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★ ★ **Amanda** ★ ★  
**BATTEN**  
**DELEGATE**

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Updated March 24, 2020

Dear Friends,

I write to share with you several resources related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As your Delegate, I want to ensure that you have the necessary information to keep you and your family updated, safe, and healthy during this unprecedented situation.

On March 12, 2020, a state of emergency was declared for Virginia. Since then, numerous local and state agencies have been impacted. Below is helpful information for your reference.

**General Closings/Cancellations**

*Courts*

The Supreme Court of Virginia has ordered all non-essential, non-emergency court proceedings to suspend through April 6th. This includes a suspension in eviction hearings. If you have ongoing matters before the courts, you may wish to reach out to your attorney or the appropriate clerk's office for specific questions.

## ***DMV***

The DMV has closed its service centers through April 2nd. Virginians with business before the DMV are encouraged to perform their transactions online. For those who must appear in person for license renewal or other similar business, a 60 day deadline extension will be granted for all expirations occurring before May 15. [Click here for more details.](#)

The Virginia State Police have also been instructed to not enforce the state's vehicle inspection program for 60 days. If your vehicle inspection is about to expire, you have an additional two months to drive without fear of a citation. [Click here for more information.](#)

## ***Utilities***

The State Corporation Commission (SCC) has [ordered](#) all publicly regulated utility companies to suspend disconnections for a period of 60 days.

## ***Restaurants***

Governor Northam has banned gatherings of 10 or more people across the Commonwealth, leaving most restaurants to function in a "take-out/delivery" mode if they remain open. He also announced Friday that some Alcoholic Beverage Control regulations will be suspended, and restaurants can deliver beer and wine with meals. [Learn more here.](#)

## **School Closings**

The Governor has ordered all public schools in Virginia to close until Friday, March 27th. Some schools will be closed for longer periods of time.

Williamsburg James City County Schools meal distribution and closure information [here.](#)

York County School Division meal distribution and closure information [here](#).

On Friday the Federal Department of Education announced that *“the Department will grant a waiver to any state that is unable to assess its students due to the ongoing national emergency, providing relief from federally mandated testing requirements for this school year.”*

This will clear the way for Virginia to make any necessary changes to our Standards of Learning (SOL) tests, and I expect more information to be forthcoming on that matter soon.

Should further action regarding school closure be deemed necessary, that information will be disseminated by local media.

### **Unemployment**

The standard one week waiting period for unemployment benefits has been waived. If you or someone you know has lost their job or had a significant reduction in hours due to Coronavirus, [this information from the Virginia Employment Commission \(VEC\)](#) will help answer questions about unemployment benefits.

I understand that it is not easy for some of us to ask for help. Rest assured that this is not a hand-out. In these times of mandated closures, this assistance is truly a lifeline to keep families afloat until the tide turns.

Please note that VEC offices are closed to the public. Online and phone services remain open, and the Commission is adding to their call center capacity daily.

### **Small Business Assistance**

If you're a business owner, the Small Business Administration has been given authority to grant low-interest loans to all parts of Virginia. If that sort of assistance can help your small business keep the lights on, I

encourage you to click the following link and fill out the application: [SBA Disaster Loan Information](#).

### **COVID-19 Information**

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has a list of answers to frequently asked questions regarding Coronavirus, including recommendations on social distancing and precautions for high-risk individuals. [Click here to access that information.](#)

You can also keep up to date with various health and safety measures being recommended by state officials by [clicking here](#).

*For a comprehensive list of actions taken by Governor Northam, click [HERE](#).*

This crisis is a significant disruption to our work, our economy, and our daily lives. The pandemic response is a challenge unlike anything we have faced in modern Virginia history. There are no quick solutions or easy answers.

Our Commonwealth has endured for more than 400 years, surviving war, plague, social unrest, and economic hardship. Working together with shared resolve, we will tackle this modern challenge. For those of us who are of faith, now is a time to pray and to take heed to Philippians 4:6-7, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Please know that my office is monitoring the situation in Virginia closely and will keep you advised as we learn more. In the meantime, if you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or email my office at (757) 741-7001 or [DelABatten@house.virginia.gov](mailto:DelABatten@house.virginia.gov).



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Paid for and Authorized by Friends of Amanda Batten

