

COVID – 19 and Vulnerable Populations

In Alabama, there are 5,832 confirmed COVID- 19 cases, 768 hospitalizations and 197 deaths. A total of 52,641 have been tested (as of 4-24-20). Please share this information with your networks and stakeholders.

COVID – 19

COVID-19, a new coronavirus, is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to very severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath. The virus is contagious and spreads between people who are in close contact with each other (within about 6 feet). COVID – 19 spreads through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. Those droplets can land on surrounding surfaces or be inhaled by individuals who are nearby. **Please note that COVID – 19 can spread by someone showing no symptoms.**

Vulnerable Populations

Anyone can become infected with COVID – 19 but individuals with a serious chronic disease and older individuals (65 or over) are most likely to become very ill from this virus. According to the National Associations of Chronic Disease Directors, people who have any of the conditions below should be extra cautious to protect themselves from COVID -19:

- Asthma and lung disease
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Severe obesity (BMI>40)
- Weakened immune systems because of diseases like HIV or because people are going through cancer treatment

As of today (4-24-20), **African Americans/Blacks** represent 26.8% of the population in Alabama. However, they account for more than 35% (37.9) of confirmed COVID – 19 cases and nearly 50% (45.7) of COVID – 19 deaths.

Persons 65 years and older represent 16.9% of Alabama's population. They represent only 25% of confirmed cases, but account for 77% of COVID – 19 deaths in Alabama.

Your Role

Everyone has a role to play to stop the spread of COVID – 19. Please follow the CDC's recommendations:

- Avoid crowded places and stay at home.
- When you are outside your home, stay at least two arms' length away (6 feet recommended) from other people.
- Wear cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). If you do not have soap and water, you can use hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with the inside of your elbow.
- Clean objects or surfaces that people touch a lot, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, and key pads.

Resources/Additional Information

For resources or additional information regarding COVID – 19, please click on the following links below:

- <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/resources.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>