



# Public Information Release

## Coronavirus Update for Preble County March 12, 2020

Preble County Public Health (PCPH) is working on Coronavirus (COVID-19) response every single day. You should monitor state and local news but rely on PCPH for reliable information on COVID-19 right here in Preble County. Information and guidance for COVID-19 changes daily. PCPH provides weekly Public Information Releases and will keep information current on our website at [preblecountyhealth.org](http://preblecountyhealth.org).

Here are the latest local facts and advice about COVID-19:

1. **There are zero confirmed cases in Preble County.**
2. **There are confirmed cases in Ohio.** While we don't want people to get too caught up in numbers, you can access the latest numbers at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov).
3. **There are people in Ohio being tested for COVID-19.** These patients are called Persons Under Investigation (PUI). Testing for COVID-19 is limited to sick patients who are at high risk for developing very severe symptoms. These people include older adults who are hospitalized with a respiratory illness and also have a chronic medical condition such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes or have a compromised immune system.
4. **There are people in Ohio who traveled to countries with widespread COVID-19 cases, returned to Ohio, and have no symptoms of COVID-19 at all.** These people are under Public Health Supervision (PHS). They are staying home away from other people, monitoring themselves for two weeks, and reporting in to their local public health department if they develop symptoms of COVID-19.
5. **Pay attention to travel bans.** Do not go on any cruise ship. Country restrictions are changing daily. The latest CDC travel recommendations can be found at [cdc.gov/travel](http://cdc.gov/travel).
6. **Ohio has Banned Mass Gatherings of 100 Or More.** Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today announced that Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH has signed an order to prohibit mass gatherings in the state of Ohio. Mass gatherings are defined as any event or convening that brings together 100 or more persons in a single room or single space at the same time such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theater, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space. This would include parades, fairs, and festivals.

Mass gatherings does not include normal operations of airports, bus and train stations,

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medical facilities, libraries, shopping malls and centers, or other spaces where 100 or more persons may be in transit. It also does not include typical office environments, schools, restaurants, factories, or retail/grocery stores where large numbers of people are present, but it is unusual for them to be within arm's length of one another.

7. **Don't ask for testing.** Healthcare workers consider all options and they consult with public health department staff. Let healthcare providers do their job. COVID-19 is not the only illness out there. Remember that testing is limited to those who are very sick and are high risk.
8. **Don't buy facemasks.** Face masks are for sick people and healthcare workers. That's it. Surgical masks work well to help limit the spread of illnesses from those who are already sick. Respirator masks are essential for our healthcare workers because they are in very close contact with sick people for long periods of time. Masks do not work well to help the general public stay healthy.

We are working to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Ohio. You've heard this before, but prevention is the best tool for COVID-19 across Ohio. Your personal choices are going to play a huge part in how this illness, or any respiratory illness, plays out. We all have personal responsibility to help prevent COVID-19.

1. **Cover every cough and sneeze with your arm.**
2. **Stay home when you are sick.**
3. **Wash your hands often.**
4. **Don't put your hands in your mouth, eyes, or nose.**
5. **Avoid people who are sick.**
6. **Clean frequently touched surfaces.**

If you know someone who isn't following these hygienic practices, call them out on it. Don't be bashful.

Keep in mind that if you've traveled somewhere with widespread COVID-19 cases in the last two weeks (or have been around a confirmed case of COVID-19) and experiences symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath), you should CALL your healthcare provider first so they can evaluate you over the phone. If you have an emergency, always call 911.

For questions about COVID-19 you can contact the **Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Hotline** at **833-427-5634** or Preble County Public Health at [admin@preblecountyhealth.org](mailto:admin@preblecountyhealth.org) or 937-472-0087.

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