



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC SAFETY**



PRESS RELEASE

We have been asked to share the following message regarding 2019-nCoV.

**DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION OUTLINES PREPAREDNESS FOR NOVEL CORONAVIRUS**

*The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, FDNY, NYCEM, NYC Health + Hospitals poised to respond coronavirus (2019-nCoV)*

**NEW YORK**— The City today laid out its preparedness plans for the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak initially identified in China, has now spread to 16 countries with 25 deaths, all in China. There are now two in the United States.

“With the best emergency response teams in the nation, New York City stands ready to respond to any potential coronavirus,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “We will remain vigilant and ensure New Yorkers have the facts and are safe.”

All City hospitals and health providers are now trained to identify symptoms and evaluate patients who may have symptoms for 2019-nCoV, which include cough, shortness of breath, and fever. Additionally, the City has established transport protocols for individuals who may present symptoms of 2019-nCoV and in need of a medical evaluation. The City is also implementing prevention and control measures at all New York City hospitals; instructions on specimen collection and other protocols.

While there are zero diagnoses in New York City at this time, coronavirus has been detected in hundreds of cases worldwide. While initially thought to only spread through prolonged exposure, more recent epidemiology indicates person-to-person transmission is possible. While some infections have resulted in severe illness, and even death, others have presented mild, flu-like symptoms and been discharged from care.

Authorities have instituted travel restrictions in at least 12 cities in China (including Wuhan), affecting tens of thousands of people. The CDC remains poised to screen passengers based on need. To date, no passengers arriving from

connecting flights at JFK have needed medical evaluation. However, New York City is fully prepared to transport individuals showing symptoms or who receive positive diagnoses as needed.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has conducted outreach and are providing guidance to local community-based organizations and health care providers serving our communities to inform them of the necessary precautions they need to take if someone with symptoms of coronavirus visits them.

Additionally, NYC Health + Hospitals is working closely with the Health Department, and the public health system is well prepared in the event that a patient with nCoV-like symptoms presents at or is transported to one of its emergency departments. Frontline staff have up-to-date public health clinical information on the 2019-nCoV virus, including infection prevention and control, personal protective equipment usage and practices, instructions on specimen collection, and in-service trainings on 'donning and doffing' personal protective gear. NYC Health Hospitals has also embedded travel screening into the electronic health record system to ensure that any patient walking into one of its facility is promptly identified and isolated.

The CDC recommends people avoid non-essential travel to Wuhan. For travel deemed essential, the Health Department has shared the following CDC recommendations with healthcare providers regarding travelers to Wuhan:

- Avoid contact with sick people
- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat);
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Older travelers and those with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease and should discuss travel to Wuhan with their healthcare provider.

For those who recently traveled to Wuhan and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, CDC recommends:

- Seek medical care right away. Before going to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about recent travel and symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Not travel while sick.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

"The de Blasio administration is prepared for the likelihood of the novel coronavirus in New York City," said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Raul Perea-Henze**. "Our world-class public health system anchored by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and NYC Health + Hospitals, working together with our partners across government and in the communities, will manage whatever comes our way. We urge all New Yorkers to continue to pursue their everyday activities and routines, but to remain aware of the facts about coronavirus. Those with a travel history should see a doctor at the first sign of any flu-like symptoms. Everyone is welcome at all NYC Health + Hospitals facilities and will be treated with dignity and respect."

"We take this rapidly changing situation seriously and are monitoring world events closely," said **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. "New Yorkers should know the risk to residents of the city is low and that public health and emergency teams are ready to act swiftly if circumstances change. We urge New Yorkers who have recently travelled to the Wuhan area to contact their health care providers if they have fever, cough or shortness of breath."

"Preparation and coordination are vital to any response. Today's exercise brings together key individuals to discuss the important steps we can take to ensure we are ready to respond to anyone who may be affected by this virus," said **NYC**

**Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell.** “Contact their health care providers if they have fever, cough or shortness of breath.”

“FDNY’s highly-trained Paramedics and EMTs are prepared to respond to any potential calls related to the coronavirus,” said **Fire Commissioner Daniel A. Nigro.** “The Department will continue to monitor this situation and work closely with the Health Department and every city agency to ensure the safety of New Yorkers.”

“NYC Health + Hospitals takes an ‘all-infectious disease approach’ when preparing for public health threats such as coronavirus,” said **Mitchell Katz, MD, President and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals.** “Our hospitals are vigilant and well prepared in the event that a patient with coronavirus-like symptoms arrives at or is transported to one of our emergency departments. Further, our Special Pathogens Program ensures the ongoing readiness of our facilities through drills and exercises of varying scope and scale by testing system and facility processes and protocols.”

“New York City is committed to protecting the health and safety of all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status,” said **Bitta Mostofi, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs.** “No one should be afraid to get the care they need, when they need it. If you or your loved ones have recently travelled to the Wuhan area and are showing symptoms, contact your health care providers or seek care, in your language and community, today.”

If you have any questions or concerns, please email us at [publicprivate@oem.nyc.gov](mailto:publicprivate@oem.nyc.gov).

Thank you,  
Private Sector/COOP ESF Team  
NYC Emergency Management

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