



February 4, 2020

Dear CPS Families,

We are writing to the Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) community with updated information about the 2019 novel coronavirus. This new respiratory (lung) virus was first detected in Wuhan, China in December. On February 1, the first case of novel coronavirus in Massachusetts was confirmed in a Boston resident. This person is currently in isolation.

This news does not change the assessment by state and federal health officials that **the risk to people living in Massachusetts and the U.S. is low**. Because the risk is low, Massachusetts health officials do not recommend canceling group activities, including school events.

This is an evolving situation, and local, state, and federal public health agencies are monitoring the outbreak closely. The most-up-to-date information can be found here:

- About 2019 Novel Coronavirus (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
- What the Public Should Do (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/what-you-should-do.html>
- Information for Travelers (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- 2019 Novel Coronavirus (Massachusetts Department of Public Health): <https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus>

What You Can Do

It is peak flu (influenza) season in Massachusetts, and CPS families can help prevent the spread of the flu and other respiratory illnesses by:

- Encouraging family members to get the flu vaccine.
- Covering coughs and sneezes.
- Washing hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.
- Having children stay home when they are sick.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at 617- 983-6800.

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