



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northern Illinois Rockford Region Public Information Officers
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This is a joint news release issued by the Northern Illinois Rockford Region Public Information Officers (NIR-PIO). NIR-PIO serves Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, and Winnebago Counties.

REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS EXPECT INCREASE IN COVID-19 CASES & ENCOURAGE PUBLIC TO PREVENT EXPOSURE

Northern Illinois Rockford Region – Over the last few days, expanded testing has become available for COVID-19 in the Northern Illinois Rockford Region. This means that more people in our community will have access to and be tested for COVID-19. With this increase in testing, there is expected to be more positive cases reported in our communities.

This increase in testing is important at a time when our communities are experiencing increased infection. In the Northern Illinois Rockford region, the cases of COVID-19 have not peaked nor plateaued. Local health departments (LHDs) are aware that more individuals in our community have COVID-19 than were being tested for the disease. Individuals can spread the disease even before they have symptoms. Increased testing helps public health officials to better understand the prevalence (number of cases at a given time) of COVID-19 in our communities. Testing also allows us to identify individuals who have the disease or can spread the disease to help prevent more transmission throughout the community.

The important thing to remember is that COVID-19 continues to spread in our communities. There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat COVID-19. The best way the public can protect themselves, their family, and their community is by preventing exposure.

The Public Can Help Prevent Exposure By:

- **STAYING HOME:** Stay home, only go out when essential (buying groceries, pick-up medicine, etc.)
- **STAYING APART:** Keep at least 6 feet away from others including while shopping. Avoid the lines by taking advantage of pick-up and delivery services for groceries and other goods.
- **WEARING A FACE COVERING:** When you are traveling outside of your home for essential services
- **CLEANING FREQUENTLY:** Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and clean commonly touched surfaces frequently

For more information:

Go to IDPH and CDC websites.

- <http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

For general questions about COVID-19, call the IDPH hotline at 1-800-889-3931

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