



COVID-19 TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY UPDATE TO CITIZENS - March 13, 2020

There are currently no confirmed cases in Transylvania County. Emergency Management and Public Health Continue to work with state and federal systems to keep information current and to confirm plans to respond should a local outbreak occur. County officials are working with all partner agencies both at the state and locally to make sure that emergency services is prepared should an outbreak occur. County officials expect to make weekly updates to citizens for the next 30 days with greater frequency if needed.

There are cases within the state that have been identified. The State of North Carolina has declared a State of Emergency and has issued guidelines and recommendations available at <https://governor.nc.gov/news/north-carolina-recommends-new-steps-protect-against-covid-19>.

Court functions that have necessary time restrictions or related to domestic violence will continue to be scheduled; however, by Order of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, many cases will be postponed. The Transylvania County Clerk of Court Office will be contacting defendants and attorneys regarding schedule changes.

Transylvania County Government is reviewing calendars for public gatherings of greater than 100 participants and making modifications, cancellations or rescheduling as needed. Public Health is working with schools, congregate living facilities, employers and churches to make them aware of recommendations and to share best practices.

Symptomatic and high risk persons without symptoms should heed the recommendations provided by NCDHHS as follows:

SYMPTOMATIC PERSONS

If you need medical care and have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspect you might have COVID-19, call ahead and tell your health care provider you have or may have COVID-19. This will allow them to take steps to keep other people from getting exposed. NC DHHS recommends that persons experiencing fever and cough should stay at home and not go out until their symptoms have completely resolved.

HIGH RISK PERSONS WITHOUT SYMPTOMS

NC DHHS recommends that people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should stay at home to the extent possible to decrease the chance of infection.

People at high risk include people:

- Over 65 years of age, or
- with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes, or
- with weakened immune systems.

All citizens should practice Prevention and Preparedness by taking the following proactive actions:

1) PRACTICE PREVENTION- see the attached handout on hygiene

- Wash your hands regularly and make sure that you are using good hand hygiene. You will see some reminder signage posted in restrooms in the coming days. Remember to use soap and spend at least 20 seconds washing.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid contact with those who are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces using household cleaner or wipes.
- Encourage older friends and relatives with conditions that make them most vulnerable to consider limiting activities that could expose them to any illnesses including the flu and COVID-19.

2) PRACTICE PREPAREDNESS

- Check your pantry and make sure that you have adequate supplies if you should need to stay home sick or with a sick family member
- Make sure that you are signed up for TEAM alerts so that you will get text messages should a situation warrant communication if a community crisis were to develop http://entry.inspironlogistics.com/transylvania_nc/wens.cfm
- Make yourself aware of what we do know about COVID-19 and read the attached guidance from CDC. We will share updated guidance if new information becomes available.
- Think through plans with your household should schools, day cares or nursing homes close in any emergency.

3) STAY INFORMED

- Share the CDC guidance on COVID 19 and How to Prevent Germs
- Do not contribute to panic with gossip or share unvetted materials. Our state IT network has indicated there have been instances of false COVID map links and other materials that contain malware- be aware of your sources!
- Sign up for TEAM alerts and to hit 'like' on both the Transylvania County Emergency Services and Transylvania County Public Health Department Pages to stay up to date

Our emergency management and public health staff are working hard to keep our regular services going while staying up to date on this situation both nationally and keeping up with local health care providers.

NC has also established a Helpline for questions. The phone number to the Coronavirus Helpline is **1-866-462-3821**.

The line, which was established by the NC Division of Public Health, is staffed by North Carolina Poison Control's nurses and pharmacists who are backed by clinical and medical toxicologists and who have been trained in responding with up-to-date information to a host of questions about coronavirus.