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**Information for Virginia's Asian & Pacific Islander
Communities Regarding COVID-19**



Richmond, VA - March 17, 2020 – The Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB) not only advises the Governor on issues impacting the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community, it also advocates for API interests. Much has been communicated about the most recently discovered virus causing coronavirus disease COVID-19, which the World Health Organization on March 11 classified as a pandemic. We felt it was important to consolidate and highlight key resources for community leaders to refer to in support of our communities, particularly those who are most vulnerable and underrepresented. This situation changes rapidly from day to day across the Commonwealth and the nation so please check these websites regularly. We also encourage you to follow @GovernorVA on Facebook for live updates.

About COVID-19: What You Need to Know / Frequently Asked Questions

- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH): <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>

What Have Our Federal and State Governments Done?

- Do Your Part to Slow the Spread - The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America -- 15 Days to Slow the Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf
- Governor Northam Outlines Plans for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-852949-en.html>
- Governor Northam Declares State of Emergency, Outlines Additional Measures to Combat COVID-19 <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-853537-en.html>
- Governor Northam Orders All Virginia K-12 Schools Closed for Minimum of Two Weeks <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-854442-en.html>
- President Trump declared a national emergency. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>

- VDH monitors reports of presumptive positive and confirmed cases by locality and updates their website daily. <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>
- Testing for COVID-19 is performed at the Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS), Virginia's public health and environmental laboratory. Local testing cuts time to report results from days to hours. <https://dgs.virginia.gov/globalassets/business-units/do/documents/newsroom/virginias-public-health-laboratory-begins-testing-for-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19.pdf>
- Due to a limited number of tests available, VDH established priority criteria for testing performed at DCLS. http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2020/03/VDH-Updated-Guidance-on-COVID19-Testing_03132020_FINAL.pdf
- Unemployment funds are available through the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) for workers and business impacted by the coronavirus. Governor Northam has waived the one-week waiting period for benefits. Contact VEC for more information <http://www.vec.virginia.gov/qa-coronavirus>.

What Can All Virginians Do?

- Avoid holding or attending mass gatherings and practice social distancing. https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf
- Governor Northam urges everyone to be a part of the solution, including following federal guidelines for social distancing and for residents 65 years of age or older to self-quarantine. <https://www.facebook.com/GovernorVA/videos/142958733717084/UzpfSTE5MDA1MDUxMTAyMTIzNzE6MjQ4MzU5NjQxNTIzNjU2OA/>
- Take VDH's Steps to Monitor Your Health and Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2020/03/MM_Low_Risk_03082020.pdf
- Take VDH's Steps to Monitor Your Health Due to a Recent Contact with a Symptomatic Person with COVID-19 http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2020/03/MM_Close_Contact_03082020.pdf
- Take VDH's Steps to Lessen the Impact of a Severe COVID-19 Pandemic on You and Your Family. Checklist for Individuals and Families. <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2020/03/Checklist-for-COVID-19.pdf>
- If You are Sick with COVID-19 or Suspect You are Infected with the Virus that Causes COVID-19, Follow These Steps to Help Prevent the Disease from Spreading to People in Your Home and Community. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>

What Else Should Virginians Know?

Report Incidents of API Xenophobia, Racism and Stigmatization. While the VDH is addressing COVID-19 and matters of public health, the VAAB is highly concerned about the public safety of the API community. There has been a rise in the incidences of xenophobia, racism, and stigmatization of our communities, specifically the dangerous narratives and misinformation aimed at our students, community members and businesses. We thank Governor Northam for his attention to these concerns and look for his continued leadership, and that of other key administration officials, to address this issue.

While the virus may have originated in Wuhan, China, it doesn't recognize geography, nationality, race, or ethnicity. Be vigilant and check on your friends and family often. We must prevent and control the spread of the virus and not allow fear and misinformation fuel racist and xenophobic behavior.



*Advocating for the Interests of Asians
across the Commonwealth*

The Virginia Office of the Attorney General provides information and resources to report hate incidents at <https://www.oag.state.va.us/programs-initiatives/no-hate-va> or (804) 225-2292.

- **If you experience or observe harassment or discrimination in your workplace, in public/private facilities, or in school**, report it to the Office of the Attorney General Division of Human Rights (Division) at 804-225-2292 or Human_Rights@oag.state.va.
- **If you experience or observe harassment or discrimination in your home or neighborhood**, report it to the Virginia Fair Housing Office at 888-551-3247 or fairhousing@dpor.virginia.gov.
- **If you experience or observe a hate crime**, you should immediately contact your local law enforcement agency or local Commonwealth's Attorney. You should also report these hate crimes to your local FBI office. To find your local office, click <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field>, or complete the online form at <https://tips.fbi.gov/>.

Support API Businesses and Organizations. The VAAB encourages all Virginians, when and where possible, to support each other and our Asian owned and operated businesses. All across the country, Asian businesses are suffering a significant decline in sales due to fear and misconceptions around the spread of the coronavirus. The hardest hit are independent businesses. We ask that Virginians not let fear keep us from supporting a community that makes a significant contribution to Virginia's economy.

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