WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

How to prepare your tenants and your buildings.

WHAT IS A CORONAVIRUS?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), coronaviruses are common in many different species of animals and can evolve and infect humans, then spread between humans. Recent examples include SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV. The novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Many patients in the Wuhan outbreak were reportedly linked to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread.

As of January 27, there are more than 1,000 reported infections throughout China and 5 cases in the United States from individuals who recently traveled to Wuhan. Symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath and may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. The immediate health risk of contracting the virus in the United States is considered low at this time.

PROTECTING YOURSELF

According to the CDC, there are several preventive actions you can take, including:

- Avoid close contact with individuals showing signs of illness.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth without first washing your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Additionally, to refrain from spreading illness to others, if you are sick you should:

- Stay home.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you have traveled to China in the last 14 days, the CDC recommends seeking medical attention right away. Notify your doctor's office or emergency room about your situation and travels before you visit their offices.

PROTECTING YOUR TENANTS AND STAFF

To prevent illness from spreading, it is important to take steps to help protect the health of your tenants and staff. This includes:

- Cleaning surfaces and items that are most likely to be touched frequently with the cleaning agents usually used for those surfaces and items. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.

- Advise employees to stay home if they are sick.
- Purchase supplies, such as tissues, soap, and alcohol-based hand cleaners to encourage healthful habits in the workplace.
- Engage your state and local health departments to confirm channels of communication and methods for dissemination of local outbreak information.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SICK WITH 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

The CDC recommends taking the following steps to help prevent 2019-nCoV from spreading if you suspect you have contracted the coronavirus specifically:

- Stay home, except to receive medical care.
- Separate yourself from others in your home.
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor.
- Wear a facemask.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Wash your hands and avoid sharing household items.
- Monitor your symptoms.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS & CONSIDERATIONS

Review your company's current pandemic flu plan or develop a new plan. Involve your employees in development and review of the plan. Familiarize yourself with the plan and share it and policies with your employees.

Develop flexible leave policies to allow employees to stay home to care for sick family members or for children, especially if schools dismiss students or childcare programs close.

Plan for how business can continue if many employees must stay home. Designate and train other employees in the event someone becomes sick to make sure you can continue your critical functions.

Distribute educational literature about prevention. Literature can be found under the "Protect Yourself" section of the World Health Organization's page about coronavirus (see link below).

Provide resources and a work environment that promotes hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes. Provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, and alcohol-based hand cleaner. Offer education on hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes in an easy-to-understand format.

RESOURCES

- **Centers for Disease Control**
  - Coronavirus: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV
  - Pandemic Resources: www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources
- **World Health Organization**
  - Coronavirus: www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
- **BOMA Canada**
  - www.bomacanada.ca/pandemicguide