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COVID-19 is a highly transmissible virus. Common symptoms of the virus are cough, fever, shortness of breath, muscle aches, chills and sometimes diarrhea or loss of sense of smell or taste. Some people are infected but feel normal and never develop symptoms. It is difficult to determine who can transmit an infection since an infected person might be able to infect someone else even 2 days before they first develop symptoms of the virus.

Each time a person leaves their home and interacts with other people they increase the chance that they will become infected. There is currently some discussion about slowly resuming many activities. Although we all hope that the coronavirus causing COVID-19 illness may be spreading less rapidly, more people in our communities are developing COVID-19. During the coming months we will each personally know people who are infected and some people who become seriously ill or die from this virus.

All individuals are susceptible to this virus. Avoid crowded places where you would likely have an increased risk of exposure to an infected person. Some people are not aware where they may have been exposed to the virus but other times people can identify that they had contact with a person known to be infected by COVID-19. Sometimes these infected contacts are family members, personal acquaintances or are contacts in a place of business. When a person is identified with COVID-19 infection the Health Department speaks to the person and tries to identify and notify others with whom they may have been in contact. When a location is identified as a possible place where several people may have transmitted the infection the Health Department will evaluate the location and recommend as needed further testing, cleaning and sanitizing the location, changing business practices or other actions to minimize the risk to public health.

Sometimes people who may have been closely exposed to an infected person will be advised to isolate themselves and they may be recommended to have a test for the virus. In order to minimize privacy concerns, the Health Department will typically not publicly disclose names or

specific locations of infected people, especially where the risk to public health has been minimized.

We should all be compassionate and thankful that the workers in all essential businesses are willing to continue to provide service to the public. Essential business workers, like many others who serve the public, are at increased risk of developing COVID-19. If a person interacts with many people each day their risk of developing or transmitting this potentially deadly disease increases.

Although current research indicates that the virus that causes COVID-19 is not likely to be transmitted in food, food service workers are at similar risk as other essential business workers and should maintain social distancing, hand washing, sanitization, and other precautions when interacting with each other and the public.

Wear a mask, keep your distance, have the minimal number of people involved and only shop when necessary. This will decrease the risk that you will transmit or receive COVID-19.