



AHA Update - Social Distancing Edition - Dateline March 23, 2020

We continue to monitor the national, state and local news and reputable websites for information that may be helpful to our members and volunteers. And we continue to keep in touch with our members who may need assistance during this period of "social distancing." By way of update:

- Many thanks to the volunteers who have answered the call and stand ready to assist members with travel to necessary appointments or go out grocery shopping for members. Please continue to check the VSS for opportunities and look for our emails when requests arise.

We know many of our volunteers would like to help more, but are unable to do so given their own health concerns or those of people with whom they live. If you'd like to do more, you can. Just place a call to a member you know, particularly one who lives alone, and just chat. We need to stay connected.

While our AHA services are for those who are full members, we want our Associate members and volunteers to know we are here should you need help. We are a community of friends and we want you to have a safety net if you truly need help. Of course, we must prioritize assistance for our most vulnerable members, but if you have a need, please call AHA so we can do our best to help you.

- Please remember that AHA is well-connected with other local resources we can point you to if your needs rise above what our volunteers can provide. Call our office if you have any concerns. We will problem-solve together.
- The AHA staff is staggering in-office shifts so only one person is in the office at a time, with others working from home. If you call, please leave a message and we will get back to you as quickly as possible. We are keeping normal business hours - 10am to 2pm.
- All AHA events in April have been cancelled. We will produce our monthly newsletter, but no calendar will be included.
- We are hoping that Spring2Action, our big Alexandria-wide fundraising day, will go ahead as planned on April 29 as it is an online giving event. We will keep you posted on that.
- A number of local grocery stores are offering special hours for shoppers over age 60 or with compromised immune systems. If you meet the criteria, take advantage of the opportunity as most stores are cleaning thoroughly and restocking overnight, so early hours can be the best time to shop.

- Costco - Tuesdays and Thursdays only - open 8am-9am for this group
 - Balducci's - Open the first hour of each day (8am) for this group
 - Whole Foods - Open the first hour of each day (7am) for this group
 - Fresh Market - Open the first hour of each day (8am) for this group
 - Giant - Open the first hour of each day (6am) for this group
 - Safeway - Tuesday and Thursday only - open from 7am-9am for this group only
 - Target - Wednesday only - open the first hour (8am) for this group
 - Walmart - Tuesdays only - open the first hour (7am) for this group
 - Trader Joe's - Special line for entry from 9am-10am for this group
 - Harris Teeter - Thursdays, 9am-2pm, ExpressLane service just for this group. Pickup fee waived, delivery is \$5.00.
- Online ordering of groceries is a great idea and information about that was included in our last email ([click here to read](#)). But, for now, these services may not offer a timely delivery or pickup option as the demand for these services has skyrocketed. We do have volunteers who are willing to shop for our Full Members (and, potentially, Associates or Volunteers in need). Please call the office if you need this assistance and we will give you the details of how it will work.
 - The City of Alexandria has provided two excellent reference sheets that you may want to view or download. The first is the [Be Ready Alexandria flyer](#) with recommendations on preparing for a period of "social distancing" and the other [provides a list of food and other "safety net" resources](#) the City offers to those in need.
 - The Red Cross has [some very good information here](#) about best practices should you or someone with whom you live fall ill and suspect it is COVID-19.
 - Sadly, scammers are hard at work taking advantage of this situation. PLEASE do not be taken in by pleas for funds from groups you don't already know and trust. Be careful not to click on any links in emails that come to you from unfamiliar sources.

A few reminders previously shared, but worth keeping in mind:

- We continue to monitor the Alexandria City Health Department website and recommend you do too. The website address is <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus>. You may also want to review the Virginia Department of Health website at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/> - which offers updates on the number and locations of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Virginia.
- [We've provided here a checklist of practical things you can do](#) to care for yourself, loved ones, friends and neighbors. Please take a moment to download or print a copy, as it contains good tips and helpful resources.
- There are many emails and Facebook posts regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. If you see an article or other link of interest to you, but the source is unfamiliar, don't click on it. If it's legitimate you should be able to go to Google and type in that source and find it online that way. Clicking on links in random emails (especially) or on Facebook posts could allow malicious software to invade your computer. Better safe than sorry. (The links in this email are ok to click!)

- Thank you to our members for postponing non-essential trips and service requests while we work on securing volunteers to help with those services that are important to ensuring the health and safety of our members. We've been in touch with our volunteers by phone and by email to gauge their ability to continue to provide assistance to our members while also taking steps to safeguard their own health. We have provided volunteers with special guidelines when providing services. We are asking that members understand that drivers will provide only pick-up and drop-off services and will not be sitting in medical waiting rooms with members. As well, volunteers will be taking care to disinfect door handles and car surfaces to make them as clean as possible when driving members. We ask that everyone practice good hand washing before and after interactions. Volunteers, please continue to check the VSS to see the open requests and help as you are able. Thank you!

If you develop fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early. Call your Primary Care Provider when you fall ill for their advice about next steps to ensure you do not put others at risk when visiting their office or going to another health care facility.

We will continue to keep you informed - and we want you to stay in touch with AHA too. Call us if you have questions or concerns or need help. Our volunteers and staff will be reaching out to our full members on a regular basis to make sure you have what you need to remain safe and healthy at home while we all ride out this situation. We're here to help.



Try Something New

1. Have you ever visited the Atlas Obscura website? If not, your first visit could be extraordinary if you [view this fascinating and beautiful \(turn on speakers\) time lapse video](#) of a magical walk through a Spring garden. Then, take a look at their "Experiences" tab and make a list of unusual places you might want to visit once we are free again to roam.
2. If you have Facebook then maybe you've seen this [teen's amazing lip-synch medley of a dozen Broadway tunes](#) performed in the passenger seat while his mother drives. If not, it's well worth a look!
3. [Michael's Craft Store](#) is now offering curbside delivery. So if you're ready to try your hand at a new craft, create a scrapbook, or want to tie dye a t-shirt, you can order online and pickup without leaving your car.
4. The National Park Service is offering [a "Bloomcam"](#) so you can enjoy a view of the Tidal Basin and cherry blossoms. Take a look!

5. [Longwood Gardens offers an free online course about the history, care and display of orchids.](#) If you're an orchid lover, or want to become an orchid owner, you'll be learning from the experts.

6. Yale's most popular course is now available to take online at no cost. "[The Science of Well-Being](#)" offers a series of challenges designed to increase your own happiness and build more productive habits. In preparation for these challenges, Professor Laurie Santos reveals misconceptions about happiness, annoying features of the mind that lead us to think the way we do, and the research that can help us change.

Do you have some ideas to recommend to others? Please send an email to jenheinz@athomeinalexandria.org and we'll include them in our next message. Thank you!

At Home in Alexandria
3139 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305
703.231.0824
aha@athomeinalexandria.org
