

Update: March 6, 2020

To the Linfield Community,

Oregon Health Authorities have reported three positive COVID-19 virus cases this week. The first two cases were from the same household in Lake Oswego and the third case occurred in Umatilla county. The patient involved from Lake Oswego was treated at a hospital west of Portland and some of the health care workers at that hospital have been in quarantine for suspected exposure to COVID-19 virus. Quarantine is used for people who are well but may have a higher risk for disease due to exposure, to prevent the possibility of spreading the infection before someone becomes symptomatic with the infection. Quarantine does not mean someone has the infection or is contagious. The virus is most contagious when people are ill with a fever and a cough. The health care workers in quarantine and their family members pose no threat to our Linfield community currently.

Umatilla health officials tested three contacts of the affected individual there and today all three tests came back negative.

There have been no positive tests for COVID-19 in Yamhill County currently.

Linfield College has a team of administrators and faculty who are meeting regularly to coordinate a response to the threat of COVID-19. Experiences in other countries provides some understanding of the illness and the fact that most people who get the infection will experience it as an illness like a cold. A small percent will experience it as a more significant illness and may need to be hospitalized because of a lung infection. Elderly people and those with weakened immune systems due to an underlying medical condition or with heart or lung disease are more likely to have a significant illness. As always, if you have concerns about your own health issues, your health care provider is the best source of information.

Linfield has developed more information which is located on the [Student Health, Wellness and Counseling Center webpage](#).

Ways to protect yourself and your community

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday precautionary steps to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
- CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
- Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health care workers and for people taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

If you are ill with a cough, please call your health care provider for instructions prior to visiting a clinic, hospital or other medical facility. Specific recommendations may be made in anticipation of your visit, such as wearing a mask or checking in at a different location.

[Learn more about the Oregon experience with COVID-19.](#)

Regards,

Patricia Haddeland

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