

MENTAL HEALTH

As the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) provides up-to-date information relating to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), we also want to prepare our residents for protecting their mental health as it is an integral and essential component of health. As information spreads about COVID-19, it can be overwhelming and scary to hear that you should stay at home and may even lead to increased fear and anxiety.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

- Governor Wolf signed an emergency disaster declaration on March 6, 2020, to ensure state agencies involved in the response have the expedited resources they need to continue to focus on the virus and its possible spread;
- Activated the Department of Health's Emergency Operations Center and partially activated the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center at PEMA to allow for enhanced response coordination;
- Testing for COVID-19 at the state laboratory;
- Maintaining constant communication and outreach with federal, state and local partners;
- Providing symptom monitoring for residents returning from areas impacted by coronavirus; and
- Providing health care providers, businesses and education providers with information.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Stay calm.** The department has the networks in place to ensure that we continue to keep Pennsylvanians safe and healthy as possible.
- **Take a moment to breathe.** Before taking to your friends, family and loved ones, take some time to calm down before spreading concern or fear.
- **Check in with loved ones.** This is an overwhelming time, so its important to connect with friends, family and loved ones to show you are there if they need you.
- **Stay at home to avoid spreading and collecting germs.** If you can, avoid going to work, school or other public places.

HOW CAN YOU STAY HEALTHY WHILE INSIDE?

- **Practice good self-care.** Ensure your body is getting the proper nutrients from fruit and vegetables, drinking water and getting enough sleep.
- **Use your phone for good.** Connect with friends, family and other loved ones through texting, calling, video chatting and connecting through social media.
- **Write down your thoughts and feelings in a journal.** It is important to have an outlet to express your yourself.
- **Step outside for fresh air.** If you can, we encourage residents to step outside, take a walk, exercise or even direct sunlight into your house.

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, help is available. Contact the Crisis Text Line by texting **PA to 741-741**.

Department of Health website – <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

CDC – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>