

COVID-19 Resource Links for Colleges, Businesses and Individuals

UPDATED Tuesday, April 7, 2020 **(latest updates are highlighted)**

(Editor's note: in the interest of brevity, the "Virtual Escapes" links have been eliminated from this doc. If you *need* such an escape, send an email to jbabb@vccs, and he'll send you the links!)

COVID-19 Pandemic Information

For information regarding the global pandemic and the latest guidance from Virginia public health officials,

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[Virginia Department of Health \(VDH\)](#)

The New York Times is providing free access to the most important news and useful guidance on the coronavirus outbreak to help readers understand the pandemic. Sign up with an email address to read all the articles on this page.

<https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/coronavirus>

Many U.S. news organizations have moved their [coronavirus coverage](#) outside of their paywalls (making it free to view online.)

Communicating about COVID-19

To help with our writing about the new coronavirus disease, called COVID-19, The Associated Press has prepared a guide based on the AP Stylebook and common usage in AP stories. [https://www.apstylebook.com/topical most recent](https://www.apstylebook.com/topical_most_recent)

Unemployment and other Public Benefits

How to access current benefits to respond to people showing up at the colleges.

Paid Sick and Family and Medical Leave for COVID-19

The U.S. Department of Labor issued a temporary rule related to implementing new paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act.](#)

U.S. Department Of Labor Announces New CARES Act Guidance on Unemployment Insurance for States in Response to COVID-19 Crisis

The U.S. Department of Labor [announced](#) the publication of Unemployment Insurance Program Letter 14-20 (UIPL) outlining relevant provisions of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act related to the administration of and eligibility criteria for state unemployment insurance (UI) programs, including Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) for those not typically eligible for UI, such as gig workers, and expanded UI benefits. Today's guidance is the first of several upcoming UIPLs to states on the unemployment insurance provisions of the CARES Act.

Paycheck Protection Program

An SBA loan that helps businesses keep their workforce employed during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll.

SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.

You can apply through any existing SBA 7(a) lender or through any federally insured depository institution, federally insured credit union, and Farm Credit System institution that is participating. Other regulated lenders will be available to make these loans once they are approved and enrolled in the program. You should consult with your local lender as to whether it is participating in the program.

Lenders may begin processing loan applications as soon as April 3, 2020. The Paycheck Protection Program will be available through June 30, 2020.

For affiliation rules applicable for the Paycheck Protection Program, [click here](#).

As the country grapples with an [unprecedented pandemic](#) that's left [millions of Americans unemployed](#), the U.S. Department of Education is giving most federal student loan borrowers [a break from their monthly bills](#) until at least October. Here's a link to the CNBC story from 4/4/20: <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/03/what-the-coronavirus-outbreak-means-for-your-student-loans.html>

Important Information for Unemployment Insurance

If you have filed an unemployment insurance application (UI), you must then file a weekly claim for each week or you will NOT be paid!

VEC recommends you do this on Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday of each week if you remain unemployed and want to be paid for the prior week. [Check out this news report](#).

You can complete and submit your weekly UI payment request by calling 1-800-897-5630. You can also find more information by visiting our website at vec.virginia.gov.

Online is recommended! For those who need to file for unemployment due to COVID-19, the best way to file is online through [Virginia Workforce Connection](#). While the call center number is still functioning, the wait times are higher than normal at this time due to call volume. The filing website is mobile friendly and can be accessed from smart phones. The website has Live Chat capability and our Centers are still accepting calls at this time if you need additional assistance.

Spanish speakers may find convenient options at this link:
<http://www.vec.virginia.gov/unemployed>

Community Awareness Podcast: Work Talk Episode 28 - Community Awareness Podcast – SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program

In this special community awareness podcast designed to provide crucial information during the COVID-19 pandemic, you’ll learn about the Small Business Administration’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. Discover eligibility requirements, loan details and how to apply

<https://vcwnewrivermtrogers.com/category/work-talk/>

State Resources

Executive Order 55: TEMPORARY STAY AT HOME ORDER DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

[https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

Executive Order 53: TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS ON RESTAURANTS, RECREATIONAL, ENTERTAINMENT, GATHERINGS, NON-ESSENTIAL RETAIL BUSINESSES, AND CLOSURE OF K-12 SCHOOLS DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

[https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has developed a series of technical assistance resources and frequently asked questions (FAQs) to address grants management questions related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) to help state and local workforce leaders, and other stakeholders and partners to assist the public workforce system during this crisis.

<https://www.workforcegps.org/resources/2020/03/18/23/35/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Resources>

Governor’s Office Guidance: <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus-updates/>

FAQ for workers:

<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Frequently-Asked-Questions-from-Workers-Regarding-COVID-19.pdf>

Virginia Chamber COVID Resource Center: <https://www.vachamber.com/covid-19/>

Virginia Employment Commission: <http://www.vec.virginia.gov/>

Support for Impacted Businesses

Small businesses and nonprofit organizations throughout the Commonwealth affected by the COVID-19 public health crisis can now apply for low-interest federal disaster loans of up to \$2 million from the SBA to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other expenses. To submit a loan application through the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, please visit disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/.

Online Connectivity for Students Who Lack It

[FCC agreement](#) stating that providers will waive late fees, not cutoff service for lack of payment, and open hot-spots.

[Comcast COVID-19 response](#): offers free WiFi for 2 months to low income families plus all Xfinity hot-spots are free to the public during this time

[Charter Free Internet offer for 2 months](#)

[AT&T COVID-19 response](#): offers open hot-spots, unlimited data to existing customers, and \$10/month plans to low income families

[Verizon COVID-19 response](#): no special offers, but following the FCC agreement.

[Sprint COVID-19 response](#): follows FCC agreement, provides unlimited data to existing customers, and, starting Tuesday, 3/17/2020, will allow all handsets to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge (I expect others will follow).

[T-Mobile COVID-19 response](#): follows FCC agreement, plus unlimited data to existing customers, and, coming soon, will allow all handsets to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge (I expect others will follow).

[Altice/Suddenlink response](#): offers 30 MB internet to any new subscriber free for 60 days. No late fees or terminations for existing customers. Applicable to some rural localities

Minimizing Your Risks of Getting COVID-19

What students can do in the wake of a natural disaster:

<https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/natural-disasters/>

How to cope emotionally in the wake of a disaster:

<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/recovering-disasters>

Print and social media materials for the CDC's Life is Better with Clean Hands campaign, which can be printed and hung around campuses and/or posted online:

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/campaign.html>

You'll probably still need to go to the store and open doors. Here are 10 ways to help avoid coronavirus when you must leave the house:

<https://www.cnet.com/how-to/10-ways-to-help-avoid-coronavirus-when-you-have-to-leave-the-house/>

Working (From Home) in This New Reality

Coronavirus creating stress? You may need "mental and emotional distancing" as much as social distancing. Here are [eight tips](#) to achieve relief. (Forbes 3/17/20)

If you know someone who's been thrown out of work due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this might be useful information: some companies that are on a hiring-spree these days.

<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/24/820624379/from-grocery-stores-to-pizza-delivery-some-companies-are-on-a-hiring-spree>

How to lead in a crisis (faculty, administration):

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-to-Lead-in-a-Crisis/248253>

A retired general and Navy SEAL on how to be a true leader during the coronavirus outbreak

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/15/perspectives/leadership-ceo-coronavirus-outbreak/index.html>

If you're working from home, you've probably worked with your IT team on technical details. Here are some other tips to help set realistic expectations and make your time as productive as possible.

<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/15/815549926/8-tips-to-make-working-from-home-work-for-you>

[Tips from astronauts](#) on how to handle living in isolation.