



# An Update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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While we continue our fight against COVID-19, I wanted to update you on the work I'm doing and ensure you have accurate and helpful information to keep yourself and your families safe.

As you know, on Friday Governor Pritzker announced a statewide Stay-At-Home order. The order went into effect last night, and continues until April 7th. It's important to note that essential services like grocery stores, hospitals, pharmacies, and gas stations will remain open during this time. [Click here](#) for more information about what the order means for you, your family, and your local businesses.

If you'd like to receive further updates on our efforts to stop the spread of this virus, please sign up for my e-Newsletter. I'll also share important information for Southern Illinoisans on my Facebook and Twitter pages.

Important Contact Information >

Both the CDC and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) have dedicated COVID-19 hotlines. You can reach the CDC at 800-CDC-INFO and the IDPH at 800-889-3931 or [DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV](mailto:DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV) >.

In addition, the state of Illinois has launched a website with up-to-date information about our state's efforts to combat COVID-19. It includes important resources for prevention as well as information for businesses, hospitals, and schools. Please visit [coronavirus.illinois.gov](https://coronavirus.illinois.gov) for more information.

Southern Illinois Healthcare has a 24-hour hotline for folks who believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19. Anyone in Illinois can call – even if SIH isn't your normal healthcare provider. Visit their website for more information, or give them a call at 844-988-7800.

### Information for Seniors

Many stores across Illinois are offering > special hours for seniors and other vulnerable populations to shop. [Click here](#) for a list of participating stores.

If you or someone you know is 60 years or older and needs help picking up medication, food, or a ride to doctor's appointments, the Shawnee Alliance may be able to help. Give them a call at 618-985-8322 or toll free at 1-800-642-7773 to request assistance. [Click here](#) for more information.

### Increasing Access to Test Kits

In the early hours of last Saturday morning, Republicans and Democrats put the health and safety of Americans over politics and passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. This week, the Senate followed suit and sent the bill to President Trump's desk, where he signed it into law. This law will ensure crucial coronavirus tests will be free and will help ease the burden on working families and job creators through paid sick and family leave, unemployment benefits, and a boost in Medicaid funding. While there is still much work to be done, this was a step in the right direction to help folks when they need it most.

### Developing a Vaccine

Since the outbreak began in the United States, the National Institutes of Health has been working rapidly to develop a vaccine to prevent any further spread. This past Monday, the first trial for a vaccine began.

### Speaking With Local Hospitals

In order to do our part to slow the spread of coronavirus, many of my meetings have turned into phone calls. This week, I spoke with local hospital administrators across

Southern Illinois to get a status report from our healthcare professionals on the ground and update them on the federal response. I also am in close contact with my House colleagues and am relaying folks' concerns to them.