



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northern Illinois Rockford Region Public Information Officers
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This is a joint news release issued by the Northern Illinois Rockford Region Public Information Officers (NIR-PIO). NIR-PIO serves Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, and Winnebago Counties.

**REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS UPDATE
COMMUNITY ON PROGRESS TOWARD RESTORE ILLINOIS**

Northern Illinois Rockford Region – Currently, the local health departments (LHDs) in the Northern Illinois Rockford Region recognize that the region is operating in phase 2 of Governor Pritzker’s [Restore Illinois](#) framework and working toward phase 3. The LHDs are monitoring the public health metrics to progress toward phase 3. For information on public health metrics, go to the IDPH website here: <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/restore>

While in phase 2 of the Restore Illinois framework, having residents in our communities stay at home as much as possible is vital to reducing the number of people who become severely ill or die from COVID-19. At this time, there is no vaccine to prevent infection or widely available treatment for those who get COVID-19. The best tool we have to reduce morbidity and mortality is social distancing and reducing the number of people interacting with each other in our community. Staying home helps to ensure continued adequate hospital capacity and preserve personal protective equipment for healthcare workers. In addition, local health departments can more easily and quickly identify and quarantine contacts to positive cases when the majority of those contacts are staying home. This helps to continue to limit the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

The LHDs are working with local businesses, organizations, and other community stakeholders to plan how to safely and confidently re-open when our region is ready to progress to the next phase. All businesses and organizations will need to partner with their local health department to promptly identify potential infections in their environments including having policies and record keeping procedures in place to be able to notify their local public health department of potential close contacts when an employee, customer, or client tests positive for COVID-19. Some businesses may need to change the way they operate including offering curbside service. Restaurants may need to serve fewer customers inside, seated further apart, and by reservation only.

The LHDs want the community to know that some changes to our lives will need to be made to safely coexist with COVID-19. These changes may include needing to continue to wear facemasks, limiting the number of people we come in contact with each day, and limiting time spent in a location. In order to prevent setbacks, we need to move forward together, cautiously, and with purpose. While in phase 2, the public is asked to continue to spend time with only those in your household, only go out for essentials, and wear a mask when leaving your home, especially when a distance of 6ft from others cannot be maintained.

For more information:

Go to IDPH and CDC websites.

- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

For general questions about COVID-19, call the IDPH hotline at 1-800-889-3931

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