



February 28, 2020

Dear Horseheads Central School District Parents/Guardians and Staff:

This letter is a follow-up to our January 28 letter regarding a coronavirus called COVID-19. As of the writing of this letter, there still have been no confirmed cases in New York State. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently stated that with the spread of this virus across China and other parts of the world, as well as our country, cases may soon occur within our state. Attached is an updated fact sheet about COVID-19 from the Chemung County Health Department.

We wish to reiterate the importance of good hygiene habits to help prevent the spread of contagious health conditions. Health officials agree that one of the best ways to prevent contagious conditions is proper, complete, and frequent hand washing, which we emphasize with our students and staff. Good practices also include covering coughs with the elbow and minimizing contact with others if one is ill. We ask that you please share and follow this important information with your children.

Current health care procedures when your child is ill with the flu or other illness are to see a health care provider and keep your student home from school. We recommend that your student stay home until the fever is below 100 degrees without medication and vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours. To be cautious, we might also suggest that this time be extended to 48-72 hours after the fever is below 100 degrees without medication and vomiting has stopped, or a doctor has cleared the student to return to school. We understand that we have individuals and families that must travel to impacted countries for work or other reasons. We would ask that those families please be very vigilant in monitoring health conditions and self-quarantining their immediate families in accordance with published guidelines to assist us as we work to keep all as safe as possible during this uncertain time. The CDC website provides a great deal of information on this topic: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

The district continues to follow health care procedures and cleaning protocols in our schools. We are keeping up to date on the latest information, and we are following guidelines from our state and federal agencies.

Be assured that all of our cleaning staff have been trained in the proper procedures for the cleaning and disinfecting of school buildings and surfaces. Our cleaners have appropriate disinfecting and cleaning agents to use when cleaning our schools. They are vigilant when cleaning, especially contact surfaces such as doorknobs, counters, physical education equipment, etc.

Our children's safety is a priority. We will follow up as we gain additional guidance based upon changing conditions. If you have questions, please contact your building nurse, or the Chemung County Health Department at (607) 737-2028. As always, **thank you for your understanding and support as we address this health issue together.**

Sincerely,

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas  
Superintendent of Schools



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Chemung County Health  
Department

# Chemung County Health Department

# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person to person. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China. *The current risk of contracting the virus in the United States remains low.*

## Working Together

We are working closely with the New York State Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local healthcare providers and facilities to follow this virus.

## No Confirmed Cases

Currently, there are no confirmed cases in Chemung County. Confirmed cases will be promptly investigated. This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. To stay up-to-date on information, please go to the [CDC COVID-19 website](#).

## Trusted Information

The uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 has led to misinformation and rumors on the internet and social media regarding the virus. It is critical that residents rely on the following trusted and reliable health sources of information regarding COVID-19.

- [Chemung County Health Department](#)
- [New York State Department of Health](#)
- NYSDOH COVID-19 Information Line: 1-888-364-3065
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

Please note that Influenza (Flu) is actively occurring in our area. It's not too late to get your flu vaccination from your health care provider or use this tool [Flu Vaccine Locator](#).

## What You Can Do

Residents should take the following steps every day to avoid spreading respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- 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.

If you have other questions please call the  
Chemung County Health Department at 607-737-2899.