Press Releases

Governor, Director Dr. Alexander-Scott Make Education Announcements

Governor Gina M. Raimondo and Nicole, Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH, the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) made several announcements today relating to education.

- Distance learning: Citing the success of the first week of distance learning across the state and the necessity of continuing to implement social distancing measures, Governor Raimondo announced that Rhode Island will continue distance learning through the month of April.

- WiFi: To ensure that all Rhode Island students have access to WiFi necessary for distance learning at home, the Governor today announced that all households that have a smart phone with a WiFi hot spot feature and have cell phone service from the four most common providers in our state – Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint – will be able to activate the hot spot feature for free. There will be no activation fee, no usage fee, and no overage fee. This policy will last until at least May 13.

- April Reading Challenge: The Governor is asking Rhode Island students to read every single day in the month of April – all 30 days. The state will work with nonprofits, public libraries and some generous companies to distribute books to students who need them. More information is available online. (See link below)

- Kids Press Conference: This Thursday, the Governor will be joined by Education Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green and Dr. Alexander Scott for a special press conference for kids. Students can fill out a google form to submit their questions or leave a voicemail with their questions. Information is being distributed to teachers and will also be available on the Governor's social media channels this afternoon. (See link below)

Data

Additionally, Dr. Alexander-Scott announced today that Rhode Island has 114 new cases of COVID-19. This brings Rhode Island's count to 408. Dr. Alexander-Scott also announced Rhode Island's fourth COVID-19 associated fatality. This most recent fatality was a male in his 70s. A full data summary for Rhode Island is posted online.

Key messages for the public

- If you have traveled in the last 14 days, self-quarantine for 14 days. If you need to get food or pick up medicine, you need to call a loved one or neighbor who can run that errand for you. Respecting and following quarantine rules will help Rhode Island try to ensure that there are enough hospital beds when there is a surge of patients who are ill with COVID-19.

- Avoid all crowded places, large events, and mass gatherings. This is social distancing.

- Avoid close personal contact with people in public. When greeting people avoid handshakes and hugs. Additional guidance is available from CDC.

- People without symptoms should not be tested for COVID-19. Testing individuals with no symptoms is not recommended by CDC.

- People who think they have COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider and should not go out. If you have any symptoms at all, you should isolate at home. Do not go directly to a healthcare facility without first calling a healthcare provider (unless you are experiencing a medical emergency). Healthcare providers have a dedicated number that they are then using to consult with RIDOH on potential COVID-19 cases.

- Early data suggest that older adults are twice as likely to experience serious COVID-19 illness. RIDOH is reiterating CDC's guidance for people older than 60 years of age:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

When greeting people avoid handshakes and hugs.

Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.

Pay attention for potential COVID-19 symptoms including, fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, call your doctor.

More information is available from CDC.

People with general, non-medical questions about COVID-19 can visit www.health.ri.gov/covid, write to RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov, or call 401-222-8022. This is the COVID-19 Hotline that RIDOH has available to the public.

Everyone can help stop the spread of viruses in Rhode Island.

Get your flu shot, and make sure the people around you do the same.

Wash your hands often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Viruses can spread by coughing or sneezing on other people or into your hands.

Stay home and do not leave your house if you are sick, unless it is for emergency medical care.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.

Related links

Reading Challenge (https://www.ride.ri.gov/insideride/additionalinformation/aprilreadingchallenge.aspx)
Kids Press Conference (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZpNE_3rBixKcMU8DDD7gWPxpF6wxHsvwWlqN5x7yzLNmbLw/viewform)

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