

COVID-19 SAFETY FOR GOOD HOPE

The entire nation including Georgia is experiencing the near-term devastating impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic. This is seen in wide spreading of the virus resulting in record levels of illness, hospitalization and even deaths. The impact of COVID-19 has resulted the closing of schools, businesses and record levels of unemployment. In Georgia, Governor Kemp has lead the way in an effort to safely reopen businesses by following public health expert input from NIH, CDC and the Georgia Department of Public Health resulting in his issuing a series of executive orders and recommendations to guide everyone through these troubling times. The Good Hope City Council is providing this guidance for the residents of Good Hope, businesses and community.

Who is at risk from the COVID-19 virus?

Older adults (over 65 yrs.) and individuals of any age who have severe underlying conditions such as heart or lung disease or diabetes are at greater risk of developing serious complications from the virus. However, all age groups may readily contract the virus simply due to its highly contagious nature. Unfortunately, national data shows that having the virus may also result in the individuals experiencing both short term and long-term adverse effects including impaired lung function and increased incidence of coronary issues such as blood clots.

How does COVID-19 Spread?

The virus is spread mainly from person to person among those who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or even talks. These droplets may then be inhaled by nearby individuals. Additional spread may be through hand contact with hard surfaces such as door handles, sinks, phones, etc. and the person subsequently touches his/her mouth, nose and/or eyes. Data have shown that both individuals showing signs of the viral infection and those with the virus but showing no symptoms may spread the virus to others.

What steps can everyone take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?

It is very important to emphasize that at present there is no vaccine available to prevent the spread of the virus attaching a person. Although there are multiple potential vaccines currently in clinical trials, none have been cleared by FDA for use. It is very likely that a vaccine will not be available to the public until early to mid-2021. Stopping the spread of the virus to others is our only viable mitigation effort available at present.

So, what can one do to help minimize the risk of becoming infected?

Step 1 Wearing face masks or facial coverings to prevent the spread of droplets from you to others when talking, sneezing or coughing is highly recommended. A face mask also provides a barrier of protection for the person wearing it. Public Health Officials at CDC and NIH as well as Governor Kemp recommend wearing a face mask when going out in public.

Step 2 Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, restroom and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Washing your hands prior to eating is critical to reducing the risk of becoming infected. If you are caring for someone who is sick with the virus, it is imperative that you wash your hands thoroughly after each contact and wear protective gloves when possible. The use of hand sanitizers may be used when immediate access to soap and water is not available.

Step 3 Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Step 4 Avoid close contact with others by maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet when in public places. Avoid attending large group events.

Step 5 Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, discard the tissue immediately and wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

Step 6 Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, light switches phones, keyboards and items commonly used by members of your household. The use of an antibacterial/antiviral cleaner is strongly recommended.

Step 7 Monitor your health daily and be alert to symptoms such as fever, dry cough, shortness of breath which are commonly associated with COVID-19. Seek prompt medical attention if your symptoms worsen.

Step 8 Consult your healthcare provider and/or CDC website for information regarding how to get tested for COVID-19 if you think you may be infected.

Additional information regarding COVID-19 may be obtained on the Georgia Department of Public Health website; <http://dph.georgia.gov/health-topics/coronavirus-covid-19>.

On behalf of the City Council, we trust that this information will be helpful in continuing the battle against the coronavirus.

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