

NEWS RELEASE

COVID-19 Unified Command

A PARTNERSHIP



PANHANDLE PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT (308)262-5764 24/7
SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT (308)630-1580

**TO SELF REPORT OR IF THERE ARE QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL
BEFORE SEEKING MEDICAL CARE**

March 13, 2020

For immediate release

For more information, contact:

Kim Engel, Health Director: 308-760-2415

PPHD communicating with Morrill Public Schools about trip to the East Coast, which included New York, an area with COVID-19 community spread

PPHD has been in communication with Morrill Public Schools. All participants on the Morrill Schools trip to the East Coast, which included New York, an area with COVID-19 community spread, will be asked to call the public health 24/7 phone line at 308-262-5764 and will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.

What does self-quarantine mean?

1. Stay home from work, school, and away from other public places.
2. Monitor your symptoms carefully and report them every day to Panhandle Public Health District by calling 308-262-5764.
3. As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.
4. Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.
5. Clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.

Use extra precaution if there is a person at high risk for serious illness in your home, this includes:

- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
 - Heart disease
 - Diabetes

- Lung disease
- Pregnant women
- People with compromised immune systems

This will take each person doing their part to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

We recommend that you call Panhandle Public Health District at 308-262-5764 if you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or difficulty breathing, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or have recently traveled to an area with ongoing spread.

Residents are encouraged to review their family preparedness plans.

“Please leave some toilet paper on the shelves for the rest of us, that will not wipe out COVID-19, our best strategy is social distancing to flatten the curve,” said PPHD Director, Kim Engel. “In all seriousness, we encourage people not to panic and to be prepared, consider other important supplies too.”

People can help protect themselves from COVID-19 and other respiratory infections by:

- **Washing hands often with soap and water** for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact with sick people and stay home if you are sick.** Social distancing has been key in reducing spread.
- **Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze** then throw the tissue in the trash.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently** touched objects and surfaces.

The CDC does NOT currently recommend the general public use facemasks. To learn more about COVID-19, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/covid19>. PPHD will keep you posted in this quickly changing environment.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website www.pphd.org.