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From the Office of

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## **COVID-19 INFORMATION SHEET**

COVID-19 is impacting our entire community. We're in this together, and we'll get through it together. At this stage in the spread of the virus, social distancing is a critically important action we can all take in order to flatten the curve. By flattening the curve, we can collectively lessen the impact on our healthcare providers and ensure they have the capacity to deal with those individuals in most in need of care.

This is about protecting the most vulnerable among us. People without symptoms can still carry the virus, and the only way to stop the spread is for everyone to stay home.

Below, please find answers to some of the frequently asked questions your residents may have.

1. Social Distancing
2. Testing
3. Essential vs. Nonessential

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

#### **What does social distancing mean?**

Social distancing is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. Staying at least six feet away from other people lessens your chances of catching COVID-19.

#### **Can I visit my relatives or friends?**

Do not visit loved ones in person. Use the phone or other electronic devices. Deliver food or other essential items to the doorstep.

#### **How can I keep safe when I need to go out to secure essential items like food?**

- Make as few trips as possible.
- Avoid excessive shopping time.
- Make a list in advance.
- Consider using delivery services or the self-checkout lane.

- Wipe down the shopping cart, touch screens and touch pads before and after use.

### **What if we are outside?**

Avoid close contact with people, even when outside. Keep a distance of at least 6 feet to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

- Avoid games and activities that require close contact.
- Avoid frequently touched surfaces and objects. This includes playground equipment like slides and swings.
- Do not share equipment such as bicycles, helmets, balls or frisbees.
- Do not gather in groups.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue and discard the tissue in a closed container.

When you return indoors, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

## **TESTING**

### **How many?**

More than 1,300 tests have been processed in Monroe County as of Monday, March 23 and we are awaiting the results of many others.

### **Who is collecting specimens for testing?**

- Monroe County Department of Public Health
- UR Medicine and Rochester Regional Health
- Private Clinicians

### **Can anyone who wants a test get one?**

No, not everyone can get a test.

### **Who should be tested and why?**

For most of us, the results of a test for COVID-19 will have NO impact on what happens next. We should already be staying home, practicing social distancing, and talking with our healthcare providers to manage any symptoms. Having a positive test result does not change this guidance.

There is a limited number of tests, and they are reserved for individuals for whom test results WILL have an impact on what happens next. For example:

- A healthcare worker or first responder who tests negative can return to work more quickly.
- A hospitalized patient who tests negative can be removed from isolation, which saves PPE usage.
- A hospitalized patient who tests positive will receive more targeted treatment.

## **ESSENTIAL VS. NONESSENTIAL**

### **How do I know what businesses or organizations are essential?**

The Governor has issued guidance on essential entities:

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-issues-guidance-essential-services-under-new-york-state-pause-executive-order>

### **If my business is essential, are all employees permitted to work at the business location?**

No. Only those employees who are needed to providing the essential products or services produced by your business are permitted to work at the business location. In addition, essential businesses are still required to telecommute or work from home to the maximum extent possible. Those employees who do report to work must adhere to the requirements set forth in the Department of Health guidelines, which can be found at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

### **What if my business is not determined to be essential?**

No employees can be working at your business location.

### **What if my business is not essential, but provides services, materials, supplies or other support to essential businesses?**

In this case, only those employees necessary to support the essential businesses are exempt from the employment reduction requirements of the executive order, and your business is still required to utilize telecommuting or work from home procedures to the maximum extent possible.

What if someone thinks their employer is violating this executive order?

Please contact the New York State Office of the Attorney General's Labor Bureau at (212) 416-8700 or [Labor.Bureau@ag.ny.gov](mailto:Labor.Bureau@ag.ny.gov).

### **What if I still have questions about this executive order?**

Empire State Development has an online form you can use to submit your questions. Here is the link:

<https://esd.ny.gov/covid-19-help>