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Our Shared Responsibility to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Escambia County
Continue Taking Measures To Prevent COVID-19 Transmission

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Pensacola, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) encourages all residents and visitors to take steps to protect themselves and prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Everyone has an important role in preventing the spread of this virus.

As the state re-opens, testing efforts have expanded so state and local health officials can adequately monitor the prevalence of the virus within communities. Equally important is the reminder that there currently is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 is spreading very easily between people. The more closely a person interacts with others, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.

"Changes in social behavior related to reopening reinforce how important it is for individuals to continue to practice disease prevention methods to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in Escambia County," said FDOH-Escambia Director, John J. Lanza, MD, PhD, MPH, FAAP, FHPS. "We cannot get complacent with our behaviors. It is our shared social responsibility to continue practicing social distancing and wearing a face covering in public. These measures will protect the entire community, including our vulnerable populations."

Take Steps to Protect Against Spreading COVID-19

FDOH-Escambia encourages the practice of social distancing by avoiding large gatherings (more than 50 people) and staying at least six (6) feet away from others. Additionally, FDOH-Escambia advises following the CDC recommendation regarding the use of cloth face coverings. Wearing a cloth face covering in public settings, like grocery stores and pharmacies or while riding in a vehicle with non-family members, is a voluntary recommendation that can help slow the spread of COVID-19. For proper use instructions and more information, visit the CDC website.

Follow these steps in all situations, even when you feel perfectly healthy:
- Avoid close contact with others, such as hugging, kissing, or shaking hands;
- Wash your hands often, especially after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose and before and after eating;
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as toys and doorknobs;
- Avoid large gatherings (more than 50 people) and stay at least six (6) feet away from others;

- Avoid unnecessary travel, especially international travel and cruise travel;
- Avoid being around anyone who is sick or who may have a weak immune system;
- Move away from people before coughing or sneezing;
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue then throw it away and the wash your hands.

If you are mildly ill, follow these tips to help prevent spreading it to other people:
- The emergency department should be used for people who are very sick. You should not go to the emergency room if you are only mildly ill. The CDC has guidance on what to do if you are sick from a mild viral illness: https://www.cdc.gov/flu/treatment/takingcare.htm and https://www.cdc.gov/features/rhinoviruses/index.html
- Stay at home and isolate from other family members while you are sick and keep children out of school or daycare while they are sick.

Sites for COVID-Testing in Escambia County

Persons who become sick should call, do not visit, their health care provider and tell them about their symptoms and travel history or exposure to a COVID-19 patient. Persons who do not have a health care provider or health insurance, may call (do not visit) Community Health Northwest Florida at 850-436-4630 or other community walk-in care locations, and tell them about their symptoms and travel history or exposure to a COVID-19 patient.

An online assessment screening for COVID-19 is available to determine if further diagnostic testing is needed. The screening can also be accessed by texting "Screen" to 850-318-3080. The screening is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also call the screening center at 850-434-4080 to determine if you need an appointment.

COVID-19 testing is available at several locations in Escambia County, including drive-thru and walk-up testing.
- IMPORTANT: Pre-screening may be required before arriving at testing centers by calling the local COVID-19 Screening Call Center at 850-746-2684.
- The screening call center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. The call center staff will assist in helping find the testing center that best fits the needs of each person needing a COVID-19 test.
- The hours of operation for the testing centers for COVID-19 are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The call center staff will confirm the hours, as they vary by location and day of week.

Testing sites and eligibility criteria vary and are subject to change; for more detailed information on testing sites, visit Escambia County's dedicated COVID-19 webpage or call the Citizen Information Center at 850-471-6600.

For More Information on COVID-19

Visit the Florida Department of Health COVID-19 webpage for information on COVID-19. If you have questions, please call the Department's COVID-19 Call Center available 24/7 at 1 (866) 779-6121 or email COVID-19@flhealth.gov.

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