

# BE PREPARED FOR A NOVEL PANDEMIC

A novel (new) virus, like Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), can emerge from anywhere and quickly spread around the world. It is hard to predict when or where the next novel pandemic will emerge.



**FEMA**

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A pandemic is a disease outbreak that spans several countries and affects a large number of people. Pandemics are most often caused by viruses, like COVID-19, which can easily spread from person to person.



May be spread directly from person to person.



May be spread indirectly. Germs can pass from a non-living object to a person.



May be spread by people who are infected but don't have any symptoms.



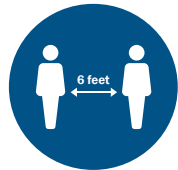
A vaccine, testing, or treatment for the disease may not exist right away. It may take months or years for the majority of the world to become immune to the disease.

## IF A NOVEL PANDEMIC IS DECLARED

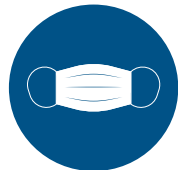
Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and try not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Keep a distance of at least six feet between yourself and people who are not part of your household.



Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when in public.



Clean and disinfect high-touch objects and surfaces.



Stay at home as much as possible to prevent the spread of disease.



Follow the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local authorities.

# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A PANDEMIC THREATENS



**Learn how diseases spread** to help protect yourself and others.

**Take actions to prevent the spread of disease.** Cover coughs and sneezes. Stay home when sick (except to get medical care). Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

**Plan for schools, workplaces, and community centers to be closed.** Investigate and prepare for virtual coordination for school, work (telework), and social activities.

**Create an emergency plan** so that you and your family know what to do and what you will need in case an outbreak happens. Consider how a pandemic may affect your plans for other emergencies.

**Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days or weeks.** Supplies may include cleaning supplies, non-perishable foods, prescriptions, and bottled water. Buy supplies slowly to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to buy what they need. Remember that not everyone can afford to stock up immediately. Consider avoiding WIC-labeled products so that those who rely on these products can access them.

**Review your health insurance policies** to understand what they cover, including telemedicine options.

**Create password-protected digital copies of important documents** and store in a safe place. Watch out for scams and fraud.



**Follow the latest guidelines** from the CDC and state and local authorities to prevent the spread of disease. Refer to your local and state public health departments for vaccine and testing updates.

**Maintain good personal health habits and public health practices.** Proper handwashing and disinfecting surfaces help to slow the spread of disease. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

**Limit close, face-to-face contact with others.** Stay at home as much as possible to prevent the spread of disease.

**If you believe you've been exposed to the disease,** contact your doctor, follow the quarantine instructions from medical providers, and monitor your symptoms. If you're experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 and shelter in place with a mask, if possible, until help arrives.

**Practice social distancing while in public.** Keep a distance of at least six feet between yourself and people who are not part of your household. Avoid crowds and large groups of people.

**Share accurate information about the disease** with friends, family, and people on social media. Sharing bad information about the disease or treatments for the disease may have serious health outcomes. Remember that stigma hurts everyone and can cause discrimination against people, places, or nations.

**Know that it's normal to feel anxious or stressed.** Engage virtually with your community through video and phone calls. Take care of your body and talk to someone if you are feeling upset.



**Continue taking protective actions, like:**

- Staying home when you are sick (except to get medical care).
- Following the guidance of your health care provider.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

**Follow guidance on the re-opening** of businesses, schools, community-based organizations, houses of worship, and workplaces.

**Be sure to evaluate your family emergency plan** and make timely updates.

**Work with your community** to talk about the lessons you learned from the pandemic. Decide how you can use these experiences to be more prepared for future pandemics.

## Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Go to [Ready.gov/pandemic](https://www.ready.gov/pandemic) and [Ready.gov/collection/12-ways-to-prepare](https://www.ready.gov/collection/12-ways-to-prepare) to learn more about how to help you and your family prepare for a disaster. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for a **novel pandemic**. Sign up for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention subscription services.

