



Southeastern Idaho Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Tracy McCulloch
(208)239-5250

What is Community Spread and What You Can do to Be Prepared

COVID-19 is a serious health threat, and the situation is evolving daily. The risk varies between communities, but given the increasing number of cases in southeast Idaho, the risk for community spread is increasing.

Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in a specific area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. “Community spread is often a trigger to begin implementing new strategies tailored to local circumstances that slow the spread of COVID-19,” said Maggie Mann, Southeastern Idaho Public Health District Director. Some areas are reporting transmission of the virus due to travel or exposure to a known case of someone with the virus. Other areas of Idaho such as Blaine and Ada counties are reporting community spread.

A COVID-19 outbreak could potentially last for a long time in your community. Depending on the severity of the outbreak, your community may recommend community actions designed to help keep people healthy, reduce exposure to COVID-19, and slow the spread of the disease.

Creating a household plan can help protect your health and the health of those you care about in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community. Here is what you can do to prepare your family in case the virus spreads in your community:

- Talk with the people who need to be included in your family plan
- Plan ways to care for those who might be at greater risk for serious complications.
- Know where to find local information on COVID-19 cases such as coronavirus.idaho.gov or siphidaho.org
- Following the Governor’s Stay-Home Order
- Continue practicing everyday preventative actions such as:
 - Limiting close contact with others as much as possible (about 6 feet)
 - Avoiding people who are sick
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Stay home if you are sick
 - Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
 - Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Bannock County • 1901 Alvin Ricken Dr. • Pocatello, Idaho 83201 • Phone 208.233.9080 • Fax 208.234.7169

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Every day, in every way, empowering & improving health!

- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs using a disinfecting solution.
- Establish ways to communicate with others (family, friends, co-workers and neighbors)
- Plan for potential changes in your workplace. Discuss sick-leave policies and telework options
- Identify aid organizations in your community

“As COVID-19, continues to spread around Idaho we are urging our communities to actively prepare for the potential spread of coronavirus. We know that the spread of COVID-19 will occur. However, everyone can do their part to slow the rate at which this virus is spread,”
said Mann.

For more information, visit www.siphidaho.org or cdc.gov; call Southeastern Idaho Public Health’s hotline at 208.234.5875; or watch SIPH’s Facebook Live segment every Monday – Friday at 11 a.m.

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