

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The City of Hopewell Selected to Participate in Governor Northam's Health Equity Program

HOPEWELL, VA -On March 11, 2020, Governor Northam established the Health Equity Working Group to review policies that are proposed and/or enacted to determine how vulnerable populations in the Commonwealth may be impacted due the Coronavirus and COVID-19 outbreak. The mission of the working group is to apply a health equity lens to the Commonwealth of Virginia's COVID-19 response.

Mayor Jasmine Gore's request, on behalf of the City of Hopewell, to participate in the Commonwealth's Health Equity Program was approved. The new partnership with the Commonwealth will provide Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as mask and sanitizer to Hopewell residents. Residents of Hopewell will also be eligible to receive free COVID-19 testing, other commodities, outreach material, and public health education. Future plans include utilizing technology, computer and internet allocation to provide distance learning support for residents to stop the spread of COVID-19.

The City of Hopewell's population with high risk for complications due to COVID-19 and amount of low income households are two factors for participation in the Health Equity Program. Hopewell's vulnerable population is estimated to be 4,398 residents.

Census data was mapped to determine which communities within the City of Hopewell have the lowest income and elevated risk. Households within income less than \$30,000 and residents with one or more health conditions such as: hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, and COPD were also identified.

“Throughout the COVID-19 response here in the Commonwealth, we have aggressively addressed the structural inequities that have caused the disparate impact of COVID-19 on black, brown, and native or indigenous communities,” said Dr. Janice Underwood, Chief Diversity Officer for Governor Ralph S. Northam. “I am pleased to see the collaborative way Hopewell is working to take care of those that have been historically under-represented. The state is committed to local-state partnerships like these and the continuous engagement with our communities to encourage inclusive efforts and help accomplish the much needed changes we need in our nation and Commonwealth.”

The City of Hopewell will officially launch the “Healthy Hopewell” Equity Program Saturday, July 11, 2020 with free COVID-19 testing will be provided to Hopewell residents at Cavalier Square Shopping Center from 9:00 am to 10:30 am. Residents are required to register for testing in advance by contacting the Crater Health Department at (804) 863-1652, option 1 to be prescreened. Registration begins Tuesday, July 7, 2020. Testing will be conducted by appointment. Participants will also receive PPE and outreach materials at the testing location site.

The City Administration will launch the Door-To-Door Outreach Campaign the week of July 20, 2020. Members of City Council will coordinate outreach dates for their respective wards and the City will officially announce the dates for distribution of the PPE and additional dates for free community testing.

“The City of Hopewell is pleased with the decision of Governor Northam’s Health Equity Working Group to include the City in the Health Equity Pilot Program” said March Altman, City Manager, “This partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia will allow the City to increase our efforts to provide facial masks and hand sanitizer to the City’s underserved and most vulnerable populations ensuring that they receive the PPE that they need during this health crisis.”

“I am very grateful for the Commonwealth’s partnership with the City of Hopewell. The City and City Council committed to addressing Health and Community Culture in the revised Comprehensive Plan. Strides have been made within the past year to address equity within city policies, programs and funding. The Governor’s Health Equity program is another example of why health is critical to an improved quality of life. Social Determinates of Health are social/economic factors within our lives in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Social and economic factors, such as income, education, employment, community safety, and social networks significantly affect how well and how long we live. COVID-19 is just one public health crisis. Communities need to tackle the other public health crises that impacts quality of life. This is another great step to change the lives of residents via equity through health” stated Mayor Gore

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