



HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



For Immediate Release – May 5, 2020

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State donates masks, hand sanitizer to support City's COVID-19 fight

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The City of Harrisonburg will begin distributing COVID-19 care kits to select neighborhoods this week, thanks to a donation of 15,000 disposable face masks and hundreds of bottles of hand sanitizer from the COVID-19 [Health Equity Working Group](#) of Virginia's Unified Command.

City staff stuffed 1,100 care kits on Tuesday to distribute throughout the community. Some 500 kits contain 14 masks and information in five languages about the prevention of COVID-19. Another 600 care kits also will include a bottle of hand sanitizer in addition to the masks and flyers. Delivery teams will go door-to-door in culturally diverse neighborhoods to drop off the supplies, while practicing social distancing and wearing personal protective equipment.

Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed worked closely with Dr. Janice Underwood, Virginia's chief diversity officer to Gov. Ralph Northam, to collaborate on this initiative and obtain the vital donation.

"As we all work together to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the Harrisonburg community, it is of the utmost importance that we take whatever steps necessary to engage with our most at-risk residents and ensure they have every opportunity to protect the health and wellness of themselves, their loved ones and their neighborhoods," Mayor Reed said. "Individuals who do not have easy access to health care due to economic considerations or language barriers need our support at this time more than ever. We are extremely grateful for Dr. Underwood and the Virginia Health Equity Task Force for the commitment they have made to support the people of The Friendly City."

The care kits will contribute to the City's efforts to reach diverse neighborhoods and those who speak English as a second language, or not at all, with important COVID-19 resources and messaging. Those efforts have included specialized community engagement efforts in five languages most spoken in Harrisonburg. It also has included COVID-19 testing that



(Above) City of Harrisonburg staff and volunteers pack care kits for distribution throughout the community. (Right) The kits will be placed in culturally diverse neighborhoods across the City throughout this week.



took place in partnership with Sentara Healthcare this weekend in the Mosby Court and Northeast neighborhood areas that resulted in more than 80 individuals being tested.

“One of the priorities of the equity task force is to intentionally collaborate with local governments to provide support to vulnerable communities because we know that everyone does not enjoy the same privileges for social distancing or receive information the same way,” Dr. Underwood said. “Therefore, we provide localities access to health equity training for all city employees and volunteers, personal protective equipment, culturally appropriate educational materials to support diverse communities, and support in identifying neighborhoods at elevated risk with mapping technology.

“Because of Mayor Reed and her team’s leadership and laser-focused commitment to the Harrisonburg community, the equity task force was able to move quickly in support of the residents in the area who needed the most help.”

Additionally, the City is thankful for donations from Wal-Mart and the Garber family from Red Front Supermarket, which provided bags to be used in this effort.

Please remember this important COVID-19 health and wellness information:

- **The City of Harrisonburg is urging all residents to follow VDH and Centers for Disease Control guidelines when it comes to responding to COVID-19. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Wear a mask when you go out.**
- **Put at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and other people at all times. All gatherings of more than 10 individuals have been banned in Virginia by Gov. Northam, and a Stay At Home order has instructed all to remain home as much as possible unless they are traveling for work, for medical care for themselves or a loved one, or essential travel such as grocery shopping or purchasing other needed supplies. Remember, even if you are not showing symptoms, you could still have COVID-19 and could pass it to someone else.**

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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