



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Cortland County Health Department

# CORTLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
60 CENTRAL AVENUE  
CORTLAND, NEW YORK 13045-2746  
(607) 753-5036  
FAX: (607) 753-5209  
<http://www.cortland-co.org/432/Health-Department>

Catherine Feuerherm  
*Public Health Director*  
Ngozi Mezu-Patel, MD  
*Medical Advisor*

## Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

All employers need to consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and lower the impact in their workplace.

- Employers need to update their medical absentee policies to reflect concerns and guidance related to COVID-19.
- For information regarding Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employer Expanded Family and Medical Leave Requirements visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employer-paid-leave>
- For common Questions and Answers regarding the Families First Coronavirus Response Act please visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>
- Persons who are tested must home quarantine until they obtain their test results. We recommend that this directive be a part of the medical providers discharged instructions, which can be presented to the employer as proof of testing.
- If test results are positive, the individual will be isolated under a local public health order.
- Public health orders are issued to all persons who test positive and to their contacts who have been in close proximity.
- Persons under these public health orders are instructed to share that order with their employer as proof of medical absence.
- Employers should **NOT** require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work. Healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner.

### Reduce Transmission among Employees

#### Actively encourage sick employees to stay home:

- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home.

#### Educate employees about how they can reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Place posters that encourage hand hygiene to help stop the spread at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen. [NYSDOH Handwashing Poster](#)
- For those who are unable to work from home, please refer to [Employee taking steps to prevention the spread](#) document and distribute to employees.

## Maintain Healthy Business Operations

**Assess your essential functions** and the reliance that others and the community have on your services or products.

- Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize existing customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).

### **Establish policies and practices for social distancing.**

Social distancing means avoiding large gatherings and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others.

Strategies that business could use include:

- Implementing flexible worksites (e.g., telework)
- Implementing flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts)
- Increasing physical space between employees at the worksite
- Increasing physical space between employees and customers (e.g., drive through, partitions)
- Implementing flexible meeting and travel options (e.g., postpone non-essential meetings or events)
- Downsizing operations
- Delivering services remotely (e.g. phone, video, or web)
- Delivering products through curbside pick-up or delivery

## Maintain a Healthy Work Environment

### **Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene for employees, customers, and worksite visitors:**

- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles.
- Provide soap and water in the workplace. If soap and water are not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol. If hands are visibly dirty, soap and water should be chosen over hand sanitizer. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained.
- Place hand sanitizers in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene.
- Discourage handshaking – encourage the use of other noncontact methods of greeting.

### **Perform frequent environmental cleaning:**

- Clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs multiple times throughout the day.
  - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

The Health Department does not have the ability to test for COVID-19. **Testing is given through Health Care Providers in the community.** Cortland County residents who are experiencing coronavirus symptoms need to **call their doctor**, who will coordinate any necessary testing. For people who don't have a primary-care physician, they can call Upstate Medical University at (315) 464-3979 or Cayuga Health's Call Center at (607) 319-5708.

To make sure you are receiving accurate updates regarding COVID-19 in Cortland County; please refer the Cortland County Health Department's Website and Facebook page.