



Leading and Supporting During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Updated 20 March 2020

Like many of you, we have been busy answering calls and emails from our staff, volunteers, members, and other community members about how COVID-19 will impact our daily operations — including our ability to deliver programs and services. We are also being proactive about our strategies for responding to the impact that this global pandemic is having on our whole sector.

I want to acknowledge the anxiety of the unknown. We haven't been through something of this scale together. But, as our routines and comforts are temporarily disrupted, I want to share my confidence in the strength of our sector – your strength. We are a smart, passionate, and empathetic force for good. And we'll help our communities get through this together.

I want to convey some information that I hope you'll find helpful.

Guidance on Operations

As an organization, we've already determined that our own staff will work remotely starting Monday, March 16 through Friday, April 3. During that time, please expect that any business you have with any IS employee will take place virtually. We are also going to hold all large meetings online, such as today's Public Policy Committee meeting, to ensure we keep people safe and adhere to the recommendation to practice social distancing. We also encourage you to join our partners at [Nonprofit HR for their webinar on Monday, March 16](#) to learn more about the impact of coronavirus on your workforce and operations.

Staying in Communication with Government Officials

In our critical role as public policy leaders, we continue to have ongoing conversations with government relations professionals across the country on our federal policy

positions. We are actively monitoring and engaging on COVID-19 response legislation currently pending before Congress. On March 14, the House of Representatives passed a response bill that includes key provisions on paid sick leave, emergency family and medical leave, and the payroll tax credit for nonprofits. The House bill, which is expected to be passed by the Senate on Monday, also includes free testing for coronavirus, increased funding for unemployment assistance, food aid, and Medicaid. It also suspends work requirements for supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP). [Read more about the bill.](#)

For your organization, the most vital line of communication is with your local emergency management institutions. If you are looking for information or have pressing needs, please contact your local Department of Health, Emergency Management Agency, or Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster chapter.

Resources to Stay Informed

We know that even in the last 48 hours, the number of resources posted to websites and shared throughout networks have multiplied substantially. We do not want to replicate what is already being done so well – [but we have curated information on the IS website so that you can easily access it.](#) If you find yourselves still wishing for additional resources or discussions, please let us know by filling out this [one-question survey](#) and we will respond to the best of our abilities.

Organizational Leadership

Lastly, I understand from many conversations I've had that leaders in the sector face a number of unique challenges when a pandemic like this hits home. We want to foster a dialogue between leaders, particularly CEOs and members of the C-Suite. If you are part of your organization's leadership team, please join us for a **[town hall on Friday, March 20 at 2:00-3:00 pm ET](#)** to discuss the sector's response.

As I recently wrote in [an editorial for *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*](#), how we show up as sector organizations today will greatly impact our ability to continue our work in the future. The actions we take and leadership we provide in supporting our organizations and communities through this crisis will strengthen their trust in us and our ability to once again rise to future challenges.

This [blog](#) originally appeared on Independent Sector.

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