Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Select Language

Updated March 18, 2020



The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) continue to closely monitor the outbreak of respiratory illnesses caused by the novel (new) coronavirus COVID-19, and are working to limit the spread of cases nationally and in Mississippi. MSDH is actively working with doctors and hospitals on responding safely and effectively to COVID-19.

Healthcare Professionals

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- Mississippi positive cases: 34
  as of March 18, 2020
- Individuals tested by the MSDH Public Health Laboratory: 513
  as of March 18, 2020

Note: Testing for COVID-19 is not performed at county health departments. Please contact your physician or a healthcare provider.

March 11, 2020: Submission of samples to the Mississippi Public Health Laboratory no longer requires prior approval from MSDH.

March 10, 2020: This updated guidance from the CDC provides updated PPE recommendations for the care of patients with known or suspected COVID-19.
Details »

Mississippi Coronavirus Hotline (8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday): 877-978-6453

Overview and General Information

COVID-19 is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, China that causes flu-like illness ranging from mild to severe, with symptoms of fever, coughing, fatigue and difficulty breathing. Like the flu, COVID-19 is thought to spread person-to-person by close contact (within 6 feet) and by coughing or sneezing. Other possible routes of transmission may include touching surfaces contaminated by the virus.

- Questions and Answers for Mississippians About COVID-19
- Questions and Answers about Coronavirus COVID-19 CDC
- Full COVID-19 information from the CDC

COVID-19 in Mississippi and the U.S.

Cases of COVID-19 continue to be identified in U.S. states, and in many areas person-to-person transmission has occurred. This is a rapidly changing situation that is continually being monitored by the CDC and MSDH as more cases in the U.S. are expected.

Mississippians are advised to take health precautions to prevent the possible transmission of disease, and stay in touch for the latest information on the situation in Mississippi.

Mississippi Cases

New cases reported Wednesday, March 18, 2020

County	Cases
Bolivar	2
Coahoma	2
DeSoto	1
Hancock	1
Harrison	3
Madison	1
Pearl River	2
Perry	1
Total	13

All Mississippi cases to date

County	Cases
Bolivar	2
Coahoma	2
Copiah	2
DeSoto	1
Forrest	3

County	Cases
Hancock	2
Harrison	4
Hinds	6
Jackson	1
Leflore	4
Madison	1
Monroe	1
Pearl River	4
Perry	1
Total	34

Mississippi COVID-19 Case Map

U.S. and World Cases

- Coronavirus COVID-19 cases in the United States (CDC)
- COVID-19 Global Case Map (Johns Hopkins University)

COVID-19 Testing

The MSDH Public Health Laboratory is testing samples submitted by Mississippi physicians and healthcare providers around the state in cases where COVID-19 is determined to be a risk. Anyone with flu-like symptoms of fever, severe cough or severe chest pains – especially those who are older or in poor health – should call their doctor or healthcare provider for instructions on safely being examined. Healthcare providers can assess your health history and symptoms, and perform testing for COVID-19 as needed.

▸ Video: A tour through COVID-19 testing at the MSDH Public Health Lab

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Prevention and Preparedness

For Individuals

Protect others:

- Stay home if you are sick, and avoid close contact with anyone who is ill.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes. When possible, cough, sneeze or blow your nose into a tissue, and throw the tissue away.
- If you are sick, especially with shortness of breath, severe cough, fever or severe chest pain, call a doctor or healthcare provider for instructions on being safely examined.

Protect yourself away from home

- Avoid social gatherings where 10 people or more would come into close contact.
- Practice social distancing advice below when your are in a group of people.
- Avoid unnecessary (non-urgent) air, bus or train travel.
- Limit visitation to older relatives or friends (especially in nursing or care homes).

Practice protective hygiene

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, especially after coughing or sneezing, blowing your nose, and using the bathroom. Effective handwashing takes about 20 seconds, and includes cleaning under fingernails, between fingers, and washing the back of hands as well as the front. More proper handwashing tips »
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched often.
- Stay in good overall health by eating right and staying active. If you are living with diabetes, heart disease or other condition, keep in touch with your doctor and stay current with your treatment.
- During or before flu season, get a flu shot. Flu vaccination can prevent the flu or make it less severe, and decrease your chance of hospitalization and death. It also keeps you healthier and better able to fight off infections.

▸ More about preventing the spread of disease

For Older Adults and People at High Risk

People at risk for serious illness from COVID-19 are adults 65 and over and those with a chronic illness such as heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease. These people should take simple precautions at all times to limit their exposure to others who may be ill:

- Avoid all social gatherings.
- Keep more space (6 feet if possible) between you and others as you go through the day.
- Avoid crowds. When you do go out in public, keep away from others who are sick and limit close contact.
- Wash your hands often, especially after being in public places.

If COVID-19 begins to spread locally, you should stay home as much as possible. Having a supply of important medications and basic supplies can help.

▸ Full recommendations from the CDC for people at high risk

For Long-Term Care Facilities

- MSDH recommends discontinuing group social activities.
- Consider restricting visitation until further notice.
- Post signs that discourage all nonessential visitation and discourage ill visitors from entering the facility.
- Visitors should only visit their family members and should not have contact with other residents since they could spread the virus.
- Visitors should cover their coughs and be educated on the importance of hand hygiene.
- Keep all ill visitors away from the facility for at least 48 hours after symptoms resolve.
- Consider limiting visitation by children (especially during community wide outbreaks) and the elderly or those with underlying medical problems that place them at risk.
- Postpone all groups (like school groups or church groups) from visiting facility — this goes along with discontinuing all group activities.
- Make sure the facility has plenty of hand washing products and that visitors have access to them.

Social Gatherings and Events

Everyone attending essential events and gatherings should take extra precautions at this time, including:

- Maintain social distancing as much as practical. A separation of 6 feet from another person is considered effective for infection control.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly soap and water, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Look for sanitizers with at least 60 percent alcohol..
- If ill, do not attend any public event and call your physician or healthcare provider if needed.
- Schools throughout the state should consider cancelling any large gatherings, including assembly and social events.

▸ CDC recommendation and resources for community events

Event organizers: MSDH recommends that communities and organizations contact us at 877-978-6453 to determine whether cancelation is warranted, or appropriate preventive steps for your event.

In the Community

Schools, businesses, events and other places that people gather should take steps to prevent or limit the spread of viral illness.

Schools

The Mississippi Department of Education has issued COVID-19 guidelines for Mississippi schools:

- Department of Education COVID-19 Guidelines MDE
- CDC Guidance for Schools and Childcare Administrators

Child care facilities

Unlike older adults, young children are at low risk from COVID-19. The Mississippi State Department of Health does not recommend closing child care facilities at this time.

Child care faculties choosing to remain open should be mindful of hygiene and disinfection practices specific to schools and daycares:

- CDC Guidance for Schools and Childcare Administrators
- CDC Guidance for School and Childcare Settings

Businesses and workplaces

Workplaces where more than 10 people work in close contact should be mindful of providing strong hygiene support and facilitating social distancing for the safety of its employees and patrons should they choose to remain open.

- CDC Guidance for health protection in workplaces

Other community guidance

The CDC offers preparation and prevention guidance for:

- Businesses and employers
- Colleges and universities
- Community and faith-based organizations
- Event organizers
- First responders
- Healthcare facilities
- Homeless shelters
- Households
- Schools and childcare administrators
- School and childcare settings

- Flyer: Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission (CDC) PDF

The CDC has guidance for cleaning rooms and buildings visited by those who have a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

- Cleaning and disinfection recommendations for schools, offices and other non-healthcare facilities CDC

For Healthcare Professionals

- Complete guidances and information for healthcare professionals

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What MSDH Is Doing

The Mississippi State Department of Health is aggressively responding to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation. With other state agencies, it has activated emergency operations in order to prepare for possible person-to-person transmission of

COVID-19 in Mississippi.

Other steps that MSDH is taking include:

- Surveillance: Increasing surveillance (monitoring) activities to identify cases of COVID-19 as quickly as possible and to limit person-to-person transmission.
- Testing: Making COVID-19 testing available for healthcare providers through the MSDH Public Health Laboratory.
- Planning: Working directly with hospitals and healthcare providers across the state to plan for possible cases of COVID-19, preparing them to identify and safely treat cases.
- Readiness: Assessing statewide hospital capacities, ensuring the capacity of the MSDH Public Health Laboratory for COVID-19 testing, and informing all Mississippi healthcare providers about procedures for identifying and testing for coronavirus cases.
- Information: Providing guidance to business, education and other entities on how to respond to the possible spread of COVID-19 in the community.

Coronavirus Hotline

The Mississippi State Department of Health is now operating a hotline for convenient answers to questions about COVID-19 by phone.

Mississippi Coronavirus Hotline (8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday): 877-978-6453

Information for Travelers

Travelers Overseas: The CDC has issued Travel Warnings recommending the postponement or avoidance to countries where COVID-19 is being actively transmitted. The U.S. Department of State has also issued a Level 4: Do Not Travel advisory to China.

- CDC Guidance for Travelers
- State Department Travel Advisories

Travelers returning to the U.S.: Steps to protect health are being taken nationally for travelers returning from parts of the world affected by COVID-19, including health screenings on entry into the U.S..

- Full information for returning travelers CDC

Resources

- Handouts: Basic disease prevention and handwashing flyers for printing

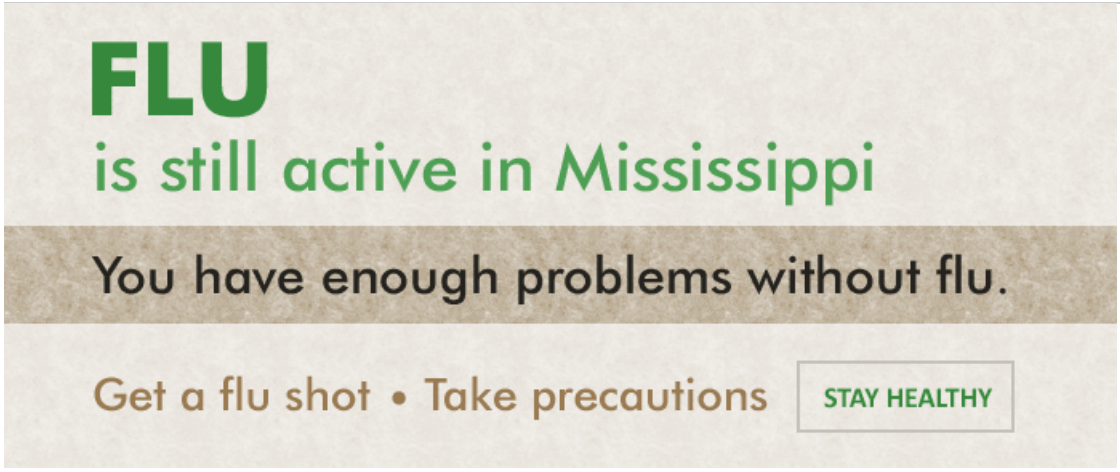
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