



JOINT NEWS RELEASE: Montgomery County, Town of Blacksburg, and Town of Christiansburg Proactively Declare Local State of Emergency in Response to COVID-19

A message from County Administrator, Craig Meadows, Town of Blacksburg Manager, Marc Verniel, and Town of Christiansburg Manager, Randy Wingfield

March 17, 2020: Effective, Mar. 17, 2020, Montgomery County, the Town of Blacksburg, and the Town of Christiansburg have proactively declared a local state of emergency, as a precautionary measure over the global outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

While the New River Health District states there are no presumed positive COVID-19 (coronavirus) cases in Southwest Virginia at this time, this declaration allows local governments to request and secure local, state and federal resources should they be deemed necessary.

The local emergency declarations follow the Executive Order issued by Governor Ralph S. Northam last Thursday (Mar. 12), declaring a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia in response to the public health threat posed by COVID-19 (coronavirus).

The local state of emergency gives Montgomery County and the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg the authority to mobilize resources for citizens in response to the potential COVID-19 outbreak, as well as request mutual aid from regional, state and other governmental entities. In addition, this declaration allows critical functions to continue and permits action to protect public health and safety.

As a community, we each have an individual responsibility to practice good hygiene and to isolate ourselves when we are feeling ill. It is incredibly important to adhere to the public health safety measures outlined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Individuals who appear perfectly healthy may have compromised immune systems, and the elderly are at tremendous risk. We should all keep these individuals in mind when making our own personal decisions.

We understand that the daily needs such as obtaining food, medicine, and fueling your vehicle cannot be completely avoided. However, we ask that you please do your part to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) in our community by avoiding contact with crowds.

Should you feel ill, please follow the guidelines outlined below:

(Symptoms of coronavirus - <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>)

- CALL your health care provider or your local health department (do not go to the emergency room).
- The New River Health District has activated a local public health hotline at 540-267-8240, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH) also has a public health hotline at 877-ASK-VDH3, available weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- Call 2-1-1 Virginia
- Practice good infection control practices: wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, keep surfaces clean, cough or sneeze into a tissue (and discard it) or into your elbow, avoid touching your face, practice “social distancing” and don’t shake hands. Stay home if you’re sick (use delivery services) and avoid others who are sick.

For updates related to coronavirus and the impact it has on our community, visit www.montva.com/coronavirus.

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