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COVID-19 Resource Guide

Introduction:

Our nation, including the St. Louis community, is in the midst of a global pandemic caused by an outbreak of COVID-19, a respiratory illness that is a particular type of coronavirus. This virus first surfaced late last year in China before quickly spreading across the world. The virus has impacted individuals in all 50 states, and it continues to cause physical, social and economic harm on families and communities everywhere.

This guide provides a brief summary of available resources made possible by our federal, state and local governments, along with our community institutions.

1. How to Protect Yourself & Others

COVID-19 is a highly contagious respiratory illness, which attacks organs such as the throat and lungs, producing symptoms such as fever, dry cough and shortness of breath. Typically, the virus spreads person-to-person when respiratory droplets from an infected person are transferred to another person by coughing, sneezing or simply talking.

There is currently no treatment or vaccine available; therefore, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) strongly urges the following preventative practices:

- **Clean your hands often**, washing with soap and water for approx. 20 seconds
- **Practice social distancing** (keeping approx. 6 feet between you and others) – and stay home whenever possible
- **Wear a non-surgical mask** to cover your mouth and nose when in public

Helpful Links:

- www.coronavirus.gov
- www.health.mo.gov
- www.stlouis-mo.gov/covid-19/

2. What to Do if You Get Sick

Common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. If you have these symptoms, you may be infected. Most people who get sick with this virus can recover at home using over-the-counter treatments to help manage the symptoms. However, in severe cases, hospitalization is necessary if symptoms become life threatening.

Most important, if you suspect you have the virus:

- **Isolate yourself at home**, staying away from other people and pets that live in the home
- **Call your doctor or local health agency** to seek guidance about testing
- **Monitor your symptoms** and seek medical attention immediately if symptoms become life threatening

Helpful Links:

- www.coronavirus.gov
- www.health.mo.gov
- www.stlouis-mo.gov/covid-19/

3. Where to Find Economic Relief for Individuals & Families

In addition to its physical and social consequences, the COVID-19 outbreak has caused significant economic uncertainty for individuals and small businesses across St. Louis, including lost wages, revenues and housing instability.

In response, Congress passed and the President has signed into law – legislation titled the **Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act**, which provides

much needed benefits and protections for families, seniors, students and small businesses. A few notable provisions of this law include:

- Increased and expanded **unemployment benefits** for workers
- **Direct payments** for individuals and families, including up to \$1,200 for individuals making up to \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married workers) with an additional \$500 payment per minor child
- **Forgivable loans and grants** for small businesses under the Payment Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL)
- **Many more additional benefits**, including student loan relief for borrowers as well as mortgage forbearance and eviction protections for homeowners and renters.

Helpful Links:

- www.congress.gov
- www.irs.gov/coronavirus
- www.sba.gov
- www.labor.mo.gov

4. Where to Find Economic Relief for Small Businesses & Nonprofits

Alongside these federal interventions, local organizations are also stepping up to provide support to small businesses and nonprofits.

- The **St. Louis Economic Development Partnership** and the **St. Louis Development Corporation** are offering a 0% interest loan of up to \$5,000 for small businesses in the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County that have sustained economic damage due to the COVID-19 crisis
 - Email: bizhelp@stlpartnership.com for details
- The **St. Louis Downtown Community Improvement District** is also offering up to \$5,000 in grants for downtown restaurants
- Also, the **St. Louis Community Foundation** has established two funds to help small businesses and nonprofits:
 - **The Gateway Resilience Fund** will help provide short-term monetary relief to small locally owned businesses and their employees

- **The Regional Response Fund** was established to direct aid to local nonprofit organizations delivering services to people affected by the virus including children, the elderly, and isolated

Helpful Links:

- www.stlpartnership.com
- www.stlouis-mo.gov/slde
- www.stlgives.org
- www.downtownstl.org/downtown-cid/

5. How to Promote Mental Health & Wellbeing

In addition to the physical and economic tolls of this disease, there can be mental and emotional consequences as well that are just as important, even though sometimes they go unseen. During these difficult times, we must remember to check in with ourselves and our loved ones. Here are a few best practices that may be applicable to you:

- **Be kind to yourself and others;**
- **Remember it's OK to not be OK; and**
- **Monitor your news consumption.**

If you or someone you know needs additional help dealing with this crisis, please visit the Missouri Department of Mental Health's website, as well as those websites for the Anxiety & Depression Association of America and the National Alliance on Mental Illness – St. Louis to determine what resources may be available.

***NOTE:** For individuals in crisis, please call **Behavioral Health Response** at **(314) 469-4908** or the **Suicide Prevention Lifeline** at **(800) 273-TALK** or **(800) SUICIDE**.

Helpful Links:

- www.dmh.mo.gov
- www.adaa.org
- www.namistl.org

6. How to Support the St. Louis Community

Hard times notwithstanding, St. Louis know the importance of supporting our friends and neighbors. For those who want to help, there are many ways to give back and spread love and kindness (not infection). A few options to consider include:

- **Red Cross blood donations**
- **St. Louis Area Foodbank**
- **St. Louis Community Foundation**

Helpful Links:

- www.redcrossblood.org
- www.stlfoodbank.org
- www.stlgives.org

Dear Friends:

Thank you for reviewing this resource guide. My sincere wish for you and your families – besides good health – is that this guide provides you with information and resources that may help you.

Additionally, I dedicate this resource guide to the heroes among us – to the doctors and health professionals who take care of us and our loves ones, as well as the grocery clerks, delivery drivers, letter carriers and other essential workers who are going to work everyday in order to serve our community. We see you and send our profound gratitude for your service.

Be well and stay encouraged, St. Louis. We will get through this and emerge stronger, wiser and more united than ever.

All best,



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