



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
*PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600*

February 29, 2020

**TO:** Home Care Providers

**FROM:** Bill Moss, Assistant Secretary  
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

**SUBJECT:** Information concerning COVID-19, or the 2019 novel coronavirus

The Washington State Department of Health announced several new cases of COVID-19, also known as novel coronavirus, in King and Snohomish Counties. You will likely hear developments in the days and weeks ahead. There is no need to panic, we are providing this information to you as a reminder of how to protect yourself and others.

As a direct care provider, you can help protect yourself, your clients and others by taking a few simple steps to help prevent the spread of the disease at home and at work:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use alcohol-based sanitizers when you cannot wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands.
- Use personal protective equipment such as gloves when providing direct care. If a client has flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath, both the client and caregiver should wear face masks. For more information, review the CDC's [Infection Prevention and Control Training](#). Medicaid and state-only-funded clients are eligible to receive a supply of 200 gloves per month, or more if medically necessary, for use by their home care providers. Learn how clients can [request gloves](#) on the SEIU Benefits website.
- Stay home when you're sick. Alert your client and your client's case manager, if appropriate, to tell them you will be staying home.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and dispose of the tissue right away.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- Get plenty of rest, drink fluids, eat healthy foods and manage your stress. The SEIU 775 Benefits Group offers unique programs to help individual providers manage stress and stay healthy. Visit the [self-care page](#) of the SEIU Benefits website for more information.

If you suspect a possible COVID-19 case, please report it to your [local health jurisdiction](#) and assist the client in notifying their health care provider.

Like the flu, COVID-19 is spread from person to person through droplets in the air. Someone can become infected by touching an infected surface and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC, currently estimate that the incubation period for COVID-19 ranges from 2-14 days. Symptoms may include fever, cough and shortness of breath, although some people may not have any symptoms. Seniors and people with underlying medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease or diabetes are at a higher risk of developing severe complications.

The Department of Health has established a call center to address questions from the general public about COVID-19. If you have questions, please call 1-800-525-0127.