June 5, 2020

Dear Tribal Member:

Please see the attached information regarding the Corona Virus (COVID-19). After reviewing the information, if you have general questions about the virus (COVID-19), you can visit www.health.ri.gov/covid, write to RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov, or call 401-222-8022. This is the COVID-19 Hotline that RIDOH has available to the public. (After hours people are being directed to call 211.) For more information on how to “Get Your Home Ready - FAQs for Individuals and Families” visit the CDC website at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/faq.html

While we are working on our re-opening plan, in an effort to protect our tribal community, the Narragansett Indian Health Center (NIHC) continues to restrict all non-essential and non-medical visits to the health center including children under 18. Children under 18 should not accompany parents or other adults to the health center unless the child(ren) is a patient scheduled to be seen by a medical provider. Patient care will continue to be provided at the NIHC.

At this time, NIHC requires all patients to call before coming to the health center. If you need an appointment at NIHC, please call 401.364.1263 ext. 107 to schedule. You will be asked a series of screening questions such as: do you have a fever of 100 degrees or any respiratory symptoms such as a cough and/or shortness of breath. If you answer yes to the screening questions, you will be asked to wait in your car in our parking lot and a nurse will come out to triage your symptoms. You will be asked to wear a mask. Please understand these steps are consistent with recommendations from the CDC and RIDOH to help restrict the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

We understand that you have concerns about COVID-19 and we will continue to keep you updated. The above precautions shall remain in place at the NIHC, until further notice and NIHC will provide additional updates.

Sincerely,

The NIHC Team
What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronaviruses are a type of virus (germ) that can cause cold-like symptoms and sometimes serious problems with lungs and breathing. COVID-19 is a novel (new) coronavirus.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Mild to severe respiratory illness, or problems with lungs and breathing. Symptoms include:

- Fever, cough, and shortness of breath

How does COVID-19 spread?

Person to person by coughing, sneezing, or personal contact like touching or shaking hands. Someone with mild symptoms may spread the disease without knowing they are sick.

Who is most at risk?

Anyone can get COVID-19. Those at risk of severe illness include:

- Elders and adults over 60 years of age,
- People with heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes.

How can I protect myself and my family?

Stay at home. “Social distancing” is recommended. This means keeping your family at home and away from others who may be sick.

- If you must go out, try to stay 6 feet away from others.
- Avoid gatherings with other people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Do not shake hands, hug, or touch others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.

If someone gets sick, what can they do?

- If someone thinks they have been around someone with COVID-19 and they get a fever and symptoms such as cough or trouble breathing, they should call their healthcare provider or local Indian Health Service unit for medical advice.
- In an emergency, call 911.
- People who are mildly sick with COVID-19 do not need to see a healthcare provider and are able to recover at home.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands.
- Stay home and away from others for 14 days to avoid getting others sick.
- Caregivers should keep sick family members away from others in the home and clean and disinfect surfaces and items that are touched often, like door handles, sink handles, toilets, remote controls, etc.

Is there a vaccine or treatment?

There is no vaccine. The best way to reduce the risk of getting sick with COVID-19 is to practice social distancing and healthy habits like washing hands regularly.

There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but medical care can help relieve symptoms. If you are sick, call your healthcare provider for instructions.

For more information: CDC.gov/coronavirus

Effective March 26, 2020
Source: CDC
People of all ages with heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or cancer are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, the new virus also known as coronavirus. In addition, older adults are at greater risk because as they get older, it’s harder for them to stay well.

Avoiding getting sick with COVID-19 is especially important for elders and people at higher risk.

How to keep Elders and others safe
(see other side of this page)

**Stay at home.** “Social distancing” is recommended. This means keeping your family at home and away from others as much as possible.

- Try to stay 6 feet away from others, especially when outside of the home.
- Avoid gatherings with other people. This may include family too. Gatherings should be less than 10 people.
- When leaving the home to get food and supplies, send only one person to do the shopping.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Do not shake hands, hug, or touch others outside of your home.
- Sleep 7 to 9 hours a night to stay strong to fight sickness.
- Drink plenty of water and eat fruits and vegetables.
- Get outside for fresh air and exercise.
- Limit news and social media. Sometimes too much information causes anxiety and added stress.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and items that are touched often, like door handles, sink handles, toilets, remote controls, phones, light switches, etc.

**Activities to do with elders while staying safe**

- Going outside for walking, gardening, hiking, stretching.
- Brain exercises and games like word searches, Sudoku, crossword puzzles.
- Relaxation, including breathing, meditation, praying.
- Reading books and magazines.
- Phone and video calls with family and friends.
- Listening to music.
- Finding ways to laugh.

**What else should caregivers do?**

The best protection for the people being cared for is for their caregivers to stay healthy. Caregivers should follow the guidelines to be safe and make sure others in the home are too, especially children and others who spend time with the elder.

Watch for symptoms (fever, cough, trouble breathing) in everyone in the home. Separate anyone who is sick from others.

Practice self-care. If can be hard for caregivers to take care of themselves as well as others, but self-care is important.

- Relax, take deep breaths, stretch, or pray.
- Take part in sacred practices.
- Do activities you enjoy.
- Talk with loved ones and friends, share feelings and experiences.
- Try to stay hopeful and thinking positively. Write down things you are grateful for or that are going well.

**If you have concerns, get help**

Call your healthcare provider or local Indian Health Service unit with any concerns.

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if prescriptions can be filled for a greater number of days to reduce how often trips are needed to the pharmacy.

For more information: CDC.gov/coronavirus

Effective March 25, 2020
Source: CDC
Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

For more info: [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
Many people with coronavirus (COVID-19) or symptoms of COVID-19 like cold symptoms, cough, fever, or shortness of breath, are told to stay home to recover. If someone in your home is recovering, take steps to prevent spreading COVID-19 to others inside and outside the home.

Help with recovery
Help the sick person follow their healthcare provider’s instructions for medications and care.
If they are getting sicker, call their healthcare provider or local Indian Health Service unit for medical advice. If they have a medical emergency, call 911.

Keep the sick person away from others as much as possible
- Stay home and avoid having visitors.
- Separate the sick person from others in the home. If possible, have the sick person use a separate bedroom and bathroom that no one else uses.
- Prepare meals for them and have them eat in their own area.
- Avoid sharing items like dishes, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the sick person uses the items, they should be handled with gloves and washed with hot water. Wash hands after removing gloves.
- Keep pets away. While the animals won’t get sick, they may carry it to other people on their fur, collar, etc.
- Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window.
- The sick person should wear a facemask around other people. If disposable ones are not available, have them wear a bandana or something else to cover their nose and mouth. When the mask or bandana gets moist or wet, it needs to be changed. The bandana can be washed and reused.
- Others can still talk, sing, play, etc. with the sick person from a safe distance (at least 6 feet) or by phone or video.

Healthy practices for everyone
Everyone in the home should wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
They should also avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.

Clean and disinfect
- Cleaning removes dirt and germs with soap. Disinfecting kills germs with chemicals.
- Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces, such as counters, tables, doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, toilets, phones, etc. multiple times each day.
- For disinfecting, use common household disinfectants like Lysol or Clorox, diluted household bleach solutions (4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol.
- Gloves should be worn for cleaning, but they should only be used for cleaning surfaces for COVID-19. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- If a separate bathroom is not available for only the sick person to use, the bathroom should be disinfected after each use by a sick person.
- Wear gloves when you touch or have contact with the sick person’s body fluids, such as blood, saliva, mucus, or urine. Wash hands immediately afterwards.

Wash laundry thoroughly
- Immediately remove and wash clothes, towels, or bedding that have body fluids on them.
- Wear gloves while handling dirty items and keep them away from your body. If gloves are not available, wash hands immediately after putting items in the wash.
- Use a normal laundry detergent according to instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers.

For more information:
CDC.gov/coronavirus
How to Prevent the Spread of Germs Like Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the Home

- Separate the sick person from others.
- Avoid sharing household items.
- Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces multiple times each day.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wear gloves for cleaning. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a bandana or facemask over nose and mouth.
- Wash laundry thoroughly.