

COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON
THE CITY OF LOVINGTON

FAQ'S (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)

Revised March 24, 2020

QUESTIONS RELATING TO COVID-19:

Q: Who is at risk of getting COVID-19?

A: Anyone is at risk of getting COVID-19. Although initially it was thought that older adults were more at risk, statistics now show the younger population is also at risk. According to the CDC, the following groups MAY have a higher risk of contracting COVID-19:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- Other high-risk conditions could include:
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised including cancer treatment
- People of any age with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] >40) or certain underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease might also be at risk
- People who are pregnant should be monitored since they are known to be at risk with severe viral illness, however, to date data on COVID-19 has not shown increased risk

Q: What are the current statistics of COVID-19?

A: As of March 24, 2020, there were 33,290 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States. This, based upon a population of 327 million, indicates an infection rate of .01%. Of the 33,290 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States, there have been 400 fatalities. This translates to a 1.2% fatality rate. The fatality rate globally is higher. There have been 83 cases in the State of New Mexico, and 1 in Lea County.

Q: Important tips for keeping yourself and others healthy:

A: These practices will help to reduce your chance of contracting COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay at home when you are sick.
- Stay at home and unnecessary travel where contact with others is likely whenever possible.
- Cover cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- SOCIAL DISTANCING.

Q: What is “Social Distancing”?

A: Social Distancing means while it may be disappointing to hear that so many sports events, cruises, festivals and other gatherings are being cancelled, there is a public health reason for these measures. These cancellations help stop or slow down the spread of disease allowing the health care system to more readily care for patients over time.

Cancelling events that are likely to draw crowds is an example of social distancing. Social distancing is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. **Staying at least six feet away from other people lessens your chances of catching COVID-19.**

Other examples of social distancing that allow you to avoid larger crowds or crowded spaces are:

- Working from home instead of at the office
- Closing schools or switching to online classes
- Visiting loved ones by electronic devices instead of in person
- Cancelling or postponing conferences and large meetings

Q: What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

- A: - Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Q: What should citizens of Lovington do if they show symptoms of COVID-19?:

A: According to Nor-Lea General Hospital, *call, DO NOT present to a public clinic or ER if you are experiencing coughing, fever and shortness of breath. For screening, please call Nor-Lea COVID-19 hotline at **575-396-9090** (7 am - 7 pm). Hotline staff will schedule you for a drive through COVID-19 test if necessary.

*if you feel your symptoms are life threatening, do not hesitate to call 911.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S LATEST (03/23/20) PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER:

Q: What new measures does this order put into effect?

A: The health order tells citizens they must:

- Practice Social Distancing, staying six feet away from others.
- New Mexico citizens should stay at home and undertake only those outings absolutely necessary for their health, safety or welfare.
- Gatherings of no more than 5 people.
- All non-essential businesses are closed. This includes casinos and horse racing facilities, gyms, hair and nail salons. (See next FAQ for what businesses are considered “essential”).

Q: What are deemed “Essential Businesses”?

A: - Gas stations

- Pharmacies

- Food providers: Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, school meal distribution sites and restaurants (but only for delivery and take-out).

- Banks

- Laundromats/laundry services

- Farms, ranches and other food cultivation operations

- Essential state and local government functions, including law enforcement and emergency management services

- Homeless shelters

- Health care operations

- Child care facilities necessary to provide services to workers employed by essential businesses and essential non-profit entities.
- Utilities
- Essential state and local government functions, including law enforcement and emergency management services
- U.S. government and military installations
- Public works construction, commercial and residential construction, public transportation, gas, electrical, oil drilling, oil refining, mining, road repair and construction, trash removal and recycling, data centers, food processing primary metals manufacturers, plumbers, electricians, security services, other skilled trades
- Media services
- Hardware stores
- Funeral homes
- Banks, brokerage services, credit unions, insurance providers, payroll services
- Restaurants, but only for delivery and carry out services
- Local breweries but only for carry out

Q: How enforceable is this order?

A: Per this order, “The New Mexico Department of Health possesses legal authority pursuant to NMSA 24-1-1 and NMSA 12-10A-1 and NMSA 9-7-1 and inherent constitutional police powers to... close public places and forbid gatherings of people when deemed necessary by the Department.”

QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE CITY OF LOVINGTON:

Q: WHAT CITY SERVICES ARE CLOSED:

A: Every city agency except Municipal Court is closed to the public as of this date. Lovington Magistrate Court also remains open with certain restrictions. Specific closures:

- Motor Vehicle Department
- The City Library
- The Lea County Museum
- City Hall **although the drive-through and call-in services are still available for payment of water bills (575) 396-2884.*
- The Bill McKibben Senior Citizen Center (although home meal delivery and curbside pickup services are still in effect – call (575) 396-4161)
- The Youth Center