

**New Orleans Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.**  
**Public Service Message on COVID-19**

Dear Beloved Sorors,

“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:3-4

As we navigate through these challenging times, this email comes in sisterly love and warm thoughts of hope. Our faith in God supersedes all fears. Rest assured my sisters that our highest priority is for the safety and well-being of the communities we serve, you and your families. Thank you to Chapter President, Soror Linda Howard- Curtis for her compassion and concern. President Howard-Curtis and the New Orleans Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. fully supports Grand Chapter’s position statement on COVID-19. Furthermore, we encourage adherence to all recommendations from World Health Organization (WHO), US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>, the Louisiana Department of Health Services (LDH) <http://ldh.la.gov/Coronavirus>, and Local/Federal governments.

As physicians, Sorors and/or members of the New Orleans Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., we feel it our duty to share valuable information, CDC and LDH guidelines regarding the novel Coronavirus otherwise known as COVID-19.

### **What We Know About COVID-19**

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe respiratory illness caused by the virus named SARS-CoV2. It is a novel virus, which means that no one in the world prior to now, has antibodies to the virus. Therefore, when COVID-19 invades the body, we do not have antibodies to mount a rapid defense against it.

COVID-19 is not a common flu (Influenza Virus). Its fatality rate is approximately ten times worse than the flu. The flu does cause severe illness in many people, but it does so over a longer time course (usually September-April). Time is the variable that is working against us during this COVID-19 outbreak. Severe COVID-19 victims will be presenting in need of critical care at rates higher than the flu. Therefore, it is very important for us all to monitor ourselves for symptoms, seek medical attention if you have symptoms, and follow all protective guidelines. It is imperative to practice home isolation. If there isn’t a dire emergency to be in the public, please stay home. These measures will not only protect you but are in place to protect our entire community. Additionally, staying home will help to flatten the curve and decrease the number of new cases of Coronavirus infection.

**COVID-19 symptoms** range from few to no symptoms (mild illness) to severe illness and death in some. These symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure** (based on the incubation period of MERS-CoV viruses): The symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

**Call your doctor:** If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing. [www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms)

**Emergency Warning Signs for COVID-19:**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Consult a medical provider and get medical attention immediately for any of these or other severe symptoms.

**How Does the Virus Spread?**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.**
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
  - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

## **Best Practices for Protection**

**Clean your hands often**

- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

**Avoid close contact**

- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick
- Put **distance between yourself and other people** if COVID-19 is spreading in your community.

**Follow the Stay Home Mandate**

- **Stay home** per the Governor's mandate

During this irresolute time, in addition to taking care of your physical health we encourage you to be aware of your mental health status. If you are feeling overwhelmed with stress, fear and anxiety about the uncertainty surrounding this public health emergency, there is a special *Keeping Calm through COVID* Hotline you can call. This connects you to trained, compassionate counselors who can offer support and who can direct you to mental health and substance abuse counseling services. The number to call is **1-866-310-7977**. The counselors are available 24/7. All calls are confidential.

The above information is from the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and LDH <http://ldh.la.gov/Coronavirus> websites. Please consult your medical provider if you have any concerns or questions about COVID-19. To access the most current information about the COVID- 19 pandemic you can call 211 or text the keyword LACOVID to 898-211.

Sorors, please remain vigilant and abide by the stay home and social distancing guidelines mandated by our Governor, medical professionals and local officials.

Be Safe. Stay Well. Wash Your Hands. Stay Home. Practice Social Distancing.

God Bless!!!

From the Desk of Your Sister/ Docs,

Migel Elie, MD  
Monique Pierce Hamilton, MD  
Rochelle Head-Dunham, MD  
TaShawn Mustiful, MD  
Sheryl Smith, MD  
Kimiyo Harris Williams, MD