



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Cole County
Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 20, 2020

COLE COUNTY, MO – At this time, approximately 70% of the positive COVID-19 cases in Cole County can be traced back to travel and/or contact to a known case. Cole County Health Department has observed clusters of positive cases at office buildings, correctional facilities, long term care facilities, related to school activities, large gatherings and household exposure to a known case. Most cases are experiencing mild symptoms and recovering within the quarantine timeframe.

We are seeing increased interaction at social gatherings where social distancing is not easily maintained. We are urging everyone to continue to take responsibility for their own health and to protect others. Please reconsider hosting or attending social gatherings that bring together more than 25 people that are outside of your normal interactions. These activities are a high risk activity for transmission of the virus. Please adhere to physical distancing requirements and limit contact with others outside of your household especially in social settings.

In addition to limiting social interactions, the Cole County Health Department is still strongly recommending that everyone take precautionary measures to reduce the spread of the virus.

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Adhere to all social distancing requirements and do not be within six (6) feet of others outside of your household for more than fifteen (15) minutes.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue, elbow or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Wear a face covering when close contact cannot be avoided and social distancing cannot be maintained.

It is recommended that face coverings be worn when in contact with someone outside of your household within six (6) feet for more than 15 minutes. Cloth face coverings offer some degree of protection against large infectious droplets, such as mucus or saliva, when speaking, sneezing, or coughing. This particularly protects those around the person wearing the face covering and helps people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.

Cloth face coverings are not considered an acceptable substitute for social distancing. Interactions within six (6) feet of a positive case for more than fifteen (15) minutes will be considered exposure regardless if either person is wearing a cloth face covering.

Cloth face coverings should be washed after each use. Cloth face coverings should be replaced frequently as consistent washing will degrade the fabric and decrease the effectiveness.

It is important to always remove face coverings correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used face covering. For more information, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

As this situation changes, the Cole County Health Department will be sending out additional information. If you have questions, please consult a factual source, such as <http://www.CDC.gov> or www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus. The community can also call the Cole County Health Department at (573) 636-2181, or MDHSS 24-hour hotline (877) 435-8411 to address questions or concerns related to COVID-19.
