



# ***CITY of NORTHAMPTON***

## ***PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT***

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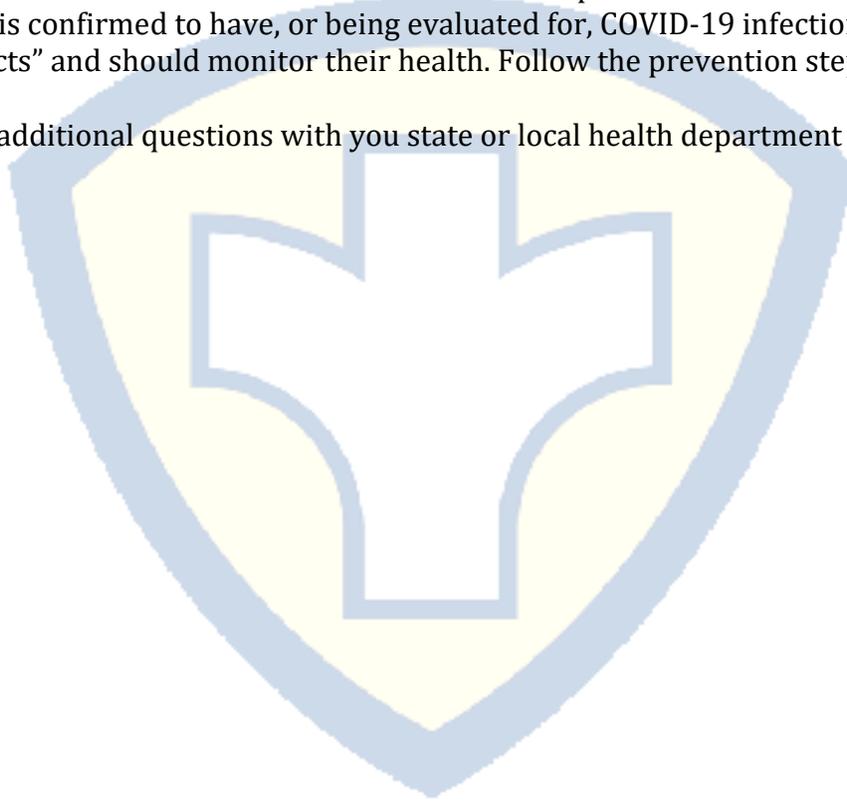
*<http://www.northamptonma.gov/245/Health>*

### **Prevention Steps for Caregivers and Household Members**

If you live with, or provide care at home for, a person confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, COVID-19 infection, you should:

- Make sure that you understand and can help the person follow the healthcare provider's instructions for medication and care. You should help the person with basic needs in the home and provide support for getting groceries, prescriptions, and other personal needs.
- Have only people in the home who are essential for providing care for the person.
  - Other household members should stay in another home or place of residence. If this is not possible, they should stay in another room, or be separated from the person as much as possible. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
  - Restrict visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
  - Keep elderly people and those who have compromised immune systems or chronic health conditions away from the person. This includes people with chronic heart, lung or kidney conditions, and diabetes.
- Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wear a disposable facemask, gown, and gloves when you touch or have contact with the person's blood, body fluids and/or secretions, such as sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhea.
  - Throw out disposable facemasks, gowns, and gloves after using them. Do not reuse.
  - Wash your hands immediately after removing your facemask, gown, and gloves.
- Avoid sharing household items. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with a person who is confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, COVID-19. After the person uses these items, you should wash them thoroughly (see below "Wash laundry thoroughly").
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, body fluids and/or secretions or excretions on them.
  - Read label of cleaning products and follow recommendations provided on product labels. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves or aprons and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
  - Use a diluted bleach solution or a household disinfectant with a label that says "EPA-approved." To make a bleach solution at home, add 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) of water. For a larger supply, add ¼ cup of bleach to 1 gallon (16 cups) of water.
- Wash laundry thoroughly.
  - Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, body fluids and/or secretions or excretions on them.
  - Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items. Wash your hands immediately after removing your gloves.

- Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. In general, wash and dry with the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.
- Place all used disposable gloves, gowns, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing them with other household waste. Wash your hands immediately after handling these items.
- Monitor the person's symptoms. If they are getting sicker, call his or her medical provider and tell them that the person has, or is being evaluated for, COVID-19 infection. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected. Ask the healthcare provider to call the local or state health department.
- Caregivers and household members who do not follow precautions when in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, COVID-19 infection, are considered "close contacts" and should monitor their health. Follow the prevention steps for [close contacts](#) below.
- Discuss any additional questions with your state or local health department



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.