



For Immediate Release

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East Hartford's COVID-19 Preparation

(March 6, 2020) East Hartford, CT— On March 3, 2020, Town leadership from various departments including the East Hartford Police Department, East Hartford Fire Department, and the East Hartford Public Schools participated in a strategic planning session led by the Health Department as part of a community wide preparedness effort to continue to actively monitor COVID-19, commonly known as the Coronavirus disease.

Coronavirus disease 2019, which originated in Wuhan, China and spread internationally, is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who live in or who have recently traveled to an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Current lists of these areas are provided by the CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html; www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html.

The Town of East Hartford has been in frequent communication with the State Department of Public Health and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) since late January and is taking precaution to protect all residents, businesses, visitors and employees.

Though the risk of becoming ill with the virus in Connecticut is low, it is important to minimize the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Like influenza, COVID-19, is spread by fluid droplets that are released when an individual sick with the virus sneezes or coughs. The Health Department would like to remind residents about the importance of using general infection prevention measures:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are unavailable, you should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (including railings, doorknobs, countertops, etc.) using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay at home if you become ill.
- Follow the CDC's recommendations for using a facemask:
 - It is **not** recommended that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should only be used by people who show symptoms of a respiratory illness (including COVID-19) to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.

If you have questions about any of the information in this message, please contact the East Hartford Health Department at 860-291-7324.

The Town of East Hartford will be providing updates on the virus and our preparation efforts as it relates to our community on town website at www.easthartfordct.gov.

For the most up-to-date information about COVID-19, please see the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) and [CT Department of Public Health \(DPH\)](https://www.ct.gov/dph) websites or dial 2-1-1.