

The branch office does not endorse any of the following programs.

Do not post this document publicly on any website, social media, or sharing service.

The links will take you to various available resources including non-profit and government agencies. Family heads will need to use discernment and carefully research these resources to determine whether the program is appropriate for their households and decide if they will avail themselves of such programs. – Gal. 6:5

Pennsylvania – COVID-19 Resources

As of April 04, 2022

Statewide.....	2
Allegheny County.....	4
Beaver County.....	4
Berks County.....	4
Blair County.....	5
Bucks County.....	5
Chester County.....	5
Cumberland County.....	6
Dauphin County.....	6
Delaware County.....	6
Erie County.....	7
Lackawanna County.....	8
Lancaster County.....	8
Lehigh County.....	8
Luzerne County.....	9
Montgomery County.....	9
Northampton County.....	10
Philadelphia County.....	10
Washington County.....	11
Westmoreland County.....	11
York County.....	12

Statewide

Main Resources Site

[State resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Child Care](#)

Interest-free loans up to \$5,000 for residents of *Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Westmoreland, Washington, and Armstrong* counties

[Child Care](#)

Interest-free loans up to \$5,000 for residents of *Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Westmoreland, Washington, and Armstrong* counties

[Individuals and families](#)

Various programs available for low-income families including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), general assistance, or refugee assistance

[Small businesses](#)

Loans for small businesses in moderate to low-income communities in central and eastern Pennsylvania

[Small businesses](#)

Forgivable loans up to \$3,000. Apply by **December 31, 2023**

[Small businesses](#)

COVID-19 loans of at least \$10,000 for businesses in *Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, and Union* counties

[Small businesses](#)

Loans up to \$50,000 at 0% interest for restaurants in business for at least 3 years

[Small businesses](#)

Loans up to \$50,000 in *Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Fayette, Indiana, Greene, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Washington, and Westmoreland* counties

NEW: [Small businesses](#)

Direct assistance to residents who are involved in catching, processing, or wholesale selling of fish in *Lake Erie* or the *Lake Erie Watershed*. Recreational fishing-for-hire and bait businesses qualify. **Apply by May 3, 2022**

Food Assistance

[Find food](#)

Food distribution sites in the *Philadelphia* region

[Find food](#)

List of food banks by county

[Food distribution](#)

Monthly drive-thru food distribution events in *Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, and Washington* counties. Reservation required

Unemployment

[Benefits](#)

Confirm eligibility, apply, or check on claims

Other Resources

[Homeowner assistance](#)

\$30,000 or up to 24 months of assistance for qualified expenses related to mortgages and housing. **Funds are limited**

[Rent](#)

Various rent assistance programs in *Cameron, Elk, McKean, and Potter* counties

UPDATED: [Rent](#)

Rental assistance for those residing in *Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset* counties. Contact April Hileman at April.Hileman@blaircap.org

[Rent and utilities](#)

Financial assistance for rent, security deposit, and utilities in *Bedford, Fulton, Juniata, Mifflin, and Huntingdon* counties

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Utilities](#)

Grants of up to \$500 to be applied towards water and wastewater bills for low-income residents

[Utilities](#)

LIHEAP grants of \$500 - \$1,500 for low-income households to pay heating bills. Apply by **May 6, 2022**

[Utilities](#)

LIHWAP emergency grants up to \$2,500 each towards both drinking water service and wastewater service for low-income families with overdue water bills

[Utilities](#)

Utility assistance programs for water, sewer, electric, and gas bills

[Utilities](#)

Up to \$500 for help with heating bill or purchase of home heating fuel. **First-come, first-served.** Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

[Utilities](#)

Help paying PECO bills

[Utilities](#)

\$500 one-time grant for PECO natural gas commercial customers with 25 or fewer employees in *Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, and Montgomery* counties. **Funds are limited**

[Utilities](#)

PPL Electric payment programs

[Utilities](#)

Financial assistance with natural gas bills for UGI customers

[Various resources](#)

One-time financial assistance for individuals affected by COVID-19 residing in *Armstrong, Butler, Fayette, and Westmoreland* counties

[Various resources](#)

Assistance up to \$1,000 for basic needs for hospitality or restaurant employees who live or work in *Wayne, Pike, Monroe, and Carbon* counties

[Various resources](#)

Rent, utilities, and emergency food assistance for *Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, and Wyoming* counties

Allegheny County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Small businesses](#)

Loans up to \$100,000 with 0% to 2% interest for small businesses inside the *City of Pittsburgh* that are recovering from COVID-19

Other Resources

[Housing](#)

Rental assistance up to \$3,000, mortgage assistance up to \$6,000, and utility assistance available for residents of *Pittsburgh*.

Assistance for eligible renters and homeowners also available for residents of *Penn Hills*

Other links

[Pittsburgh application instructions](#)

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

UPDATED: [Utilities](#)

Clean Water Assistance Fund provides a credit of \$40 every three months for sewage treatment bills for customers of a municipality served by ALCOSAN.

Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

[Utilities](#)

COVID-19 Utility Assistance Program for county residents. Cities and boroughs that are ineligible are listed on the website. **First-come, first-served**, apply by **June 30, 2022**

[Utilities](#)

Payment assistance and grants for customers of Duquesne Light Company

[Utilities](#)

Bill assistance and hardship grant for customers of Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority

[Various resources](#)

Basic Needs Fund provides one-time financial assistance for households impacted by COVID-19
Other links

[Application](#)

[Various resources](#)

Up to \$1,000 of assistance for rent, mortgage, utilities, food, and other needs for county residents outside of the City of Pittsburgh.

Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

Beaver County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Rent and utility assistance for low-income residents. Eviction notice or utility shut-off notice is required for assistance

Other links

[Application](#)

[Utilities](#)

Payment assistance and grants for customers of Duquesne Light Company

Berks County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Mobile market sites provide food once a month to low-income residents

Other links

[Times and locations](#)

[Food distribution](#)

Monthly food box for low-income seniors 60+.

Must call to request application

Other Resources

[Rent](#)

Rental assistance including security deposits and first month's rent

[Rent](#)

Assistance for tenants in *Reading* with a court-ordered eviction. **Funds are limited**

[Rent and utilities](#)

Assistance for those with eviction or utility shut off notices

Blair County

Financial Assistance

[Small business](#)

Up to \$9,000 for businesses located in the *City of Altoona*. Apply by **June 30, 2023**

Bucks County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Drive-thru food pantry for income-eligible residents

UPDATED: [Food distribution](#)

Drive-thru food distributions for income eligible residents. Pre-registration required

[Food delivery](#)

Contact-free food box delivery for those extremely vulnerable to COVID-19, seniors, and the disabled

UPDATED: [Food distribution](#)

Pre-bagged groceries in *Quakertown* and *Upper Bucks County*. Registration is required

Other Resources

[Mortgage](#)

Financial assistance for homeowners facing foreclosure due to COVID-19 related financial difficulties. Call [\(215\) 348-8003](#). **Funds are limited**

UPDATED: [Various resources](#)

One-time emergency assistance for rent, utilities, and other needs for low-income households

[Homeowner assistance](#)

\$150 grant for senior and disabled homeowners in *Bensalem Township*. Apply by **March 31, 2022**

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

Chester County

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Drive-thru food boxes available once a month serving the *Octorara area*, must register

Other links

[Hours and location](#)

[Food distribution](#)

Option of pre-packaged food box for income eligible residents. Open from **12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays**

[Food distribution](#)

Drive-thru food distributions for income eligible residents of the *West Chester School District* area, and through June 2022 any Pennsylvania resident. Registration for first visit is required

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Various resources](#)

Financial assistance for rent, utility bills, and other basic living expenses for those residing in the *Avon Grove, Unionville, or Kennett Consolidated School Districts*. Some services available to those residing in the *Oxford School District*

[Various resources](#)

One-time \$4,500 grant for maintenance or repairs on the primary home of low-income residents age 65 or older

Cumberland County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Other Resources

[Mortgage](#)

Up to \$1,500 per month for a maximum of 3 months to assist with mortgage payments to prevent foreclosure. **Funds are limited.**

Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

[Rent](#)

Eviction prevention and move-in program

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

Dauphin County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Mobile food distributions at various locations for eligible residents of zip codes: 17005, 17023, 17030, 17048, 17080, 17097, 17098, 17978, 17980. To register, email sblough@centralpafoodbank.org or call [\(717\) 905-2512](tel:(717)905-2512)

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Utilities](#)

Credit of \$200 for eligible customers of Capital Region Water

Other links

[Application](#)

Delaware County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Small businesses](#)

\$2,500 grants for small businesses in *Haverford Township*. **Funds are limited**

Other links

[Program information and application](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Food distribution for residents of *Narbeth* and *Lower Merion*

[Food distribution](#)

Weekly food distributions for *Upper Darby* residents at Calabash Pantry
7016 Terminal Square, Suite 1-A, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania

Other Resources

[Rent](#)

Financial assistance to avoid eviction or to move into a new residence

[Mortgage and utilities](#)

Homeowners can apply for up to 3 months of assistance of up to \$6,000. *Chester City* has it's own application

Other links

[Delaware County Application](#)

[City of Chester Application](#)

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Rent and utilities](#)

Up to \$3,000 in rent and \$1,000 in utilities for those living in *Chester City*. Must call [\(610\) 874-8451](#) to schedule an appointment for an interview and application

[Utilities](#)

Assistance with past-due utilities, fuel, and reconnection services

Erie County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Small businesses](#)

Microgrant of up to \$2,500 for eligible small businesses located in the *City of Erie*

Grant of up to \$5,000 for restaurants and entertainment businesses in the *City of Erie*

[Small businesses](#)

Low-interest loan up to \$50,000 with flexible repayment plans for small businesses with 25 or less employees

[Small businesses](#)

Grants of \$5,000 to \$10,000 for new small businesses negatively impacted by the effects of COVID-19. **First-come, first-served**

[Small businesses](#)

Grants up to \$75,000 to assist businesses that were not eligible for the federal Shuttered Venue Program and who have been negatively impacted by closing during the pandemic

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Food distribution for *City of Erie* residents **Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.** Call [\(814\) 504-9584](#) to set up appointment for pick up by the backdoor

Other Resources

[Housing](#)

Up to 6 months of rent and mortgage financial assistance for *Erie City* residents. Up to \$5,000 for rent or mortgage and up to \$1,000 for utilities for *Erie City* and *Millcreek* residents. Up to \$750 assistance for county residents facing eviction.

Funds are limited

Lackawanna County

Main Resources Site

[City resources](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Pre-packed food bags available for pick-up, must register to receive assistance

Other Resources

UPDATED: [Housing](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited.** Mortgage program also available

[Rent](#)

Rental assistance program for residents in *Carbondale*. Call [\(570\) 282-4633](#) to apply

Other links

[Program newsletter](#)

[Various resources](#)

Assistance with rent, utilities, food, and other basic needs

[Various resources](#)

Emergency assistance with food, utilities, and other basic needs

Lancaster County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Drive up/drive-thru style food distribution.

Registration required

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Rent and utilities](#)

Eviction prevention program provides rent and utility financial assistance for the *northwest region* of the county

[Various resources](#)

Emergency financial assistance for families in *Ephrata* and *Cocalico* regions

Lehigh County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Small businesses](#)

Up to \$15,000 grant for COVID-19 related business expenses. **First-come, first-served**

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Utilities](#)

Hardship program provides grants of up to \$400 for water and sewer bills. **First-come, first-served.** Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

Luzerne County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Mortgage](#)

Mortgage assistance for low-to-moderate income homeowners in *Pittston* to avoid foreclosure. **First-come, first-served**

[Utilities](#)

Grants to help residents of *Wilkes-Barre* pay utility bills

[Rent](#)

Grant towards rent for entrepreneurs, new businesses, or relocating businesses in *Wilkes-Barre*

Montgomery County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Small businesses](#)

Grant of up to \$20,000 for businesses located in *Abington Township* that are in jeopardy of closing due to COVID-19 pandemic. **Funds are limited**

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Outdoor food distribution for low-income households in certain zip codes. Must apply for assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Outdoor food bank for residents of *Narberth* and *Lower Merion*

[Food distribution](#)

Drive-up food distribution to eligible residents of the *Souderton Area School District*. Registration required. "Fresh For All" provides 25 to 30 lbs of fresh produce for any area resident. Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

Other links

[Current pick-up schedule](#)

Other Resources

[Rent and mortgage](#)

Grants to households in *Abington Township* for up to six months of payments for rent and mortgage with assistance capped at \$12,000. **Funds are limited**

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Mortgage and utilities](#)

Emergency mortgage and utility assistance of up to \$7,500 over 3 months for *Norristown* homeowners

[Various resources](#)

COVID-19 Relief Funding for up to 6 months of rent and mortgage assistance, and small business grants up to \$20,000 in *Lower Merion Township*

Other links

[Residential Rent & Mortgage Assistance Guidelines](#)

[Small Business Grant Guidelines](#)

[Various resources](#)

Financial assistance for utilities, fuel, housing costs, and medical prescriptions for income-eligible residents in the *Upper Perkiomen Valley*

[Various resources](#)

Rent and utility assistance for residents affected by the pandemic. Weekly no-contact drive-thru/walk-up food distributions also available

Other links

[Rent and utility application](#)

[Food distributions](#)

Northampton County

Financial Assistance

[Small businesses](#)

Easton micro-grant of up to \$500 to offset technical assistance costs

[Small businesses](#)

Grants up to \$15,000 for COVID-19 related business expenses. Subject to close and reopen.

Funds are limited

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Pre-bagged groceries distributed during pantry hours. Must bring photo ID and proof of county residency

Other Resources

[Rent](#)

Up to \$500 in financial assistance for rent or security deposit for households with an eviction notice

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited.**

Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

Philadelphia County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Financial Assistance

[Theater industry](#)

\$300-\$500 for those living within 35 miles of *Philadelphia's* City Hall

Food Assistance

[Find food](#)

Weekly supplemental food boxes available without ID or proof of income

[Food distribution](#)

30-pound food box once a month for low-income seniors 60+. To apply, call [\(215\) 339-0900](tel:2153390900)

Other links

[Informational flyer](#)

[Food distribution](#)

Bagged grocery walk-up once per week in *South Philadelphia*

Other Resources

[Housing](#)

Assistance with rent, security deposits, mortgage, and utilities

[Utilities](#)

Financial assistance for gas bills for PGW customers

[Utilities](#)

Bill assistance for Philadelphia Water Department customers who are low-income, seniors, or experiencing a special hardship

[Housing](#)

Help in paying rent, mortgage, and utility bills if in danger of eviction

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Various resources](#)

Monthly senior food boxes. Twice monthly bagged grocery and emergency food programs in the *Olney* neighborhood. Must register

Utility assistance. Includes emergency repairs for income-eligible households

Other links

[Food distribution](#)

[Utility assistance](#)

Washington County

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Drive-thru food distributions throughout the county. See website for times and locations.

Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

Other Resources

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Various resources](#)

Financial assistance towards food, housing, utilities, and other basic needs for residents of the *Quaker Valley School District*

Other links

[Online application](#)

Westmoreland County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Other Resources

[Housing](#)

Financial assistance in the form of back rent, first month's rent, security deposit, or mortgage assistance

UPDATED: [Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited.**

Please note: The benefit source is not linked to any religious organization. All selected non-profits act as facilitators only.

[Various resources](#)

Assistance with utility payments and food. Food box distribution **every third Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

York County

Main Resources Site

[County resources](#)

Food Assistance

[Food distribution](#)

Drive-thru or walk-up weekly food distributions at two locations in *York*. Monthly senior food boxes are available for low-income residents 60 years of age or older

Other Resources

[Rent](#)

Emergency rent assistance for low-income households

[Rent and utilities](#)

Tenants and landlords experiencing financial hardship can get up to 18 months of assistance from the Treasury's ERA programs, regardless of immigration status. Subject to close and reopen, check regularly. **Funds are limited**

[Utilities](#)

Up to \$200 credit for past-due bills for York Water customers

[Various resources](#)

Emergency funding available, as well as energy and fuel assistance. Call [\(717\) 456-5559](tel:7174565559) for assistance

“MAKE SURE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS.”—PHIL. 1:10.



SPIRITUAL ROUTINE: It is vital to maintain a good spiritual routine, including daily Bible reading, heartfelt prayer, preparation and participation in congregation meetings, personal study, family worship, and a meaningful share in the ministry. (Matt. 6:33, 34; Phil. 4:6-8) This routine educates and equips us during these “critical times.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5) It also helps us to trust and rely on current theocratic guidance.—Ps. 86:11; Jas. 3:17.



MAKING DECISIONS: This pandemic has required us to make difficult decisions for our safety and the protection of our health and that of others. Though health decisions, like vaccination, are personal matters, it is wise to be aware of applicable governmental direction and to cooperate with public health officials. (Rom. 13:1-7; Gal. 6:5) We should make it our aim to be guided by Bible principles and updates from the Governing Body.—Ps. 119:105.

For instance, if you are considering vaccination, please review the three factors explained in the [2021 Governing Body Update #6](#). Such loving guidance is most appreciated and reflects the Governing Body’s spirit-directed and Scriptural thinking on the matter. (Heb. 13:17) Allowing the Scriptures to mold your thinking will strengthen your family’s confidence in the decisions you make. *Why not review these factors at a Family Worship session?*



UNDERSTAND YOUR RISK: All persons exposed to COVID-19 are at risk, some more so than others. Consider the following: (A) YOUR VACCINATION STATUS. Those not fully vaccinated have a far greater risk of contracting the disease, suffering its serious effects, and transmitting it to others. (B) YOUR SURROUNDINGS. Remain up-to-date on community factors, such as the general adherence to health and safety regulations, the rate of infection, and the percentage of the population that is fully vaccinated. (C) YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES. Even if you are vaccinated, it is still possible for you to be infected and pass the virus on to others. Understand the danger to those with serious underlying health issues, the unvaccinated, and the elderly. You can find additional information on the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) website.



MANAGE YOUR RISK: Understanding your risk, as described above, will help you to take appropriate precautions. Carefully plan ahead to manage contact with others not living in your household. For example, those at a higher risk will want to avoid contact with the public while those at a lower risk may have greater flexibility when it comes to association with others, travel, and assembling in groups. Managing your risk also includes the need for you to reduce the threat of infecting others. Be considerate of the unvaccinated, the elderly, and those with serious underlying health issues. The goal should be to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on those who are vulnerable.

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING YOUR RISK:



Face Coverings: Regardless of current local regulations, masks are recommended in indoor public spaces and crowded outdoor settings. Do not touch the front of the face covering or mask during use. Masks should fit well and cover both your nose and mouth. If using a washable face covering, wash and dry it often. When used properly, masks are one of the most protective measures available. The CDC provides additional guidelines in the article [“Your Guide to Masks.”](#) Keep in mind that the use of a face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing.

COVID-19

Helpful Reminders



Physical Distancing: When in public, try to maintain at least six feet of separation between you and those not living in your household. Understand the risks associated with public transportation and crowded stores or restaurants. Potential exposure to the virus increases when indoors.



Cleanliness: Frequently wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. You may use alcohol-based hand sanitizer in addition to hand washing. Frequently clean and disinfect touch surfaces and sanitize packages before bringing them inside the home.



Quarantine and Isolation: If you have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or you are displaying symptoms, there are steps you need to take to protect others and yourself. The CDC article "[Quarantine and Isolation](#)" contains specific guidance. If you are having trouble breathing or are displaying any emergency warning signs, you should seek immediate medical attention.

REQUESTING ASSISTANCE – COMMUNICATE WITH THE ELDERS



THE ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH UNDERLYING MEDICAL CONDITIONS: If you need assistance in obtaining necessary items so that you can stay at home and limit potential exposure, please communicate with the elders. Any who render assistance to such ones should avoid physical contact whenever possible. When physical contact is unavoidable, the visitor should thoroughly wash or sanitize his hands before entering the residence and endeavor to maintain physical distancing. All present should wear face coverings.



NEEDS FOR PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE: If you are having difficulty obtaining food or other basic necessities or applying for financial aid from government or social programs, make it known to the elders.



MEDICAL NEEDS: Each publisher should have a properly completed durable power of attorney (DPA) card and the ability to phone or videoconference their health-care agents, family members, and elders. Along with the executed DPA card, you should have a list of current medications, a written statement of known health issues, and up-to-date contact information for your health-care agents, your emergency contact(s), and the elders in your congregation.

You may find it helpful to review the following references found on [jw.org](#):

- "Disease—How to Reduce the Risk" ([Awake! No. 6 2016](#))
- Virus Outbreaks—What You Can Do ([Whiteboard animation](#))
- "Find Relief From Stress" ([Awake! No. 1 2020](#))
- "Are Jehovah's Witnesses Opposed to Vaccination" ([Web article](#))

When making difficult decisions, consider the following:

- "Make Decisions That Honor God" ([The Watchtower, April 15, 2011](#))
- "Maintain Unity in These Last Days" ([The Watchtower, July 15, 1996](#))
- "Protect Yourself From Misinformation" ([Web article](#))

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

MEANING OF TERMS

- **Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Although cleaning does not kill germs, removing them does lower their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
- **Sanitizing** refers to a solution or process that reduces the amount of germs on a surface.
- **Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals to kill all germs on a surface. It does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing the germs, it lowers the risk of spreading infection.
- Although sanitizing reduces the amount of contamination present on a surface, disinfecting is more effective for killing germs.
- During a biological outbreak it is recommended to **clean** and **disinfect** frequently-touched surfaces on a daily basis, including doorknobs, light switches, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.—*See g10 June p. 28.*



HOW TO CLEAN

- Clean surfaces using soap and water. Practice routine cleaning of frequently-touched surfaces.
- A microfiber cloth slightly dampened with water is effective in cleaning many surfaces such as glass, counter tops, furniture, doors, etc.

HOW TO DISINFECT

- If the area is visibly dirty, clean it first with soap and water or a detergent.
- Use an [EPA-registered household disinfectant](#).



- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- To be effective, disinfecting solutions often need to remain in contact with the surface for a specified length of time.
- Follow all safety precautions, such as wearing gloves and ensuring good ventilation.
- Other options include a solution of 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water or solutions that are at least 70% alcohol.
- Confirm that the bleach is intended for disinfecting and is not past its expiration date.
- Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.

For additional information see:

- [CDC — Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#)

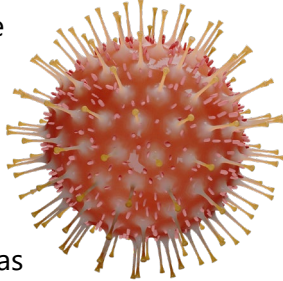


HAND HYGIENE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Hand hygiene is one of the most effective actions you can take to reduce the spread of pathogens and prevent infections, including the COVID-19 virus. This starts with washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water. These recommendations are based on standards from the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization.

WHY HAND WASHING IS EFFECTIVE

- Under a microscope, coronaviruses appear to be spheres that are covered with spikes, giving them the appearance of having a crown or "corona." Beneath the crown is the outer layer of the virus, which is made up of lipids, otherwise known as fat.
- Since soap dissolves fat, it can disrupt the molecular bonds in the fatty outer membrane of the coronavirus cell.
- Washing your hands properly with soap and water does not just remove the coronavirus; it can actually **destroy** the virus as it is washed away.



WASH YOUR HANDS PROPERLY

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. This is especially important after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- **Wet:** Put both your hands under clean, running water.
- **Lather:** Apply a generous amount of soap to the inside and back of your hands as well as your fingertips.
- **Scrub:** Wash for at least **20 seconds**. Rub both hands together and move your fingertips around both hands. Remember to wash under jewelry and fingernails.
 - Time is needed to allow the soap to interact back and forth with the virus particle.
 - In one study, it was noted that the most common shortcoming for most people was the amount of time they spent washing their hands. Only 5% spent more than 15 seconds washing their hands.
- **Rinse:** Use running water to rinse away the soap.
- **Dry:** According to the researchers, it is best to dry hands completely, preferably using disposable paper towels or a clean, unused cloth towel.

SANITIZE YOUR HANDS PROPERLY

- When washing with soap and water is not possible, alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be effective if they are used correctly.
- They must have at least 60% - 70% alcohol.
- To affect the germ membrane, the alcohol must come in direct contact with the virus.
- Placing a small amount of sanitizer in the hand and quickly wiping it away is usually not sufficient.
- Use enough product to cover every part of your hands, including the areas between your fingers and on the back.
- Rub your hands together until they feel dry. This should take around 20 seconds.

For additional information see:

- [Wash and Dry Your Hands! \(g98 11/22 p. 31\)](#)
- [CDC Hand Hygiene Recommendations](#)