COVID-19 is a new disease. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and/or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. Early information out of China, where COVID-19 first started, shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes:

- Older adults
- People who are immunocompromised and/or have serious chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease

**Preparedness Recommendations for Senior Centers**

Preparedness for possible community-level spread is of utmost importance at this time for senior centers. Senior Centers should take the following steps to stop or slow the spread of COVID-19:

- Identify discretionary vs. mandatory activities
- **Definitions:**
  - Containment – measures to prevent the spread of disease from specific individuals; consider suspending or canceling discretionary activities.
  - Mitigation – measures to slow down **community spread**; suspend and/or cancel all discretionary activities; implement COOP

**Containment Phase:** Discretionary activities should be postponed effective immediately and the general prevention measures below should be followed:

- All field/bus trips should be cancelled.
- All special events (yard sales, flea markets, holiday celebrations, etc.) should be cancelled.
- Separate those who become sick at your center from those who are well. Send sick staff members and volunteers home immediately. If someone you serve becomes sick at your center, separate them from others (particularly from those who are at a high risk for COVID-19 complications) as soon as possible. Provide them with clean, disposable face masks to wear until they can leave.
- Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies at your center. Have supplies on hand for staff, volunteers, and those you serve, such as soap, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60%
alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, and disposable facemasks. Plan to have extra supplies on
hand during a COVID-19 outbreak.
  o Note: Disposable face masks (ear loop style or surgical) should be kept on-site
  and used only when someone becomes sick at your organization. Those who
  become sick should be given a clean, disposable face mask to wear until they can
  leave.

**Mitigation Phase (Early): Anticipate workforce reductions, activate COOP, and the
general prevention measures below should be followed:**

- Persons 60 years of age or older, with or without chronic medical conditions (see above),
  should stay home as much as possible.
- Meal service should be limited to those who would go without if the meal was not
  provided. To-go meals are preferred.
- If participants eat at the center, limit 1 person to a table. There should be 6 feet of
  distance between individuals at all times.
- Remind Seniors to maintain a supply of prescription medication at home in case they
  need to be quarantined or isolated

**Mitigation Phase (Late)**

- Close all centers
- Meal service limited to drive-up service or delivery

**Prevention Recommendations for Senior Centers**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to
prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always
recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases,
including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household
  cleaning spray or wipe
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask
  o CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect
    themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  o Face masks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to
    help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also
    crucial for **health workers** and **people who are taking care of someone in close
    settings** (at home or in a healthcare facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going
to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  o If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
    with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are
    visibly dirty.
Additional Information:

**CDC Resources**
- [COVID-19 Prevention & Treatment](#)
- [What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)](#)
- [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions and Answers](#)
- [What to do if you are sick with COVID-19](#)
- [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)
- [COVID-19 Community Organization Checklist](#)
- [CDC’s Handwashing Guide- Clean Hands Save Lives](#)