The Skokie Health Department is monitoring the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. Current information suggests that person-to-person spread will continue to occur and more cases will be identified in the United States, including the Chicago-land area. We are working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and other area health departments to develop response plans. Our goal is to reduce the impact of COVID-19 by collaborating with community partners to reduce transmission and respond as the situation unfolds.

**Recommended strategies for employers:**

- Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath) should stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4°F) for at least 24 hours.

- Employees who appear to be ill upon arrival to work, or who become sick during the day, should be sent home immediately.

- Emphasize personal protection in the workplace:
  - Encourage employees to cover coughs and sneezes with tissue, and wash hands often with soap and water.
  - Hand sanitizers should contain 60-95% alcohol at work stations, counters and in conference rooms.

- Consider permitting employees to stay home to care for a sick family member.

**Perform routine environmental cleaning:**

- Frequently clean all regularly touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas.

- No additional disinfection beyond regular cleaning is recommended at this time.

- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

**Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps:**

- Check the [CDC’s Traveler’s Health Notices](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/) for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which travel is planned.

**Prepare for possible increased numbers of employee absences:**

- Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.

For more information on how workplace settings can prepare for an infectious disease outbreak, see [CDC's Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](https://www.cdc.gov/). 

For more information and updates on Skokie’s COVID-19 response, please visit [www.skokie.org/coronavirus](http://www.skokie.org/coronavirus) or call the Skokie Health Department at 847/933-8252.