



COVID-19

Missouri Novel Coronavirus Information Hotline  877-435-8411

Team members,

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is easy to get overwhelmed. Fear of the unknown, rapidly changing circumstances, conflicting information, mass closures, and media overload are the new reality.

Now more than ever, it is critically important to focus on your own health – realizing that mental health and physical health are intertwined. The more stressed you feel for long periods of time, the more likely it is that your immune system will be compromised. This puts you at risk of getting ill and taking longer to recover. You may start to experience behavioral health issues as well.

The Department of Mental Health wants to remind our fellow State employees of the following tips to manage your overall health during stressful times:

- Avoid information overload—pick a few reliable sources and stay with them*
- Name your fears and prepare for them
- Think outside yourself by helping others
- As much as possible, keep some level of routine and consistency in your days
- Get regular sleep
- Exercise
- Eat nutritious foods that are low in sugar
- Drink plenty of water
- Avoid drinks high in alcohol or caffeine
- Find at least one thing to be thankful for each day
- Find opportunities for humor and fun
- Breathe slowly and deeply when your anxiety is high
- Stay emotionally connected to others (but physically distant)

Self-care involves actions to support your physical and mental health. Visit our COVID-19 site for self-care tools: <https://dmh.mo.gov/disaster-services/self-care>

Please remember, things will get better. Consider unexpected positive impacts from this negative event and look for light at the end of the tunnel. Physical distancing, frequent hand washing, and increasing availability of personal protective equipment are having a positive impact.

For more information and support, I encourage you to access any of the following resources:

- Department of Health and Senior Services COVID-19 web site*: <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus>
- Department of Health and Senior Services COVID-19 24 hour hotline: 877-435-8411
- COVID-19 Coping Skills: <https://dmh.mo.gov/disaster-services/covid-19-information> and <https://dmh.mo.gov/covid-19-information>
- Disaster Distress Helpline: Phone 800-985-5990, or text “TalkWithUs” to 66746

Sincerely,

Mark Stringer

Director

Missouri Department of Mental Health

*The DHSS web site is one of the best sources of information about COVID-19 in Missouri

P.S. You can also visit <https://oa.mo.gov/personnel/state-team-member-resources> for resources involving COVID-19.

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