



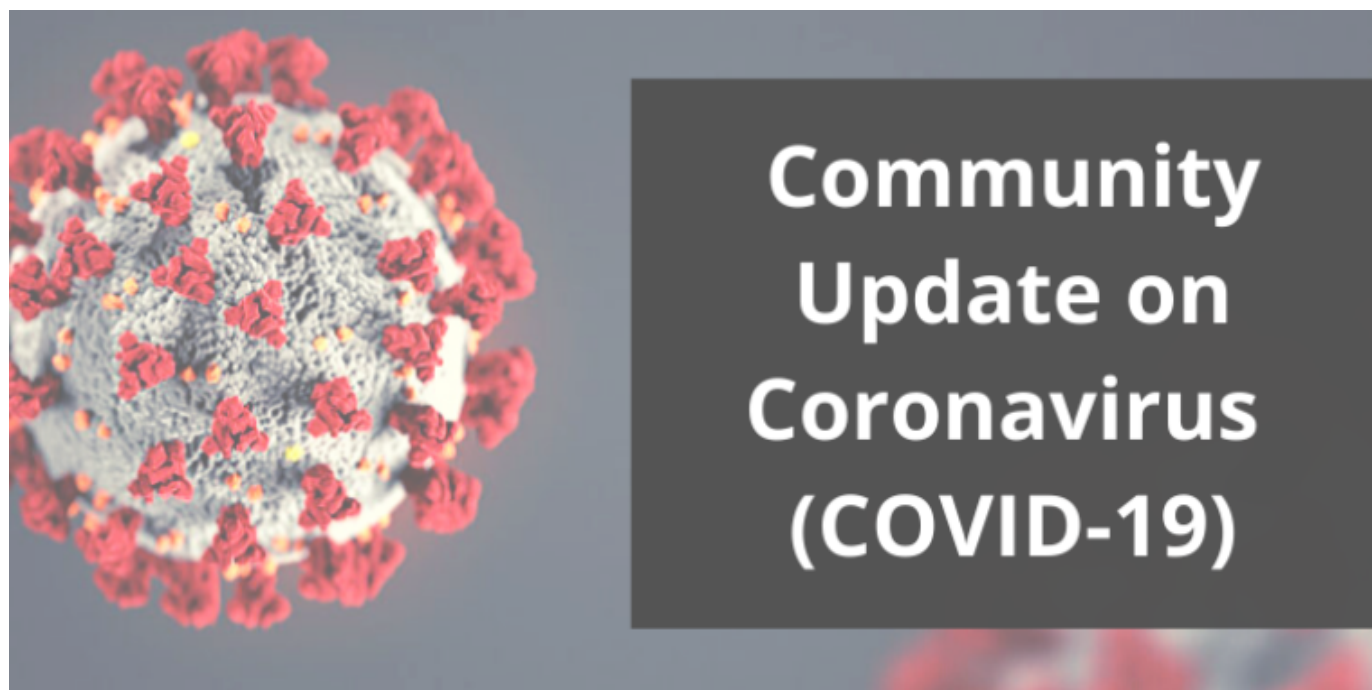
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin Thomas

Community Update on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

SENATOR KEVIN THOMAS March 3, 2020

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS**



Dear Neighbor,

As you are likely aware, we have learned about the **first confirmed cases of novel coronavirus** (COVID-19) in New York State. While New York's overall risk level remains low, it's understandable if you're wondering how likely it is that you or a loved one will be affected. As state and local health departments continue to take proactive measures against COVID-19, I want to ensure that all Long Islanders remain informed, prepared, and safe.

It's important to know that this is a continually-evolving situation. Approximately 80% of those who test positive for COVID-19 will experience mild symptoms. It is still unclear exactly how contagious the virus is, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates symptoms occur 2-14 days after exposure. Symptoms of the virus are fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Like with many other illnesses, older adults and those with weakened immune systems are most at risk.

While there is currently no vaccine to prevent this virus, everyone can do their part to help stop the spread of this and other respiratory viruses. Here are some tips from the CDC:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- If you start to feel unwell, contact your doctor.

In times like these, we tend to turn to the internet, because we know there's a lot of useful and reliable information online. But there is also a great deal of misinformation, which may make it hard to find timely and trustworthy information. While no one source of information is perfect, some are undeniably better than others. It is best to look for sites that rely on experts who use well-accepted scientific analysis, and those who have a mission to inform and protect the public. The [CDC](#) and [World Health Organization](#) websites both meet

these criteria, and are continually updated with new information on COVID-19.

The New York State Department of Health has also set up a hotline with information and to answer questions you may have about COVID-19. The hotline can be reached at **1-888-364-3065**. In addition, the Department has a dedicated **website** with regularly updated information for New Yorkers.

Please keep in mind that our fellow Long Islanders may be worried or anxious about friends, loved ones, and relatives living in affected regions. Perpetuating fear or xenophobia towards groups of people -- including and especially those of Asian descent -- does nothing but cause more harm. We all have a responsibility to support and respect one another, especially in times like these.

If you have any questions, you can always call my office at 516-739-1700 or email me at thomas@nysenate.gov. We will do our best to connect you with the services and information you need.

Be well,

Senator Kevin Thomas

Additional Resources (Last Updated 3/10/2020)

[A list of area schools and universities closed over coronavirus concerns \(from Newsday\)](#)

[Simple steps help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions About Monitoring and Movement Restrictions](#)

[County Health Department Contact Information](#)

[Interim Cleaning and Disinfection Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools for COVID-19](#)

[Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-Healthcare Settings Where Individuals Under Movement Restriction for COVID-19 are Staying](#)

[Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public Transportation Settings for COVID-19](#)

[List of Products Registered in NY for Use Against COVID-19](#)

[Guidance on Coronavirus Resources and Warnings about Consumer Scams](#)