



**Tuesday, March 24, 2020**  
**The Highlands COVID-19 Task Force, Update on Efforts**

The Highlands COVID-19 Task Force, convened its weekly meeting yesterday. The objective of this latest meeting was to continue discussions on resources in place through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). The group also covered emergency planning and preparation steps in place locally within each government and the steps being taken to protect first responders and the community.

- The Sheriff of Alleghany County and City of Covington along with Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety for Covington also completed a joint Public Service Announcement, which went live yesterday.
- Local governments have worked to provide sites for public Wi-Fi in each locality to assist those with limited or no internet access at home. Should you have questions on the location of sites, please contact your local government office by phone.
  - You can also visit the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism's Facebook account at: <https://www.facebook.com/alleghanyhighlandschamber/>
- Locally, the Salvation Army reached out to the Highlands COVID-19 Task Force along with the League of Older Americans and the M3 Minute Men to provide meals and essentials to those who are in need and homebound. **For assistance or to help, please contact the Salvation Army by phone at 540- 962-6206.**
  - The state has also implemented a texting service for those in need of food assistance to obtain information on sites where food is being provided in your area, please text **FOOD to 877-877**, for additional information.
- Efforts are underway in conjunction with the City, County and VDH, to develop a drive thru testing site in the Highlands. There will be a phone in pre-screening process. More to come on this as the details are ironed out.

Effective March 25, 2020, there are new measures mandated per Governor Northam's latest Executive Order, We strongly encourage our local restaurants and businesses to comply.

- If you are a business and have questions regarding the latest Executive Order, you can email the state your questions at [business@va.gov](mailto:business@va.gov), state officials will work to respond to your inquires as there are many questions at this time on compliance.
- The Chamber of Commerce and Tourism along with the Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corporation are working to develop resources and information for the business community as well.
- Local law enforcement is working to get the word out as well on the Executive Order by going to area businesses in the Highlands with fliers on what it means.

For more information on COVID-19, the following online resources are recommended, CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/>, or the VDH website: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/>. For those without internet, VDH has a regional hotline 1-855-949-8378, as well as a state hotline, 1-877-ASK-VDH3. **Additional information on The Highlands COVID-19 Task Force can be found at:** <https://covington.va.us/highlands-covid-19-task-force/>

###

