

From: "Representative Terri Sewell" <AL07TSIMA@mail.house.gov>  
Subject: **UPDATES: Protecting our Community from the Coronavirus**

News From Congresswoman Sewell  
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U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN  
**TERRI SEWELL**  
REPRESENTING ALABAMA'S 7<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

March 23, 2020

Dear Friends,

I know that as we closely monitor the status of the COVID-19 Coronavirus, many of us have immediate concerns about the state of our health and the state of our community. This situation is developing in real time, and we all must do our best to stay up-to-date on recommended protocol.

As your Congresswoman, I am committed to fighting on your behalf to ensure that Alabama's 7th Congressional District has sufficient access to tests and treatment, as well as direct support to individuals to slow the economic crisis associated with this virus. I am equally committed to sharing information regarding the virus and its prevention as well as tips on how to strengthen our community infrastructures, as the situation develops. Please be sure to check in regularly with our [website](#) and social media pages ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)) for immediate updates.



Last week, I had a briefing from local public health experts and state officials including Dr. Scott Harris (Director of the Alabama Department of Public Health) and Brian Hastings (Director of Alabama's Emergency Management Agency.) The briefing was to understand the steps being taken by our local stakeholders to ensure public safety and I remain grateful for our ongoing partnership as we work to contain the virus.

Following the briefing, I held a [press conference](#) with Dr. Harris and Brian Hastings to assure constituents that we are fighting for comprehensive testing, treatment and economic stimulus across the district. I also urged everyone to please continue to follow CDC's safe guidelines, staying home when possible, practicing social distancing, washing hands frequently, avoiding large gatherings and regularly wiping down frequently used objects.

Please continue to monitor best practices and updates from the [CDC](#).



On Wednesday, I hosted a district-wide telephone town hall with local health experts to discuss what federal, state and local leaders are doing to help stop the spread of the Coronavirus. **To listen to a recording of the call, [click here](#).**

Understanding the incredible economic hardship that this virus is inflicting on our community, [Senator Jones and I wrote a letter to Governor Ivey](#) on Thursday, urging her to reinstate unemployment benefits to 26 weeks, after the state legislature slashed them last year. It is paramount that as restrictions tighten, we still take care of the well-being of our workers.

### **Federal Response**

The federal government has declared a public health emergency and urges all Americans to exercise caution.

In Congress, we have passed two bills to address this crisis.

The [first bill](#) provided **\$8.3 billion** in emergency federal funding to help states, federal agencies and public health providers fight the Coronavirus. This includes:

- More than **\$3 billion** for research and development of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics.
- **\$2.2 billion** in public health funding for prevention, preparedness, and response, **\$950 million** of which is to support state and local health agencies.

- **Nearly \$1 billion** for procurement of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, to support healthcare preparedness and Community Health Centers, and to improve medical surge capacity.
- **\$61 million** to facilitate the development and review of medical countermeasures, devices, therapies, and vaccines, and to help mitigate potential supply chain interruptions.
- **\$1.25 billion** to address the coronavirus abroad to help keep Americans safe here at home.
- Allows for an estimated **\$7 billion** in low-interest loans to affected small businesses, to help cushion the economic blow of this public health emergency.

This Wednesday, Congress passed a second bill, the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#), which is focused directly on providing support for American families by providing:

- Free Coronavirus testing for everyone who needs a test, including the uninsured.
- Paid emergency leave with both 10 days of paid sick leave and up to three months of paid family leave for parents with children whose schools are closed due to Coronavirus. These benefits are in the form of tax credits to the employers.
- Enhanced unemployment benefits.
- Strengthened food security initiatives, including SNAP, student meals, seniors' nutrition and food banks.
- Increased federal funds for Medicaid, as states face increased costs.

Congress is currently negotiating a [third bill](#), which [seeks to provide economic stimulation in the form of individual payments](#).

Democrats in Congress are fighting to strengthen transparency and worker's provisions within the bill and remain committed to ensuring that the bill that passes is focused on protecting our most vulnerable.

## **Alabama's Response**

Governor Ivey has asked for the closure of public schools as of Wednesday March 18, 2020; and is authorizing state agencies to telework.

Governor Ivey has updated state regulations as of March 19, 2020. Statewide: bars and restaurants have moved to takeout and delivery options only and any bars or breweries not serving food must close; all senior citizen gatherings and senior citizen centers must close; pre-school and childcare centers must close; visitors are banned from hospitals and nursing homes; and elective medical and dental procedures must be delayed.

**Please be sure to take a few moments to sign up here to receive [text updates](#) on the status of COVID-19 in Alabama.**

## **Our Community**

### **Confirmed Cases**

Currently, there are [167 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Alabama](#), however, experts agree that confirmed cases not only in Alabama but across the country [should be considered low](#) due to inadequate testing.

### **School Closures and Meals**

Statewide, Governor Ivey has ordered the [closure of all public schools](#), effective Wednesday March 18, 2020.

As schools close, many of our constituents will face the challenges associated with childcare and school provided lunch. State Superintendent Eric Mackey has said that students who receive free or reduced-cost lunches will [still be provided meals](#) through



schools during the closure. The specific logistics concerning when and how meals will be provided is still being worked out by district, so please make sure that you are regularly checking in with your school system for up to date information.

In Birmingham, [many local businesses](#) will also be providing free meals to those in need.

## Community Food Resources

In addition to providing meals for children, our local food assistance providers will continue to operate, providing meals to those in need.

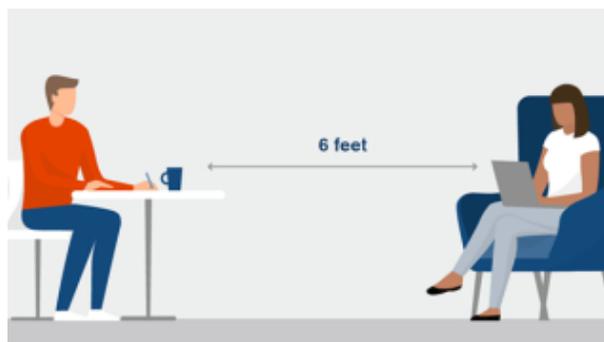


- [Greater Birmingham Ministries](#) will be continuing uninterrupted service to Jefferson County.
- The [West Alabama Food Bank](#) will be continuing uninterrupted service to Bibb, Greene, Hale, Pickens, Sumter and Tuscaloosa counties.
- The [Community Foodbank of Central Alabama](#) will be continuing uninterrupted service to Jefferson County.
- The [Edmundite Missions](#) will be continuing uninterrupted service to Selma, Alabama.
- A list of food pantries in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, can be found [here](#).

## Social Distancing

Even for those not experiencing symptoms, it is still important to practice social distancing. The federal government has asked that:

- No one convene groups of over 10 people.
- Everyone retain six feet of separation.
- Anyone able to work from home, please do so.
- Everyone, please avoid eating at bars and restaurants (and instead opt for drive-through, pick-up or delivery options.)
- Everyone, please avoid any discretionary travel, shopping and social visits.

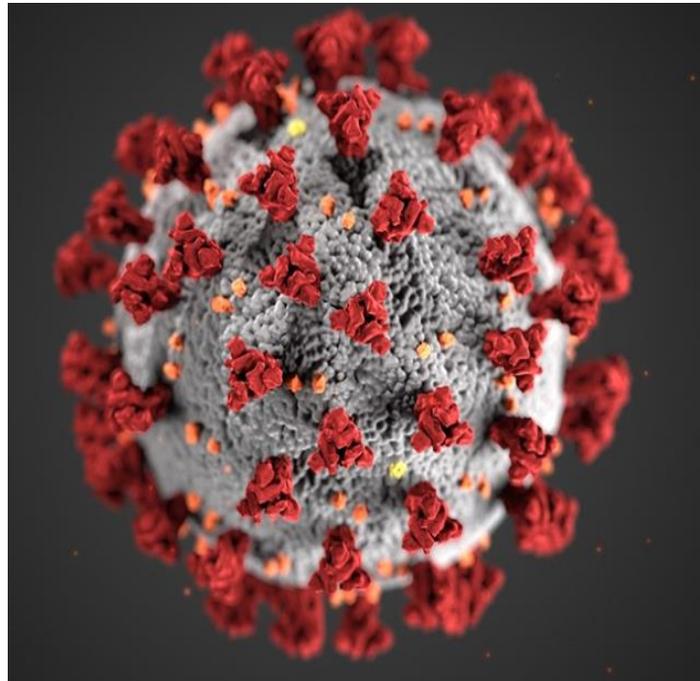


For those who suffer from mental health issues, please contact your doctor. For those experiencing heightened anxiety, please consult [these helpful resources](#).

### **COVID-19 Testing (as of 3/23/20)**

As of March 20, 2020, the ADPH is recommending that anyone showing symptoms should first call their healthcare provider.

If you do not have a healthcare provider, please call 1-888-264-2256.



#### ***List of Sites in the 7th Congressional District***

**\*\*\*A NEW CENTER OPENS TODAY, MONDAY MARCH 23, 2020, AT UAB. This site is appointment-based. Details below:**

**Name:** [Birmingham Downtown COVID-19 Testing Site](#) **\*By appointment**

**Address:** The corner of University Boulevard and 22nd St. South, Birmingham, Alabama 35205

**Phone:** 205-957-1881

**County:** Jefferson

**Hours:** 9:00 am - 1:30 pm, by appointment only (appointments may be scheduled from 7a – 11p, seven days a week)

**Name:** [Urgent Care for Children - Birmingham](#) **\*Testing for Children Ages 0 – 21**

**Address:** 500 Cahaba Park Circle, Suite 100, Birmingham, AL 35242

**Phone:** 205-848-2273

**County:** Jefferson

**Hours:** Weekdays 2pm – 10 pm , Sat – Sun 10am – 8pm

[\\*Please visit website first for protocol](#)

**Name:** [Hale County Hospital](#) **\*By appointment**

**Address:** 508 Greene Street, Greensboro, AL 36744; screening clinic in front parking lot

**Phone:** 334-507-3815

**County:** Hale

**Hours:** Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

**Name:** [Baptist Health Coronavirus Care Clinic](#) **\*By appointment**

**Address:** 2936 Marti Lane, Montgomery, AL 36116

\*located across from former Governor's House

**Phone:** 334-747-0150

**County:** Montgomery  
**Hours:** 7:00 am – 7:00 pm, seven days a week.

**Name:** [Whitfield Regional Hospital Coronavirus Collection Site](#) \*Walk-in

**Address:** 105 U.S. Highway 80 East, Demopolis, AL 36732

\*Site located on in rear of hospital in parking lot

**Phone:** 334-289-4000

**County:** Marengo

**Hours:** 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, seven days a week

**Name:** [Druid City Hospital \(DCH\) Regional-Remote Screening Clinic](#) \*Walk-in

**Address:** 809 University Blvd., Tuscaloosa, AL 35402

\*located in DCH Outpatient Center on the bottom floor beside the pharmacy

**Phone:** (205) 759-7867

**County:** Tuscaloosa County

**Hours:** Monday – Friday 6:30 am – 5:00 pm; Saturday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Name:** [Urgent Care for Children - Tuscaloosa](#) \*Testing for Children Ages 0 – 21

**Address:** 4700 Rice Mine Road Northeast

**Phone:** 205-614-5628

**County:** Tuscaloosa

**Hours:** Weekdays 2pm – 10 pm , Sat – Sun 10am – 8pm

[\\*Please visit website first for protocol](#)

**Name:** [Northport Medical Center Outpatient Laboratory](#) \*Walk-in

**Address:** 2700 Hospital Drive, Northport, AL 35476

**Phone:** (205) 333-4662

**County:** Tuscaloosa County

**Hours:** Monday – Friday 6:30 am – 5:00 pm; Saturday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

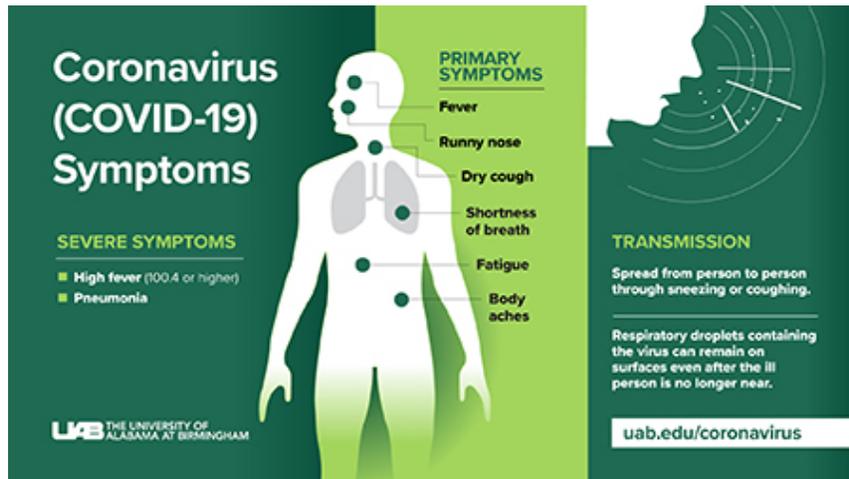
**Name:** [MainStreet Family Care - Selma](#) \*Walk-in

**Address:** 1475 AL-14, Selma, AL 36703

**Phone:** (334) 526-3240

**County:** Dallas

**Hours:** Monday – Friday: 8:00 am – 8:00 pm; Saturday – Sunday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm



Please continue to check in with [ADPH](#) for testing information.

Please also check in [here](#) for a list of testing sites throughout the state.

Further information about COVID-19 testing can also be found [here](#).

### What Can We Do?

For many of us, this is not only a frightening but a frustrating time. It is hard to sit back and feel helpless when so many in our community are suffering. We know that what sets the 7th District of Alabama apart is our fierce loyalty and commitment to one

another—so what can we do?

If you are able, please reach out to one of your local food banks (listed above) to see how you can donate.

The [United Way](#) is also seeking volunteers for Meals on Wheels, however any work that requires breaking quarantine should be done only by those who are certain not to have COVID-19.

And the American Red Cross is facing blood shortages due to blood drive cancellations. For more information on how and where to donate blood or platelets, visit the [American Red Cross website](#).

During times like these, we are reminded of the power of our communities. Practice caution, stay safe and keep in touch with those you love via phone, email or the internet.

Please take good care.

Sincerely,



Congresswoman Terri A. Sewell



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