March 6, 2020

**Fellow Youth Ranch employees:**

This is the second information message concerning the coronavirus and actions being taken by IYR to protect ourselves and our families, our clients and customers, and our communities. As before, ***we ask all supervisors to post this message and to personally share it with any of their staff who do not have a personal work email.***

**IYR Specific Information**

* The Executive Leadership Team is developing plans for each IYR work section that include:
* Identifying/prioritizing essential functions in each area
* Continuing operations with employee absences due to illness or family care needs
* Dealing with potential reductions in customers and store revenue
* Dealing with potential reduction (or increase) in numbers of clients
* Emergency communication
* Reducing face-to-face contact
* Review of policies on sick leave, PTO, administrative leave, and compensation
* Dealing with exposure to an individual with the illness
* Infection control supplies and guidance on cleaning of public area surfaces
* We want to encourage calm regarding the coronavirus. There is still much that is unknown about the virus. However, there is a lot we do know, including:
* Washing hands thoroughly and often is the #1 way to prevent the spread of the disease.
* Frequent sanitizing of your workspace including phones, keyboards, door handles, etc., assist in minimizing the spread of the virus.
* Masks don’t prevent those who are healthy from getting sick. Only those exhibiting symptoms should wear masks.
* If you are sick and exhibiting symptoms – please stay home and take a personal day to rest and get healthy.
* There are additional tips in the General Information below to help protect yourself and others from the coronavirus.

**Questions**

* So far, we have not received any questions from staff members, but as we do, we will address them in future communications.
* If you do have any questions or concerns, please direct them to HR at HumanResources@youthranch.org or call 208-377-2613 and ask to speak with HR. Supervisors: If any of your staff raise questions related to the coronavirus or information in this or future communications, please send those questions to HR as well.
* We know this disease can cause uncertainty, anxiety, and even fear. Please know that Idaho Youth Ranch will always act in the best interest of our clients and customers who rely on us for help, and our work colleagues who look to stay safe and healthy. Thanks for your attention. We’ll have more soon!

**General Information:** The number of cases in the US continues to increase, although for now most schools and offices are open and few public gatherings have been canceled. Here are some tips to help you stay corona-free.

* **Individual behaviors matter -** If you are young and healthy you are most likely to avoid or survive an infection. Still, you should pay close attention to preventive measures. These people can spread the disease while believing they only have a cold. They can infect the elderly, or people who have chronic diseases or immune conditions.
* **Wash your hands!** The CDC continues to stress that this is perhaps the most important behavior to prevent spread of the disease. Wash your hands for 20 seconds, regularly, and as soon as possible if you sneeze or cough into them. Soap works best if you scrub and use hot water, but cold water is far better than nothing. You don’t need antibacterial soap because the coronavirus is a virus, not a bacterium.
* **Use hand sanitizer!** Use it often and particularly when hand-washing is not available. Make sure it’s alcohol-based (at least 60%).
* **Clean hand towels -** Wash them often.
* **Avoid touching your face -** This is an effective preventive measure, but hard to do.
* **Avoid shaking hands -** Consideralternative forms of greeting such as fist bumps.
* **Using bathrooms -** Avoid touching the fixtures as much as possible and use a paper towel to touch the door handle when exiting.
* **Disinfect common surfaces -** The coronavirus can live for as long as 9 days on a solid surface. You can prevent exposure by disinfecting commonly touched surfaces in your home and work area like countertops, remote controls, keyboards, and refrigerator handles.
* **Cleaning your phone -** This may be the surface you touch the most. Other, similar viruses are known to live on glass for up to 4 days. So, if you’ve been touching your phone with viral hands, then do a beautiful job washing your hands, and then touch your phone again, you may have just recontaminated yourself. The CDC currently recommends cleaning your phone once a day.
* **Wearing masks -** The World Health Organization has published [recommendations](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks) for when individuals should use masks. The Surgeon General has stated that masks are not an effective way for the general population to avoid exposure and that masks are needed for the people who are at the highest risk, especially those treating the ill. When doctors, nurses, and first responders cannot work, new crises present themselves.
* **Traveling -** It’s always advisable to avoid travel if you’re sick. If you are not sick and you do travel, be sure you are informed of the conditions at your destination and that you follow safe anti-exposure practices.
* **Stay home!** If you experience symptoms of illness protect those you work with or serve and stay at home.
* **Be conscientious -** No matter your position, there are people who stand to lose much more than you do if they get sick. No matter how worried you are, there are people who are more worried. Look out for them and help make sure everyone adopts these basic measures.