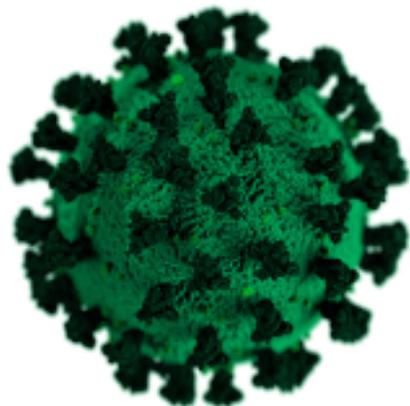


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*Alpha Kappa Alpha*  
SORORITY, INCORPORATED®



# COVID-19

## CORONAVIRUS

### PANDEMIC TASK FORCE

Prayerfully, you and your loved ones are safe, healthy and continuing to observe the recommended precautions to ensure your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those you love and cherish. Virtually every institution and organization, including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, has been touched by the coronavirus (COVID-19). Please continue to keep our members who have been affected in your thoughts and prayers during this very difficult time.

## SORORITY OPERATIONS

<b>Boule</b>	Under Advisement
<b>Regional Conferences</b>	Postponed
<b>Membership Intake Processes (MIPs)</b>	Postponed
<b>Chapter Meetings</b>	Virtual
<b>Chapter Activities &amp; Events</b>	Virtual**
<b>Foundation Meetings</b>	Virtual
<b>Foundation Activities &amp; Events</b>	Virtual**
<b>Program Targets &amp; Service Projects</b>	Virtual**
<b>Leadership Fellows Conference</b>	Postponed
<b>Executive Leadership Academy (ELA)***</b>	Postponed
<b>Ivy Beyond the Wall Ceremonies</b>	Postponed
<b>Corporate Office</b>	Virtual

\* Updates will be provided as decisions are made and additional information becomes available.

\*\* Activities, events, programs, targets and service projects can be conducted virtually where applicable and to the extent possible

\*\*\* The ELA application deadline has been postponed until further notice.

## DAY OF PRAYER

Every Thursday for at least the next four (4) weeks has been designated as our **Day of Prayer** where we will use our collective voice to ask God to intercede in this pandemic. Madam Supreme Basileus Glenda Glover thanks the Regional Directors who cooperated in this effort by agreeing to suspend their regular prayer calls during this period. The designated prayer times are 7:00AM, 12:00 Noon and 6:00PM in your time zone. Pray once, twice or at each of the designated times as your schedule allows. Just pray. Sorors, we know the power of prayer. So, continue to remain prayerful.

## PANDEMIC TASK FORCE

In an effort to ensure that we are keeping sorors informed of the ever-changing world in which we now find ourselves and the impact this global health emergency is having on Alpha Kappa Alpha, I have empaneled a Pandemic Task Force to assist in navigating this unprecedented public health crisis. The members who have been appointed to serve on the Pandemic Task Force are:

**Soror Glenda Glover**, Supreme Basileus

**Soror Danette Anthony Reed**, First Supreme Anti-Basileus

**Soror Kasey Alexander Coleman**, Second Supreme Anti-Basileus

**Soror Kaylen Long**, Undergraduate Member-at-Large

**Soror Hollye Weeks**, Undergraduate Member-at-Large

**Soror Carol Dixon**, Far Western Regional Director

**Soror Joy Elaine Daley**, International Regional Director (*Chairman*)

**Soror Cynthia Howell**, Executive Director of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

**Soror Martha Perine Beard**, Chief of Staff to the Supreme Basileus

**Soror Robyn Jones**, Physician & Medical Director for Women's Health

**Soror Ora Douglass**, Program Committee Chairman

**Soror Kimberly Esmond Adams**, Special Assistant to the Supreme Basileus & Risk Management Task Force Chairman (*Co-Chairman*)

**Soror Cynthia Finch**, MIP Committee Chairman & Healthcare Professional

**Soror Jasmine Adkins Moore**, Disaster Relief Committee Chairman

The purpose of the Pandemic Task Force is as follows:

1. To develop and communicate a coordinated plan of action concerning operations, programming, and other activities of Alpha Kappa Alpha;
2. To provide updates to the membership and reinforce best practices to mitigate the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19);
3. To create a chain of command for notification protocol and procedures to be followed for (1) sorors who have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19); and (2) sorors who have come into contact with another soror who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and, therefore, are at risk of exposure;
4. To gather data to assess the effect that coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on the sorority; and
5. To determine how best to support our vulnerable sorority members.

The Pandemic Task Force will provide weekly updates to the membership on a variety of matters impacting Alpha Kappa Alpha in addition to other helpful information.

## UNDERSTANDING COVID-19: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What is the background of coronavirus (COVID-19)?** China notified the world of the coronavirus in December 2019. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses which cause the common cold and can cause more serious, contagious infections such as SARS 2003 and MERS 2012. SARS-coV2 is the abbreviation for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. COVID-19 is the abbreviation for coronavirus disease 2019.

**From where did it come?** COVID-19 is a novel virus which means of animal origin and is most likely from bats in Wuhan, China. Mutations of the virus have caused animal to animal transmission which mutated to human to human transmission.

**Is there an immunity for this virus?** The virus is new to human beings and there is no natural or acquired immunity. It is contagious, not human, and unrecognized by the human immune system.

**Who is at risk of infection?** All human beings are at risk of infection. Serious infection and death are most likely in people 65 years and older with pre-existing conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, cancer or other types of immune compromise.

**How do I catch it?** COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that is passed from person to person by coughing and sneezing.

**Who can be tested?** The testing criteria include fever with symptoms, fever and age 65 and older, and healthcare professionals who actively care for patients. Others are tested based on local testing criteria.

**What is the incubation period?** The incubation period for this virus is 2 – 14 days from exposure. Those infected may be contagious with or without symptoms.

**How do I protect myself?** Practice good hygiene by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds when available or using hand sanitizer; cleanse surfaces; observe respiratory etiquette by coughing into your elbow or a tissue; and practice social distancing by staying six (6) feet away from others.

**What are symptoms of COVID-19?** Symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

**What is the treatment?** There is no treatment at present. Research is ongoing. Supportive care is recommended.

**How do I lessen the impact?** Self-quarantine for 14 days if you have been exposed to the virus and isolate if you have tested positive for COVID-19.

**What is the risk of infection?** Most infections are mild and can be treated at home; however, severe illness may require hospitalization and can lead to death.

**When is a vaccine coming?** Private industry, government and academic centers are working together to develop a vaccine. The timeline for availability in humans is approximately one (1) year.

#### *References for FAQ*

[CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

[NIH.gov](https://www.nih.gov) (National Institutes of Health)

[WHO.int](https://www.who.int) (World Health Organization)

[coronavirus.jhu.edu](https://coronavirus.jhu.edu) (Johns Hopkins)

[nejm.org/coronavirus](https://www.nejm.org/coronavirus) (New England Journal of Medicine)

## SOCIAL DISTANCING: WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Over the past few weeks, most of the world has been introduced to a new term used to describe the manner in which we interact with one another in a public health emergency. Social Distancing has now become part of our lexicon. Social distancing or physical distancing is a set of infection control actions intended to stop or slow down the spread of a contagious disease. It is unfamiliar and uncomfortable for most people. Rampant misinformation has caused far too many to believe that social distancing is much ado about nothing and will not have any appreciable effect on slowing the rapid transmission of this highly contagious disease. So, what is the big deal about social distancing?

COVID-19 is now moving explosively through the human population by spreading through respiratory secretions. This virus is 10 times more contagious than the flu or a cold. Positive cases for the virus have multiplied from 6,000 to 50,000 in the span of seven (7) days. Although most people will recover, about 20% will end up with a serious pneumonia that will require hospitalization. Some will be so ill from the pneumonia that they will die. In those over age 70, the death rate is 8-20%. If a child becomes infected on a playdate, that child can easily transmit the virus to her grandmother simply by touching the same doorknob or countertop.

Scientists measure the spread of an epidemic by a number called  $R_0$  or “R naught.” That number is calculated this way: for every person who develops the illness, how many other people does she infect before she is cured (or dead) and no longer infectious? The  $R_0$  for coronavirus appears to be a number close to three (3) – an extremely frightening number for such a deadly disease.

In practical terms, suppose you catch the virus. You will give it to three (3) other people, and they will each give it to three others, and so on. Here is how the math works where you, the “index case,” are the first line:

YOU infect

3 people who infect

9 people who infect

27 people who infect

81 people who infect

243 people who infect  
729 people who infect  
2,187 people who infect  
6,561 people who infect  
19,683 people who infect  
59,046 people who infect  
177,147 people who infect  
531,441 people who infect  
1,594,323 people who infect  
4,782,969 people who infect  
14,348,907 people who continue to spread the virus . . . .

So, as you can see, in just 15 steps of transmission, the virus has gone from just one (1) index case (YOU) to 14.3 million other people. Those 15 steps might take only a few weeks. The first person infected may be a young and healthy child, but many of those 14 million people will be older and sick. They will likely die because they became infected by a virus that started in one person's throat. Consider that the World Health Organization reported that it took 67 days to reach 100,000 confirmed cases; 11 days to reach the second 100,000 confirmed cases; and just four (4) days to reach the next 100,000 confirmed cases. Sorors, this is not an exaggeration; it is fact.

The good news is that  $R_0$  can be lowered by control measures. If we can get the number below one (1), the epidemic will die out. This is the point of social distancing and quarantines. The disturbing reality is that too many of us are not heeding these precautions seriously enough, and we are not acting quickly enough. We must act with a sense of urgency to slow down the rate of infection in order to flatten the curve.

Medical experts project that the United States might be the next epicenter for this dreadful virus. Sorors, we all of us must do our part. We implore you to scrupulously observe aggressive social distancing even though it can be painful and confining. Our children have cabin fever. They are pleading to see their friends. They may have birthday parties coming up or special events they have been anticipating. Most of us need to work, and childcare is a big worry. But we must overcome these issues and the boredom we may be experiencing over the coming weeks so that we can survive this pandemic with as few deaths as possible. How can we do that? Following these 10 steps is a good start:

1. No playdates, not even 1:1.
2. No small gatherings and no meetings between a couple of families, even for intimate gatherings and birthday celebrations.
3. Avoid gyms, spas, trampoline parks, climbing gyms, restaurants, movie theaters, and anything in an enclosed area. Many of these places are advertising increased cleaning and hygiene. Those representations are not sufficient. Do not go!
4. Cancel planned vacations for at least the next month.
5. Avoid airline travel that is not an emergency. Many airlines and rental agencies are offering penalty-free cancellations.
6. Stay at home as much as possible.
7. Work from home if possible.
8. Make necessary outings to buy groceries and medicine quick and purposeful.
9. Wash your hands thoroughly after you have been in public places, for a full 20 seconds, lathering up thoroughly with soap and being sure to wash between the fingers.
10. Avoid disseminating social media claims that the situation is not serious or is being exaggerated. This is a national crisis and conveying misinformation to your friends and family may put their lives in danger.

Bottom line, Sorors, the coronavirus IS a serious matter. It is the most urgent health crisis that any of us has ever faced in our lifetimes. The only way to ensure that you do not contribute to the alarming rate of transmission is not to get infected and not to infect your family members and loved ones. Therefore, you must practice aggressive social distancing. In other words, STAY AT HOME. So, what is the big deal about social distancing? Slowing the spread of this dreadful virus is a matter of life and death, and that is a big deal.

Share this information with your line sisters, family members, loved ones and friends using the hashtag #SocialDistancingIsASeriousMatter.

Source: Boston Physicians' Group

Please do not reply to the [eBlasts@aka1908.com](mailto:eBlasts@aka1908.com) email address. For any questions/concerns, visit our [Member Assistance Form](#).

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