Key messages

- Though Colorado has no cases of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), we take it very seriously. Working with the CDC, we continue to closely monitor the outbreak and develop Colorado’s response.

- It is normal in situations like this to have several cases being investigated because health care providers are being extra cautious looking for symptoms and members of the public have a heightened awareness. That's what we want. We will continue to investigate and test patients under investigation alongside the CDC and will provide updates if we get a positive case.
  - The department has investigated one person in northern Colorado for 2019-nCoV who had travel history to Wuhan. That case was subsequently ruled out after a negative test was confirmed by the CDC.
  - The department is working with Centura - St. Anthony Hospital in Lakewood to investigate a second possible case of novel coronavirus in an individual with a history of travel from Wuhan. Results from CDC to determine whether it is a confirmed case will not be available for several days.
    - Upon the patient’s arrival, the hospital took all precautions recommended by CDC. These included that the patient wear a mask and be placed in an isolation unit as a precautionary measure until diagnosis.

- While we understand that new viruses like this can be worrisome, we echo the CDC’s statement that the risk to people in the United States is low at this time.

- We have assembled a team to work on infection control, case investigation, contact notification, and communications and are prepared to respond if we have a case.

- If there is a suspected case in Colorado, there are protocols in place to help ensure hospitals, health care providers, and local health agencies know what steps to take to minimize any potential spread of the virus.

- People who are worried about this, or any respiratory virus, like the flu, can protect themselves by practicing everyday actions:
  - Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.
○ Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing.
○ Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.

● While the 2019-nCoV is expected to be of zoonotic origin, there is now confirmed human-to-human transmission in several countries.

○ CDC Situation Summary:  

● For answers to general questions about the 2019 novel coronavirus, call CO HELP at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911.

What CDPHE is doing

● The department is sharing reporting, testing, and infection control guidance with health care providers and local public health partners across the state, as well as actively monitoring the situation and developing response plans.

● Even in the absence of a case, the department’s initial response planning includes assembling a team that is focused on different operational aspects. Some of those focus areas include …
  ○ Infection control
    ■ Ensuring we’re well informed regarding the latest guidance on how to prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV and protect Colorado’s healthcare workers and other people who may have contact with patients, and then able to pass that information on to our healthcare providers.
  ○ Case investigation and data/surveillance
    ■ Ensuring we have the capacity to perform necessary case investigation, specimen collection, and coordination of testing with CDC.
  ○ Contact notification
    ■ Ensuring we have dedicated staff available to support our residents with a travel history to affected areas or other possible contact with 2019-nCoV cases.
  ○ Communications
Ensuring we have plans in place to provide appropriate information to our healthcare providers and local public health partners, the governor’s office and department leadership, as well as to the media and the general population.

What CDC is doing

- CDC has been proactively preparing for the introduction of 2019-nCoV in the United States for weeks, including:
  - Alerting clinicians on Jan. 8, 2020 and then again on Jan. 17, 2020, to be on the look-out for patients with respiratory symptoms and a history of travel to Wuhan City.
  - Developing guidance for clinicians for testing and treatment of 2019-nCoV, as well as developed guidance for home care of patients with 2019-nCoV.
  - Developing a diagnostic test to detect this virus in clinical specimens.
  - On Jan. 17, 2020 CDC began implementing public health entry screening at San Francisco (SFO), New York (JFK), and Los Angeles (LAX) airports. These airports receive the most travelers from Wuhan, China. During the week of Jan. 21 CDC will add entry health screening at two more airports - Atlanta (ATL) and Chicago (ORD). Together, the five airports will cover all travelers arriving in the United States whose travel originated from Wuhan, China.
  - CDC has activated its Emergency Operations Center to better provide ongoing support to the 2019-nCoV response.

- CDC and the Department of Homeland Security’s Customs and Border Protection (CBP) are implementing enhanced health screenings to detect ill travelers. Those screenings are currently taking place at five major airports: Atlanta (ATL), Chicago (ORD), Los Angeles, (LAX) New York city (JFK), and San Francisco (SFO). DEN is not on the list. You can read more about that here: https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0117-coronavirus-screening.html

About coronaviruses
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others circulating among animals including camels, cats and bats.

Some coronaviruses are common and regularly cause illness in the U.S. in the fall and winter. These viruses spread through coughing or sneezing, much like the flu. Symptoms may include: fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath.

Rarely, animal coronaviruses can evolve and infect people and then spread between people, such as has been seen with Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). These viruses have caused outbreaks internationally and have been known to cause severe illness.

It is too soon to know how severe 2019-novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is compared to other coronaviruses or how easily it can spread easily between humans.

For airport employees

Airport employees are more likely to be exposed to other seasonal respiratory illnesses such as influenza than 2019-nCoV at this time. There is no increased risk for airport employees at this time.

To prevent illness, CDC recommends:
- Avoiding contact with sick people.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.