

COVID-19 OVERVIEW AND PROTOCOLS

Note: This guidance could change rapidly as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, new resources become available and new guidance (from the City, County, State and/or Federal governments) emerges. Visit the following websites for the latest information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development:
<https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus>
- State of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment:
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/2019-novel-coronavirus>
- Larimer County Department of Health and Environment:
<https://www.larimer.org/health/communicable-disease/coronavirus-covid-19>
- City of Fort Collins: <https://www.fcgov.com/eps/coronavirus>

Background

From the [CDC](#): CDC is responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and which has now been detected in more than 100 locations internationally, including in the United States. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2” and the disease it causes has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”).

On January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC). On January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency (PHE) for the United States to aid the nation’s healthcare community in responding to COVID-19. On March 11, 2020 WHO publicly characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic.

From Larimer County Health Department: As of most recent reports, one individual has tested positive for COVID-19 in Larimer County. **That individual was a healthcare worker at a long-term care facility in Loveland.** Read the most current updates from the County [here](#).

COVID-19 Symptoms

According to the CDC, reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Emergency warning signs include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

Signage

All entrance doors and public spaces are to display the following signage

- [COVID-19 Fact Sheet \(CDC\)](#)
- What You Need to Know About COVID-19 ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)) (CDC)
- What To Do If You are Sick With COVID-19 ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)) (CDC)
- Handwashing Guidance ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)) (CDC)

Housed Guests

- Guests who are housed may not access the Murphy Center during morning shelter or evening shelter.
- Encourage housed guests to call the Murphy Center with any inquiries, limit visits to pre-scheduled, necessary appointments, and leave the building as quickly as possible. Ensure guests that this is a temporary precaution designed to protect the health of the people we serve.

Other Agencies

- Homeward Alliance is encouraging agencies whose services are not vital to the day-to-day functioning of the Murphy Center to consider relocating, suspending or otherwise adjusting services.
 - The goal is to minimize traffic and allow for social distancing.

Heightened Awareness of Guest Health Symptoms

- For numerous reasons, any pandemic has the potential to disproportionately impact people experiencing homelessness. See articles [here](#) and [here](#).
- If a symptomatic guest (cough, sneezing, runny nose, fever) presents, hand the individual a protective face mask and/or paper towel (since masks are in short supply) and instruct the individual that the mask is *required* in order to stay in the building. Request that the individual attempt to maintain a distance of six feet from other individuals.
 - Contact the Lead staff member or your supervisor for further instruction.
- If a guest presents with severe conditions (fever of over 100 degrees and/or other significant symptoms), call 9-1-1.
- If a guest presents with minor symptoms, do NOT encourage guest to visit doctor's office (guest will be turned away). Instead, provide guest with mask and encourage social distancing. Monitor as is possible.
- Encourage guests (through repeat announcements over intercom and/or in-person suggestions) to maintain safe social distancing (six feet) whenever possible. If weather is appropriate, encourage guests to sit outside.

Heightened Disinfectant Procedures

For all staff. In your work areas:

- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces twice daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- To disinfect:
 - Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface. Options include:
 - Diluting your household bleach. To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against COVID-19 when properly diluted.
 - Alcohol solutions. Ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol.
 - Other common EPA-registered household disinfectants.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

At the Murphy Center:

- Cleaning service has been tasked to expand cleaning procedures on nightly basis.
- For staff:
 - Make sure there is hand sanitizer at each reception station and at all copiers.
 - Twice per day (after morning shelter and evening shelter):
 - Wipe down with Lysol/Clorox wipes all tables and chairs, including legs in both day rooms and lobby, monitors, keyboards, mice, phones, door handles.
 - Wipe down all tables with PineSol, then spray down with bleach, allow bleach to sit for ten minutes, and wipe again.
 - Note: open windows while bleaching; clean windows with Lysol/Clorox wipes when closing.

Office Configurations and Office Meetings

- All intakes are postponed indefinitely. Intake/front desk staff should still collect intake paperwork from new guests, but all intakes are postponed indefinitely. Only meet with new guests for emergency reasons and hold those meetings in the conference room.
- Minimize office meetings.
- Adjust your office furniture so that you are as far away from individuals (during one-on-one meetings) as possible. Limit meetings to one or two others, if possible.
- Keep windows open during meetings.
- Prior to hosting a meeting in your office, ask guests/individuals if they have any symptoms (see symptoms above) of COVID-19. If a guest reports any symptom consistent with COVID-19, follow the protocols in the other sections of this report

(including ensuring that the individual wears a mask) and host your meeting outside, in a common area, or in the conference room. Wipe down all areas after meetings.

Take Steps to Protect Yourself

- **When in common areas of Murphy Center:**
 - **Wear N95 facemask at all times. See CDC guidance [here](#) related to reuse of N95 facemasks. Note that masks are in short supply and are therefore limited to staff. This is for staff and guest protection.**
 - **Wear protective gloves at all times.**
- Clean your hands often.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Put distance between yourself and other people. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
- Take steps to protect others.
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wipe down keys, steering wheel, gear shift and radio knobs any time you enter a vehicle, including Homeward Alliance vehicles.
- If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Full CDC guidance [here](#).
- If you are NOT sick and NOT in Murphy Center common areas: You should not wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks are in short supply.

Health Monitoring

- If you believe you may have a fever or any symptoms, go home and do not return until you have been asymptomatic for 24 hours. Homeward Alliance has implemented a zero-tolerance policy: no employee can come to work sick.

- If you have questions or concerns related to your health insurance coverage, please contact Kaiser Permanente directly (if you have Homeward Alliance insurance) or the Customer Advocates at Shirazi Insurance (our insurance broker). The Customer Advocates can be reached at 970-356-5151.
- If members of your household are ill with suspected COVID-19, do not report to work.
- Managers are to send staff home if they exhibit continuous sneeze, cough or fever. Staff must be asymptomatic for at least 24 hours before returning to work. Doctor's note is not required.
- If you have a health condition that requires an accommodation, please talk to your supervisor. Legitimate health conditions will be accommodated, but you will be expected to use sick leave and vacation to compensate any absences necessitated by your accommodation.

Remote Work

- If your position allows you to work remotely and/or if your position could be relocated away from the Murphy Center or to a home office, please speak to your supervisor immediately.

Travel, Meetings and Conferences

- Staff may not transport guests under any circumstances.
- Staff may continue to travel at their own discretion for personal reasons, but Homeward Alliance discourages travel. All non-essential travel for work is canceled, effective immediately.
- Eliminate all face-to-face meetings except those that are necessary to the continuity of guest services. Substitute Zoom or telephone conference where possible.
- Refrain from handshaking and touching.

Agency Closure

- The people we serve are among the most susceptible to viral outbreaks, and our work will likely become even more imperative if the outbreak significantly impacts people experiencing homelessness in Fort Collins. We do not expect to close the Murphy Center or halt our services.
- Homeward Alliance will close the Murphy Center (or stop services) only if ordered to do so by a public health authority OR if another agency at the Murphy Center is closed by health authorities due to a suspected outbreak. In the event of emergency closure, staff will continue to be paid. More than likely, Homeward Alliance would re-deploy staff to other locations in the event of a Murphy Center closure.
- Homeward Alliance recognizes that school closures could significantly impact staff members with children. If you are concerned that school closures could impact your availability, please discuss it with your supervisor.

Volunteers

- Homeward Alliance has seen a significant reduction in volunteerism since the COVID-19 outbreak began. We encouraged—via mass email and through in-person meetings—volunteers who are elderly or have underlying health conditions to consider temporary hiatuses. This will inevitably impact service delivery, and Homeward Alliance has a separate plan with contingencies for each potentially affected service.

Communications

- Homeward Alliance created [this document](#) to answer some of the most frequently asked questions among community stakeholders. Regardless of whom you are communicating with, some key points to remember:
- We are updating our stakeholders regularly via social media, our website and elsewhere. This document will also be updated regularly.