News reports about the global pandemic of COVID-19 have made all of us worried about the health and safety of our families. This virus did not exist before so scientists around the world are working hard to tell us information as they learn it. This means the information that we get is changing rapidly. The ACCC will try to provide you with up-to-date information as we learn it. Our staff can help you via phone as you need to navigate this changing environment.

What We Know:

1. The number of cases of COVID-19 is increasing exponentially and as of March 15, 2020 the US has 3,244 confirmed cases. This is the number of people that have been tested and proven to have the disease. Public health experts believe that the number of people who have unconfirmed cases to be much higher. We are relying on information from Johns Hopkins University, Center for Disease Control, and our local health department for up-to-date information.
   
   a. https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html
   
   
   c. https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/health/

2. People don’t have to feel sick to spread the disease. Anyone can be a carrier.

3. The best way to prevent the spread of the disease is to stay home. If you can, don’t go to community events, friends’ houses, or public places. Schools and other institutions are closing to prevent the spread and to “flatten the curve” so the total number of people who are sick is not greater than the number of hospital beds that we have in our community.

What We Should Do:

1. Public health officials want us to practice “social distancing” that means keeping at least 6-10 feet between you and other people.

2. Please stay calm and find safe ways to stay connected to support (phone calls, text messages, video chatting, etc). Social distancing doesn’t mean social isolation.

3. If you need to go out to the grocery store or to work, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer, scrubbing for 20 seconds when you enter a new space and when you return to your home. Cleanse your hands after you touch hard surfaces or your face, or when you cough, blow your nose, or sneeze.
4. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.

5. Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.

6. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

7. Greet others with a smile instead of a handshake or hug.

8. Try to go grocery shopping when there are not many people there such as early in the morning or late at night.

9. If you are sick, stay home.

10. If a family member is sick, stay home.

11. If you have a fever of 100 degrees or higher, a dry cough, and difficulty breathing, you might have COVID-19. You should call your doctor’s office to report that you have these symptoms and they will give you further instructions.

12. Have enough non-perishable goods on hand for about two weeks or more.