



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
29th January, 2020

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-nCoV) *Update #3*

The Ministry of Health wishes to advise the public that the current risk of the Novel Coronavirus (2019 n-CoV) to The Bahamas remains low. At this time there are no suspected, reported or confirmed cases of the virus in The Bahamas.

The Novel Coronavirus that was first identified in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China has to date, globally manifested 6,057 confirmed cases of the novel virus in 17 countries with the death toll from the virus currently at 132 persons. The Ministry of Health has received reports of confirmed cases from our northern neighbours the United States (5 cases) and Canada (2 cases).

The Ministry of Health is closely monitoring developments pertaining to the Novel Coronavirus and following guidelines from our World Health Organization(WHO), Pan American Health Organization(PAHO), Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) partners. Surveillance at our ports of entry remain alert and ready to follow established protocols if necessary.

The Ministry of Health is currently engaging in Novel Coronavirus sensitization meetings with public and private stakeholders to discuss the 2019 Coronavirus, the Ministry of Health's preparedness and to ensure that all agencies have a coordinated and effective response plan.

Standard recommendations to prevent the spread of this infection include:

- frequent, proper hand washing and use of hand sanitizer;
- covering the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, preferably with the elbow and sleeve;
- thoroughly cooking meat and eggs;
- cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and objects; and
- avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

Currently, the WHO does not recommend any restriction of travel or trade amongst nations. The Ministry of Health recommends that persons who MUST travel in that region, take precautions to protect themselves by avoiding direct contact with sick people and products that come from animals. If during or after your travel, symptoms of respiratory illness are experienced, immediately contact a medical provider and be ready to give your full travel history. All persons returning to The Bahamas from China will be monitored.

The Ministry of Health will continue to monitor for the occurrence of the novel virus with ongoing updates to the public.

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