



January 19, 2021

Dear Branches Church,

Columbia County Public Health is working diligently to keep the community healthy by partnering with local community groups, businesses, and organizations. A person connected with this group was diagnosed with novel coronavirus, otherwise known as COVID-19. We share your concerns and want you to have the most up-to-date information about how to protect yourself and prevent the spread of this illness.

Oregon and Columbia County have COVID-19 cases in people without high risk exposures such as travel to affected regions or contact with known cases. Locally, the risk for exposure is increasing.

Columbia County Public Health is working with your leaders to identify people who spent the most time with the person while they were ill. Columbia County Public Health cannot reveal the identity of the ill person because information about an individual's health is protected by federal and state privacy laws. We ask that you respect the ill person's privacy as well.

Here are some important steps that you can take to prevent getting sick or spreading illness:

- Illness from COVID-19 can be mild and seem like the common cold. Illness can also be severe in some people. Be alert for any symptoms of illness and stay home at the first sign of sickness. Symptoms to watch for include: cough, sore throat, fever or new difficulty breathing. **Staying home at the first sign of illness is the MOST important step we can take to keep our workplaces and community healthy.**
- If your temperature is above 100°F at any time, or you get a cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or new loss of taste or smell:
 - Cover your cough and avoid direct contact with household members and others.
 - Call your medical provider if you need medical advice and if your symptoms are getting worse. If you do not have a medical provider, call the Columbia County Public Health or your local health department for local medical provider and insurance resources.
 - If you need medical care, call your health care provider before going to their office and tell them you may have been exposed to COVID-19. If emergency care is needed, call 911 and notify them about any known exposure to someone with COVID-19.
 - Contact Columbia County Public Health - 503-397-7247- or your local health department. Tell them you are at risk for COVID-19 and have symptoms.
 - If you can't contact your local health department, or are very ill, call 911, and tell them that you are at risk for COVID-19 and have developed symptoms.
 - Your local health department and ambulance service can help arrange safe transportation for you to get treated and keep you and those you love safe.
 - Only return work and other activities after you do not have a fever or respiratory symptoms (and are not using fever reducing medications like Tylenol or Ibuprofen) for at least 24 hours.

Wear a cloth, paper, or disposable face covering if you have one

Wear a cloth, paper or disposable face covering when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets, and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a face covering (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not be in the same room with you, or they should wear a face covering if they enter your room.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and immediately clean your hands as described below.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60–90% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Soap and water are preferred if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing personal household items

Do not share dishes, utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day

High-touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe according to the instructions on the label. Bathroom and toilet surfaces should be cleaned daily with household cleaner and then with a bleach disinfectant.

For general questions about COVID-19, call 211. For health-related concerns, please contact your health care provider.

More detailed information can be found on our County website at <https://www.columbiacountyor.gov/CoronavirusDisease2019COVID19> and at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) site: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

Thank you for your important partnership in keeping our community healthy.

Columbia County Testing Sites

<https://www.columbiacountyor.gov/departments/PublicHealth/TestingSites>

For those outside Columbia County, contact your local health department for sites where testing is offered.