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



Richmond, VA - March 30, 2020 UPDATED - 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. The VAAB 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 and follow @GovernorVA on Facebook for live updates.

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

- Virginia Department of Health (VDH):
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>. Public information line is (877-ASK-VDH3).
- Commonwealth of Virginia Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates:
<https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus-updates/>
- 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>
- 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

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What Have Our Federal and State Governments Done?

- Governor Northam Announces Additional Actions to Address COVID-19
<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-854722-en.html>
- Governor and Health Commissioner Issue Health Emergency Order to Enforce 10-Patron Limit
<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Order-of-the-Governor-and-State-Health-Commissioner-Declaration-of-Public-Health-Emergency.pdf>
- Governor Northam Announces New Measures to Combat COVID-19 and Support Impacted Virginians
<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-854487-en.html>
- 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>
- 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
- Governor Northam Orders Statewide Closure of Certain Non-Essential Businesses, K-12 Schools
<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-855292-en.html?fbclid=IwAR33MPw0xWkV2D9qbrBGmOePe5QyJ-XLlvCV4Vb5cmO3z45u0JGbr8uJwll>
- Governor Northam issues Statewide Stay at Home Order
<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-855702-en.html>

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.

The Virginia Office of the Attorney General provides resources on hate crimes and a way to report them - <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/>.

Be Aware of Services and Programs Impacted by COVID-19

- Governor increases access to health care for Virginia's 1.5 million Medicaid members and thousands of low-income residents, including eliminating co-pays. https://coverva.org/materials/COVID_19_One_Pager_3_19_20_FINAL.pdf
- Governor increases support and flexibility for families and providers enrolled in Virginia's Child Care Subsidy Program. <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/cc/covid-19.html>
- Small businesses and nonprofit organizations throughout the Commonwealth affected by COVID-19 can now apply for low-interest federal disaster loans of up to \$2 million from the U.S. Small Business Administration to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other expenses. <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>
- Virginia Department of Corrections has suspended all in-person visitation to state correctional facilities and transfers from local and regional jails for the next 30 days. <https://vadoc.virginia.gov/news-press-releases/2020/virginia-doc-s-covid-19-medical-guideline-pandemic-sanitation-plan-working-to-keep-offenders-safe/>
- Virginia Department of State Police suspends enforcement of Motor Vehicle Safety Inspections for 60 days. <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/march/headline-854722-en.html>
- Because of school closings, check your county public school websites for learning plans and free grab-and-go food programs.
- Check internet service providers for a variety of new policies that include service upgrades, fee waivers, free access to Wi-Fi hotspots, no service terminations, more affordable plans and free support services.
- The State Corporation Commission issued an order directing utilities it regulates, such as electric, natural gas, and water companies in Virginia, to suspend service disconnections for 60 days to provide immediate relief for any customer, residential and business, who may be financially impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. https://www.scc.virginia.gov/newsrel/r_noshutoff_20.pdf



Advocating for the Interests of Asians Across the Commonwealth

- 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>. Frequently Asked Questions from Workers <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Frequently-Asked-Questions-from-Workers-Regarding-COVID-19.pdf>
- Through April 6, non-essential, non-emergency court proceedings in all circuit and district courts are suspended absent a specific exemption. This includes a prohibition on new eviction cases for tenants who are unable to pay rent because of COVID-19. All non-exempted court deadlines are tolled and extended for a period of 21 days.
http://www.vacourts.gov/2020_0316_scv_order_declaration_of_judicial_emergency.pdf / COVID-19 Appellate and Local Court Information http://www.courts.state.va.us/news/items/covid_19.pdf

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. Across the country, Asian businesses in particular have suffered 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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