



### **March 13, 2020 - A notice for anyone planning a long-distance hike or ride on the CDT in 2020:**

As you know, the COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly. While the trail can be a great place to practice social distancing, there is still a risk of transmission, particularly in high-use areas like trailheads and off-trail gathering areas, such as hostels. While you yourself may fall into a lower risk category for developing a serious case of COVID-19, we here at CDTC are writing because we are concerned for your safety as well as the safety of those who live and work in trailside communities.

These communities are home to vulnerable populations, including the elderly and those without health insurance, and many have limited medical facilities that could become easily overwhelmed by even a small number of COVID-19 cases. **If you are planning to begin a long-distance hike or ride on the CDT in the next six weeks, you must be prepared – mentally and financially – to self-quarantine in a private hotel room for at least two weeks if you think you are exposed to the virus and/or begin to develop symptoms.** Traveling home from the trail to self-quarantine would be ill-advised and would endanger those around you and people on your route home.

We understand that finances are often already tight on a long-distance hike and that preparing for such an outcome may be impossible for you. **If you are unable to budget for the possibility of paying for a hotel room, food delivery, and medication for two weeks in the event that you are exposed to COVID-19, we urge you to consider postponing your CDT journey until the situation improves.**

We understand that this may be upsetting – many of you have been planning this journey for years, and we know that an opportunity to spend months on the CDT is life-changing. However, in issuing this guidance, we are thinking of the elderly man working part-time at the checkout counter of the grocery store where you will resupply, and the woman without health insurance who cleans your hostel or hotel room. We are thinking of the fact that many trailside communities along the CDT are small and isolated, and may be hours away from the closest COVID-19 testing center or, more importantly, the closest hospital equipped to treat patients in severe respiratory distress.

[This article](#) includes an easy-to-follow explanation of who should self-quarantine or isolate as of March 13, 2020; however, as the situation continues to evolve, we encourage you to consult [CDC guidelines](#) for up-to-date information about who should self-quarantine and for how long.

Additionally, we recommend that CDT travelers take extra precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 along the CDT. These include washing your hands often (at least 200 feet from water sources), staying home if you're sick, avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and avoiding unnecessary skin contact with others.

Our Southern Terminus Shuttle is still running, albeit with extra precautions for your safety and that of our drivers' in place (please read these precautions below if you intend on taking the shuttle).

**We are encouraging at-risk individuals to postpone their travels.** On 5 March, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated public guidance encouraging those older and/or with underlying medical conditions to stay at home to minimize all interactions with the public. CDTC is encouraging greater safety for those that require heightened protection from COVID-19. If you're not in an at-risk category, we are not suggesting that you cancel your trip – simply that you be adequately prepared to take necessary steps to protect those around you in the event you become sick.

**CDTC has taken proactive and voluntary steps to help reduce possible exposure of COVID-19 to shuttle passengers.** In addition to instituting daily interior cleaning of our vehicles, we are providing hand sanitizer and personal sanitizing wipes for passengers to reduce exposure to germs and bacteria. All frequently-touched areas like windows, armrests, and handles will be disinfected with cleansers daily.



Our staff and drivers will be trained to look for symptoms that may be exhibited by a potentially affected individual ([these include cough, fever, and shortness of breath](#)) and will be exercising an abundance of caution when discerning who to turn away from the shuttle.

**NOTICE: Passengers that are visibly ill (i.e. sneezing, coughing, tissue use) will require a doctor's note certifying non-contagiousness and their ability to safely travel.** Travelers with seasonal allergies may wish to provide a note as their symptoms can be mistaken for something more serious. We reserve the right for our staff and drivers to deny rides to passengers in the interest of public health and safety.

We want our shuttle passengers to make responsible travel decisions. Your safety and health are paramount for us and we encourage you to take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. **If you wish to change or postpone your shuttle, you may do so free of charge. We will also offer refunds for those who want to cancel their trip. If you would like to rebook or cancel your shuttle ride, please contact us at [info@continentaldividetrail.org](mailto:info@continentaldividetrail.org).** If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us at 303.996.2759 (8-4 MT, M-F) or [info@continentaldividetrail.org](mailto:info@continentaldividetrail.org).