



# TOWN OF ATHERTON

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Town of Atherton wants to ensure our residents have access to resources and information related to COVID-19. We continue to monitor the latest information and coordinate efforts with the San Mateo County Health Officials as it relates to COVID-19 preparedness and prevention.

The San Mateo County Health Department is coordinating with the region, the state, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The County has advised that the best resources available can be found at the CDC website, which has the most recent information about COVID-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>

The County Health Officer has posted messaging and information about COVID-19 and preparedness on the County Health website: <https://www.smchealth.org/coronavirus>. The San Mateo County Emergency Medical Services Agency has encouraged all residents to visit this site for County Health updates. The Town will continue to coordinate with San Mateo County Health Department to provide updates on COVID-19 as it affects local areas and will share County news releases on the Town website. If there is urgent news, it will be sent as a special edition of Atherton Online or News Flash. We have included general COVID-19 information below and will provide links to information provided by the County.

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## What is the Coronavirus and How Is It Transmitted?

The information contained is to review what is known of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus, more commonly known as the “Coronavirus.” [According to the CDC](#), the initial reports of the illness originated in Wuhan, China, where people likely contracted the virus from animals at a seafood and animal market. Experts now believe that the virus is spreading from human-to-human when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to the spread of a cold or flu. According to the CDC, little is known about how the Coronavirus spreads. Most often, spread from person-to-person happens from close contacts (about six feet). Person-to-person spread occurs mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or can be inhaled into the lungs. It is currently unclear if a person can contract Coronavirus by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. Typically, as with most respiratory viruses, people are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). With the 2019 Novel Coronavirus, however, there have been reports of spread from an infected patient who had no symptoms to a close contact. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with the Coronavirus and investigations are ongoing.

## What Are the Primary Symptoms of the Coronavirus?

In the confirmed cases of Coronavirus thus far, affected individuals have reported mild to severe respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. In severe cases, the virus has led to pneumonia, kidney failure, and, at least 100 deaths (presently, all in China), as of the time of this writing. The CDC believes at this time that symptoms may appear within two to fourteen days after exposure. However, some infected individuals have shown little to no symptoms.

## How Can Spread of the Coronavirus Be Prevented?

Because there is presently no Coronavirus vaccine available, the CDC is recommending standard precautions to avoid the spread of respiratory viruses, such as washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or, if soap is not available, using hand sanitizer; avoiding close contact with people who are sick; staying at home when you are sick; and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces. Employee use of issued Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for work involving exposures is also a very important element to avoid exposure and spread of viruses.

## Basic Prevention

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends taking some actions to help prevent the circulation of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when sick.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. Common areas in the workplace, including break rooms and computer keyboards used by more than one person, are kept clean and disinfected. Facilities is placing disinfecting wipes in these common areas if they are not already there and they are asking our cleaning service personnel to take some extra time to wipe down counters, door handles, light switches, etc. with appropriate cleaner.