



**Coronavirus Update: March 17, 2020**

## **A Message from Kathy Smith**

Below is updated information regarding the Coronavirus situation in Fairfax County to assist and inform Sully District residents. This situation is continually evolving and my office will continue to inform the community as we receive information from our trusted sources. Please share this information with your family, friends, and neighbors.

Residents facing difficulties – including those related to food, shelter, employment, financial assistance, healthcare and other needs should call 703-222-0880, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, for assistance accessing government and community-based resources. Assistance is available in multiple languages.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kathy'.

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## **Board of Supervisors Declares Local State of Emergency for Coronavirus**

At its meeting today, Tuesday, March 17, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors declared a local state of emergency in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. Today's action follows Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam's [declaration of a state of emergency](#) on March 12, and a [national emergency declaration](#) by President Donald Trump on March 13.

The local emergency declaration is primarily a financial mechanism that provides greater flexibility and authority for the county in purchasing hard to find resources and supplies. It also increases the authorities granted to the county to protect the health and safety of the community and provide emergency assistance in such a rapidly evolving incident. [Click here to watch the video online.](#)

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*"This declaration streamlines and expedites Fairfax County Government's access to emergency disaster funding and it allows the county to use its authority to procure goods to address the emergency." — Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay*

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# Governor Northam Announces New Measures to Combat COVID-19 & Support Impacted Virginians



**For Immediate Release:** March 17, 2020  
**Contact:** Office of the Governor: Alena Yarmosky,  
alena.yarmosky@governor.virginia.gov

Governor Ralph Northam today announced additional steps to help Virginians impacted by novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, stop the spread of the virus in the Commonwealth, and protect public health.

"Everyone must play a role to help flatten the curve and mitigate the spread of this virus, and that starts with social distancing," **said Governor Northam.** "We know this will be a hardship for many businesses, and we are assisting workers affected by closures. Public health relies on every individual using common sense and making responsible decisions. We can and will get through this difficult time. But we must work together to do so."

Video of today's media briefing is available [here](#).

## **Further Reducing Public Gatherings:**

Governor Northam told Virginians to avoid non-essential gatherings of more than 10 people, per federal guidelines. This does not include normal operations at essential services such as manufacturers, distribution centers, airports, bus and train stations, medical facilities, grocery stores, or pharmacies.

## **Protecting High-Risk Virginians:**

Those with chronic health conditions or aged 65 or older should self-quarantine. Public health experts advise that individuals with underlying medical conditions and those aged 65 or older are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Governor Northam encouraged neighbors and friends to stay in touch and regularly check in with high-risk individuals.

## **Increasing Social Distancing:**

All restaurants, fitness centers, and theaters are mandated to significantly reduce their capacity to 10 patrons, or close. Restaurants are encouraged to continue carry-out and takeaway options.

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**Support for Affected Workers:**

Governor Northam announced the following actions to protect working Virginians impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak:

- No waiting for unemployment benefits. Governor Northam has directed the Commissioner of the Virginia Employment Commission to waive the one-week waiting period to ensure workers can receive benefits as soon as possible.
- Enhanced eligibility for unemployment. Workers may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits if an employer needs to temporarily slow or cease operations due to COVID-19. If a worker has been issued a notice to self-quarantine by a medical or public health official and is not receiving paid sick or medical leave from their employer, they may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits. In addition, a worker may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they must stay home to care for an ill family member and are not receiving paid family medical leave from their employer.
- Fewer restrictions. For individuals receiving unemployment insurance, Governor Northam is directing the Virginia Employment Commission to give affected workers special consideration on deadlines, mandatory re-employment appointments, and work search requirements.

The Office of the Governor is providing a [Frequently Asked Questions guide](#) for workers that have been temporarily laid off or discharged during this public health crisis.

**Support for Impacted Employers:**

- Regional workforce teams will be activated to support employers that slow or cease operations. Employers who do slow or cease operations will not be financially penalized for an increase in workers requesting unemployment benefits.
- The Governor is authorizing rapid response funding, through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, for employers eligible to remain open during this emergency. Funds may be used to clean facilities and support emergency needs.
- Governor Northam is directing all employers to follow [U.S. Department of Labor guidance on workplace safety](#).

**Department of Motor Vehicle Office Closures:**

- Virginia's 75 DMV offices, as well as mobile units, will close to the public until April 2, 2020.
- Online services will remain available, and anyone needing to renew a license or vehicle registration is encouraged to do so online.
- For those who cannot renew online, or whose license or registration expires before May 15, DMV will grant a 60-day extension.

**Courts:**

Governor Northam requested and the Supreme Court of Virginia [granted a judicial emergency](#) in response to COVID-19.

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From Monday, March 16 through Monday, April 6, non-essential, non-emergency court proceedings in all district and circuit courts are suspended absent a specific exemption. This includes a prohibition on new eviction cases for tenants who are unable to pay rent as a result of COVID-19. All non-exempted court deadlines are tolled and extended for a period of 21 days.

**Utilities:**

The State Corporation Commission (SCC) 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.

For a comprehensive list of actions Governor Northam has announced to combat COVID-19 in Virginia, visit [virginia.gov/coronavirus](http://virginia.gov/coronavirus).

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## Ways to Stay Informed About Coronavirus (COVID-19)



Here is a list of ways you can stay updated on COVID-19 in Fairfax County.

**Stay Informed:**

- **Call 703-267-3511** with Coronavirus (COVID-19) questions. A Health Department call center is open from 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays and 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends to help provide answers.
- **Text FFXCOVID to 888777** to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19.
- **Email [ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov)** with specific questions or concerns related to the coronavirus. This email account will be staffed Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., to respond to community questions.
- **Visit the new [web portal for coronavirus](#)** that will be updated regularly to provide a one-stop online resource for information about the COVID-19 situation in Fairfax County.
- **Learn more about COVID-19** on the Health Department Coronavirus (COVID-19) [Webpage](#) or [FAQ](#) page.

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### Subscribe for Updates:

In addition to checking our web portal for coronavirus, subscribe to these news feeds to get the latest information as it becomes available:

- Follow the [Fairfax County Government Facebook Page](#) and [Health Department Facebook Page](#)
- Follow [@fairfaxcounty](#) and [@fairfaxhealth](#) on Twitter
- Subscribe to the county's [Emergency Blog](#).

[Click here](#) to visit the **Coronavirus webpage**.

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## County Operating Status

Updated as of March 17, 2020.

### CLOSED:

- **Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS):** All FCPS school buildings are closed until further notice. Food distribution at FCPS sites will continue as scheduled. For details, [click here](#).
- **Fairfax County Park Authority:** All Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) facilities are closed from March 16 to 29, 2020; parks remain open. This includes RECenters, nature centers, historic sites, visitor centers, equestrian facilities, golf courses, preschools, etc. For details, [click here](#).
- **Libraries:** Effective Monday, March 16, all Fairfax County Public Library full-service locations will be closed for two weeks. Although library branches are closed, some staff will be on site to support phone and virtual reference. FCPL is also working on a curbside pick up option; more info to follow later this week. Due dates for all physical materials will be extended for thirty days. For details, [click here](#).
- **Senior Centers and Adult Day Health Care Centers:** Effective immediately, all Fairfax County [Senior Centers](#) and [Adult Day Health Care Centers](#) are closed to participants until further notice. Additionally, beginning Monday, March 16, Fairfax County will provide meal delivery service to registered participants who wish to obtain them.
- **Community Centers/Neighborhood Centers/Resource Centers and Teen Centers:** Effective immediately, NCS [Community Centers/Neighborhood Centers/Resource Centers](#) and [Teen Centers](#) are closed to participants through Sunday, March 29. Community Centers and Teen Centers plan to offer regularly scheduled spring break services (RecQuest/Teens In Action) April 6 – April 13.
- **School Age Child Care:** [SACC](#) is closed for the weeks of March 16 and March 23. However, SACC plans to offer an additional week of spring break services at consolidated sites the week of March 30 and plans to offer regularly scheduled spring break services the week of April 6. The system for registration for the weeks of March 30 and April 6 will be communicated to all SACC families.

### OPEN:

- **Courts:** Open, but with limited services. Fairfax County's courts have cancelled most of their hearings and trials due to the coronavirus.

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The Supreme Court of Virginia [declared a judicial emergency](#), and it ordered that all non-essential, non-emergency proceedings for circuit and district courts be suspended. Click the links below for more information.

\*[Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court](#)

\*[Fairfax City and Fairfax County General District Courts](#)

\*[Fairfax County Circuit Court](#)

- **Fairfax County Park Authority:** Our parks, dog parks, and trails remain open at this time, but we reiterate the need for social distancing and mandated avoidance of any large gatherings or group activities. For details, [click here](#).
- **Fairfax County Animal Shelter:** Open, but with limited services. The following changes are effective immediately and will be in place through April 15, 2020. For details, [click here](#). **The following essential services and programs will continue with modifications:**

\*Return-to-owner of stray pets by appointment only.

\*Pet surrenders by appointment only; no walk-ins will be accepted except in cases of true emergencies.

\*Adoptions - The shelter will continue to facilitate adoptions; however, they will be moving to adoptions by appointment.

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## 2020 Tax Relief Applications

All remaining 2020 Tax Relief Workshops have been postponed, including the Sully District workshop scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2020. **The 2020 Tax Relief application due date has been extended from April 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020.**

To mitigate the risk of COVID-19 within our community, the Department of Tax Administration (DTA) is encouraging residents to support social distancing. Therefore, the 2020 tax relief application due date for seniors and people with disabilities has been extended from April 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020, and the remaining tax relief workshops have been postponed until further notice. We encourage all residents to stay home and submit their annual applications by email, mail, or fax. If you require assistance in filling out the application or have any questions, please call 703-222-8234 (TTY 711).

For more information, [click here](#).

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## Donating to & Supporting Local Community-Based Organizations

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As the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues to evolve, we understand that many of our **residents want to support individuals and families in our communities who may have food and other needs.**

Residents, businesses and organizations who want to help fill community needs can make donations to local community-based organizations. An updated list of community-based resources for food assistance and donations is [available online](#).

Residents who want to contribute are also encouraged to consider making monetary contributions and grocery gift cards donations to our community-based organization partners. You can visit the [Human Services Resource Guide](#), an online, searchable guide to available human services resources in Fairfax County.

**Due to state training requirements for food distribution, it is not possible for community members to volunteer at Fairfax County Public Schools [food distribution sites](#).**

During this uncertain time, contributions to local community-based organizations will help support the needs of local individuals and families. We are thankful for the outreach from our community so that our vulnerable neighbors do not have to go without.

**COVID 19**  
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

**STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA**

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

For more information: go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health) or email us at [health@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:health@fairfaxcounty.gov).

CDC

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