

After two Michigan residents were diagnosed with Coronavirus disease on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency in order to harness resources, mitigate spread of COVID-19, and protect families. The number of affected individuals continues to rise and the situation seems to change hourly. Today, SCDA-MI has taken additional precautionary actions after the Governor has specifically cited persons with sickle cell among a list of individuals at risk of severe illness.

As previously stated, vulnerable populations may be at higher risk for COVID-19 adverse health complications. Vulnerable populations include infants, individuals over 50, individuals with compromised immune systems, and individuals with chronic conditions, including sickle cell.

We now know that fever, cough and shortness of breath are being promoted as the symptoms to be aware of. The CDC has cited **acute chest syndrome and sepsis** in its [interim clinical guidance](#) for individuals with confirmed coronavirus disease. **Both of these conditions are highly dangerous conditions for people with sickle cell.**

In order to protect one another and our community, SCDA-MI has heightened its protocols and will observe the following measures based on CDC recommendations:

1. NEW TO THIS UPDATE: Delivery of services

- For patient safety, we will not conduct face-to-face client meetings. Meetings will continue only via phone or other virtual means.
- For patient safety, we will halt home visits until further notice. Staff should continue to reach out to clients via phone or other virtual means.
- Our on-site lab will be closed to testing until further notice. We apologize for the inconvenience but must stay vigilant to minimize the threat of virus transfer.
- We are declining and cancelling participation in any currently scheduled health fairs or similar events until further notice.
- We are not taking walk-in appointments until further notice.

2. Don't come in sick, or if someone you live with is sick.

- If you or someone you live with has symptoms of acute respiratory illness or fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), please notify your supervisor and stay home until you/they are free of fever, signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
- If you take public transit, consider adjusting your schedule so you're not traveling during rush hour.
- If you arrive at work displaying signs or symptoms of respiratory illness, you will be sent home.
- SCDA-MI encourages staff to work from home if they or family members are ill. Check with your supervisor.

3. Increase sanitation practices.

- [Wash your hands](#) (for at least 20 seconds) or use hand sanitizer during the following times:
 - When you enter or leave the SCDA-MI offices or other program spaces
 - Before and after eating
 - After [coughing or sneezing](#)
 - After using the bathroom
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Always cover your mouth when you [cough or sneeze](#), and do so into a tissue or your elbow

4. Use antibacterial cleaning supplies.

- After using any surface – including workstations, countertops, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, tables, etc. – run an antibacterial wipe over it.
- If you do not have antibacterial wipes for your office space, we will reimburse the cost of purchase. (Please keep in mind that these products are meant to be used at the office only.)

5. Travel

- Please inform your supervisor if you are planning to conduct any personal travel outside the region or country.
- SCDA-MI is suspending all non-essential business travel at this time. Please check with your supervisor if you have questions about what this entails.

6. Testing and Assessment

- If you or clients have questions about possible exposure, the CDC offers information on [how to conduct a risk assessment](#).
- Michigan's Medicaid program will waive copays and cost-sharing for testing and health care treatment related to the COVID-19 coronavirus. Private insurers including ours, BCBSM and BCN, will fully cover the cost of medically-necessary COVID-19 tests.

This plan is flexible and will continue to evolve according to circumstances. Please direct any questions or concerns to your supervisor. Additional information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus). Thank you for helping to keep our community healthy and safe.