions during work in the office and field to keep yourself and your family safe. Please read the CDC's flyer for what you need to know about coronavirus at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>.

Per the CDC, there are simple preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. You should:

- 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.

If you are ill, we ask you to contact your health care professional. 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.

New information and questions are coming in daily. My priority is to keep AL TSA informed through updates that are accurate, relevant, and timely. As part of the key work of AL TSA, many of you come in contact with clients and care providers in different settings, including hospitals and skilled nursing facilities.

Initial communication around preventative precautions, similar to the ones in this message, have been sent out to our licensed providers through RCS as well as to contracted home care agencies. A notice was also posted for IPs on the IPOne.org website.

We are in the process of developing additional guidance to respond to questions we have received around how to address impacts to operations during this public health event.

The wellness and safety of you and your families is of primary concern, and critical to our ability to stay grounded in our work. The most important thing is that we all need to be safe to help others and carry out mission-essential functions. If you have questions while in the field, please contact your supervisor.

Thank you for all you do to help people in their time of need.