

**COVID-19 Updated Guidance for Clinicians**  
**February 28, 2020**

**Clinical Guidance & Requested Actions**

- Sustained person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 in large numbers has been established in nations near to and far from China, including **South Korea (1766)**, **Italy (528)**, **Iran (245)**, and **Japan (189)**. For a world map of aggregated case counts updated daily, visit:  
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>
- In response to the growing global COVID-19 outbreak, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued travel alerts for these countries with community transmission. See *Travel Health Notices* at <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers> for details and monitor frequently for updates to the list.
- **Definition of a person under investigation (PUI) eligible for testing** has thus been updated to include returning travelers returning in the past 14 days from affected countries with a CDC Travel Alert Level 2 or higher: mainland China, South Korea, Japan, Italy and Iran.

Clinical Features	&	Epidemiologic Risk
Fever <sup>1</sup> OR signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or dyspnea)	AND	Close contact with COVID-19 case within the past 14 days
Fever <sup>1</sup> AND signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or dyspnea)	AND	History of travel from affected areas <sup>2</sup> within the past 14 days
Fever with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) requiring hospitalization and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza). <sup>3</sup>	AND	No source of exposure identified

<sup>1</sup>Fever may be subjective or objective

<sup>2</sup>See [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/) for countries with at least a CDC Level 2 Travel Alert.

<sup>3</sup> Includes single cases or clusters of patients with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) of unknown etiology in which COVID-19 is being considered.

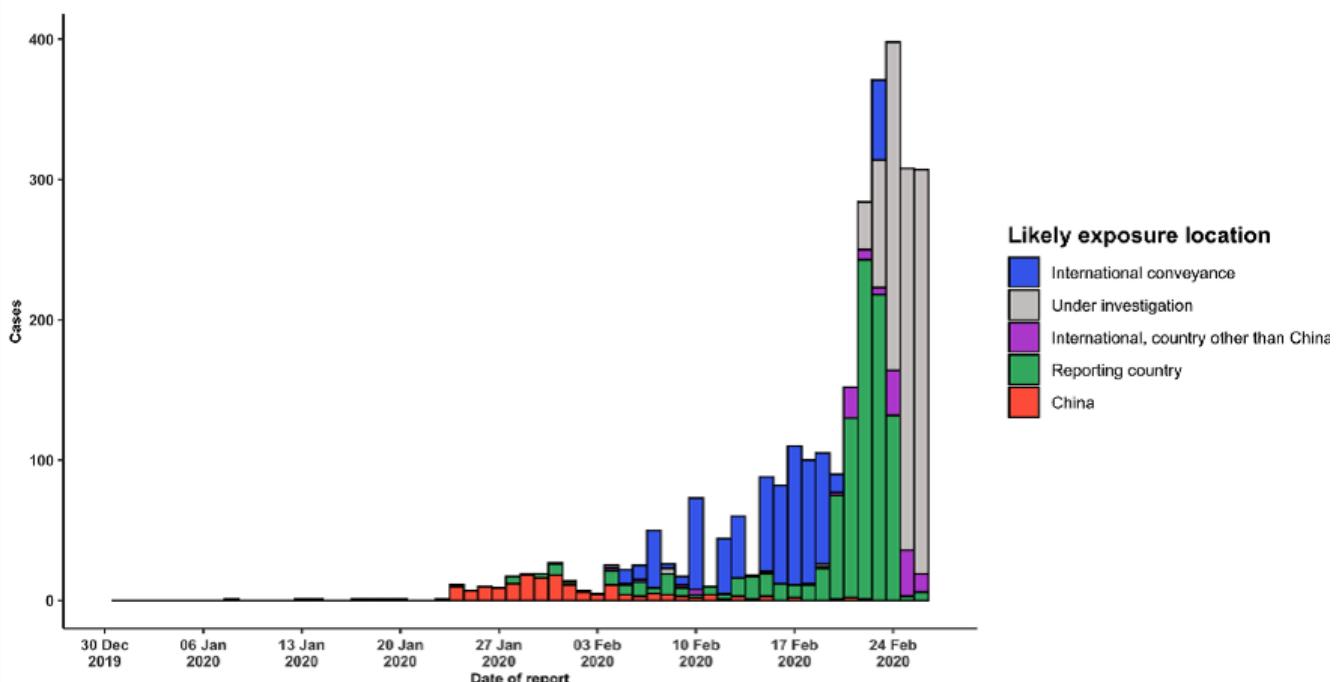
*For full details, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>*

- **Follow CDC guidance for infection control and personal protective equipment** when evaluating patients meeting these PUI criteria. Visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html> for details.
- **Perform rapid influenza and respiratory viral panel testing** for all patients meeting PUI criteria or for whom you otherwise plan to notify or consult the Snohomish Health District (SHD).
- **Immediately notify your facility's infection control personnel and the SHD Communicable Disease Program (425-339-5278) in the event you identify a PUI for COVID-2019.**
- This is a new and rapidly changing situation. Case definitions, laboratory capacity and clinical guidance is likely to change frequently. Stay tuned for updates and frequently monitor CDC's and the Washington State Department of Health's websites for COVID-19.

## Background

- Changes in novel coronavirus nomenclature have replaced the prior “2019-nCoV” designation. The novel coronavirus itself is now referred to as SARS-CoV-2 (for its genetic relatedness to the SARS coronavirus) and the disease it causes is referred to as COVID-19 ([coronavirus disease 2019](#)).
- The vast majority of new COVID-19 cases occurring outside China are no longer linked to travel in China. Note in the figure below that China-associated cases are red; cruise line, blue; and presumed local transmission, green.

**Figure 3. Epidemic curve of COVID-19 cases (n=2918) identified outside of China, by date of report and likely exposure location, 26 February 2020**



Source: <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronavirus/situation-reports/20200226-sitrep-37-covid-19.pdf>

- Nationwide, 14 total cases have been diagnosed in the United States (US); two of these represented domestic secondary transmission from imported cases to a close contact. COVID-19 positive results were also found among US residents repatriated from Wuhan (3) and the Diamond Princess cruise ship (42).
- To-date in Washington State, we still have had only the one COVID-19 case diagnosed in mid-January. No secondary cases emerged from that case's contacts. Two additional Washington residents (one from Snohomish County) were among asymptotically infected passengers on a cruise ship who were repatriated in mid-February. Statewide, twenty-six persons under investigation have tested negative for SARS-CoV-2 and two have pending results at this time.
- The new availability of SARS-CoV-2 testing locally at the Washington State Public Health Laboratories beginning February 28 should improve turnaround time on results of SARS-CoV-2 testing which previously was taking up to seven days due to shipping and waiting lines for finite capacity at CDC in Atlanta.

## Resources

CDC's Information for Health Care Professionals  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/>

Washington State Department of Health  
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus/Resources>

Snohomish Health District  
<https://www.snohd.org/nkov2019>

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