
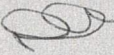


Memorandum

To: All VFW Employees

From: Kevin Jones, Adjutant General 
Debra Anderson, Quartermaster General 

Date: March 12, 2020

Re: Coronavirus

The VFW takes the health and safety of our staff and members very seriously; it is our first priority. We are monitoring a variety of sources, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and state and local health authorities, for the latest updates and recommendations affecting our operations. Yesterday, the WHO declared COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease 2019) a pandemic.

COVID-19 is a virus that can cause respiratory problems. Symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. The virus is spread similar to the flu by coughing and sneezing. The CDC reports that symptoms generally appear between 2 to 14 days after exposure.

We are taking proactive steps to address a number of concerns applicable to all VFW employees. First and foremost, we want to maintain a safe workplace and encourage practices protecting the health of employees, members, visitors and others. We also want to ensure the continuity of business operations in the event COVID-19 continues to spread.

Minimize Risk of Exposure

We ask all employees to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of communicable diseases in the workplace. Prevention is a priority. Several tips found through different resources include the following:

- If you have respiratory symptoms (coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath) and/or a temperature above 100.4 F, contact your supervisor and plan on staying home.
- If you develop these symptoms while at the workplace, notify your supervisor and plan on going home.
- If you believe that you may have been exposed to COVID-19, consult with your doctor or health care provider immediately.
- Wash your hands frequently with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your mouth with tissues whenever you sneeze, and discard used tissues in the trash.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street Office 816.756.3390
Kansas City, MO 64111 Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E. Office 202.543.2239
Washington, D.C. 20002 Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

- Avoid people who are sick with respiratory symptoms.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces.
- Avoid shaking hands entirely to reduce the risk of spreading infection. Though that might be awkward at times, it's an increasingly common practice in hospitals and clinics.

We will monitor and follow guidance from the CDC, along with any provided by relevant state and local authorities. We encourage you to monitor the CDC's website for updates:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Communication

Updated guidance, as applicable, will be shared via email, phone, and our Alert Media application. Despite conflicting guidance on certain topics, there remain certain protections that apply to confidentiality. Although certain exceptions apply, it is best to avoid identifying potentially infected employees to ensure compliance with various confidentiality laws. Any employee, of course, may voluntarily authorize disclosure of his or her own medical information for the purposes of sharing potential exposure.

Steps We Are Taking Now

- We will be expanding flexibility of telework. Any currently designated telework employees will continue to telework until further notice. Expanded flexibility will be facilitated by the transition to the new telephone system.
- Supervisors are to eliminate any unnecessary business travel for themselves and their respective employees.
- Overseas (OCONUS) business travel is cancelled until further notice.
- We will avoid scheduling business travel for employees who may be at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. older employees and those with medical conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease) to areas within CONUS where COVID-19 is spreading.
- Employees who may have been exposed or who manifest symptoms associated with COVID-19 may be sent home.
- Sick, annual, and administrative leave will be administered as necessary to balance the health needs of each employee with the overall well-being of the office. Supervisors should coordinate questions on leave with Human Resources.
- Employees located in federal government installations, such as Pre-Discharge sites and VA facilities, will likely need to ensure that site-specific protocols are followed. Employees at those locations must coordinate with the designated point of contact at those facilities.
- Maintenance and cleaning staff has begun wiping down all surfaces that are frequent points of contact. Staff will be using disinfectant and germicidal wipes more frequently each day. Hand sanitizer stations are checked daily. More sanitary supplies are being order for surplus.

As this situation continues to evolve, we will provide additional guidance as it becomes available.