

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information (3-10-20)

- **MO DHSS Website:** Our Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) [COVID-19 webpage](#) contains any and all COVID-19-related information for Missourians, and is updated frequently. Please be sure you're including a link to this webpage and its resources in any piece of communication you share with families or staff members. DESE officials remain in close communication with colleagues at the DHSS to stay informed about COVID-19 and the current situation in Missouri.
- **School Closure Decision-Making:** If a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in your community, we encourage local education agencies (LEAs) to work closely with local health officials and seek their guidance on the next steps for your school(s). In the event of a confirmed case, epidemiological investigators would work quickly to determine what individuals came into close contact with the infected person; the infected person and those who were determined to have close contact with that individual while considered contagious would be those asked to self-quarantine and monitor their health for any development of symptoms. It is important to keep in mind that a school closure **may not be warranted** in all circumstances when a student or staff member contracts COVID-19.
- **CDC Travel Guidance:** In an effort to continue providing safe learning environments, and assist in the effort to slow the exposure to and/or the spread of COVID-19, LEAs may choose to follow the [CDC Travel Guidance here](#) for people returning from a country under a travel advisory, which currently includes China, Italy, South Korea, Iran and Japan, and ask students/staff to stay home from school for 14 calendar days upon their return to the United States. Please note that the CDC's list of travel advisories may change rapidly; follow the link above to stay informed about those advisory updates.
- **Conference on the Young Years (CYY):** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) CYY is scheduled to take place as planned this week ([March 12-14](#)). DHSS officials do not recommend a change in our plans for CYY; if that changes, conference participants will be notified as quickly as possible.
- **COVID-19 & Food & Nutrition Services:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and DESE have received questions from Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) officials asking how their programs and operations could be impacted as a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19). At this time, continue normal program operations. If a public health emergency happens in your community, such as an outbreak of COVID-19, USDA Foods currently in your local inventory can be used as an emergency feeding source for your community without prior approval or permission from DESE Food and Nutrition Services. Information about that decision-making can be reviewed on the USDA Foods During Disaster [fact sheet here](#). Within 45 days of an emergency feeding, local FNS officials will submit to DESE FNS [via email](#) the total amount of products that need to be replaced. DESE FNS officials will then work with local SFAs to gather additional information needed, such as the disaster rate, total number of persons receiving USDA Foods, the period

those foods were issued, etc. The USDA Foods used will be replaced with another like product or, in some cases, credit entitlement for the value of the food used. The [USDA Food Program Disaster Manual here](#) provides FNS officials key information about this process. DESE encourages FNS officials to review this information as a precautionary measure, specifically: page 21 (School Food Authority Disaster Preparation information), page 32 (Procedures for the Replacement and Reporting of USDA Foods), and page 73 (Disaster preparation recommendations). [See full memo.](#)

- **Coding COVID-19-Related Absences:** Any student absence related to COVID-19 would be coded/entered like any other student absence related to illness.
- **Communication Resources:** The Missouri School Public Relations Association (MOSPRA) has made any and all COVID-19 materials accessible to anyone interested, not just MOSPRA members. If an LEA needs samples of letters home to families, or information to post on your website, review the contents in the [“Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) MOSPRA” Google Drive folder here.](#)
- **COVID-19 Cyber Scams:** The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) warns individuals to remain vigilant for scams related to COVID-19. Cyber actors may send emails with malicious attachments or links to fraudulent websites to trick victims into revealing sensitive information or donating to fraudulent charities or causes. Exercise caution in handling any email with a COVID-19-related subject line, attachment or hyperlink, and be wary of social media pleas, texts or calls related to COVID-19.