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Sign up for my
email newsletter to
receive the latest
information about
Hawai'i's COVID-
19 response and
other legislative
updates:

[bitly.com/
reptarnas-signup](https://bitly.com/reptarnas-signup)

Read inside for:

- Federal and State COVID-19 relief resources
- Well-being resources and contacts to share
- How you can help during the COVID-19 pandemic

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID A. TARNAS

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

APRIL/MAY 2020

Aloha, friends and neighbors,

The COVID-19 crisis marks an exceptionally challenging time for our community and State. In this newsletter, I share a collection of resources to help you and our community endure the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. As this situation is rapidly evolving, please use the resources listed in this newsletter to find the latest information. I also encourage you to sign up for my email newsletter, at bitly.com/reptarnas-signup, for more frequent updates.

As of this writing, the 2020 Legislative Session remains suspended until it is safe again to hold large gatherings and public hearings. Meanwhile, as your State Representative, I continue to address community questions and concerns, share information and resources, and advocate with policymakers for a strong, reasoned response to the COVID-19 crisis. I also continue to advocate for State-funded projects in our district—from the Waikoloa Library to the Pololu Lookout to public school improvement projects—either continuing to move forward or having their funding lapse date extended so this state funding stays in our community.

My staff and I remain here to serve you. Please feel free to reach me at (808) 586-8510, or reptarnas@capitol.hawaii.gov, with your questions and comments.

Mahalo nui to everyone in the community for working together during this crisis, including the healthcare workers and first responders caring for our sick and injured 'ohana, the essential workers providing food and services to the community, the educators teaching in new ways online, the food service workers and Department of Education administrators serving hundreds of meals to our students, those calling lonely neighbors to say aloha and talk story, and everyone staying home and social distancing to reduce the spread of the virus. Together, we can weather this crisis and rebuild as a stronger and more resilient community.

Stay safe, and mahalo,

Avoiding Scams

Please beware of scams targeting consumers trying to protect themselves in this rapidly changing situation. Common scams include:

- cyber scams,
- telephone and text messaging scams,
- counterfeit product offers,
- bogus tests and virus-related products, and
- phony charity donation requests.



Do your research on the source of messages and the businesses or people you are engaging with.

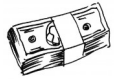


Do not provide personal information or money to anyone who contacts you or to those you do not know.

Visit bitly.com/covid19-scam-alert for more information on these scams. Please report suspected scams at cca.hawaii.gov/ocp/consumer-complaint, or by calling 808-587-4272.

Federal and State Relief Resources

Federal legislation is providing a variety of economic relief resources for individuals and small businesses in response to the severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. For a comprehensive guide on the different resources included under the federal legislation, including eligibility requirements and how to apply, please visit schatz.senate.gov/coronavirus.



ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS & NEW TAX BENEFITS

One-time economic impact payments and new tax relief are available to eligible individuals to help cover financial needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Find more information on economic impact payments and eligibility for new tax benefits at:

Internal Revenue Service (IRS):

irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payments

State of Hawai'i Department of Taxation:

Online – tax.hawaii.gov/covid19/

Phone – 808-587-4242

(M-F, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

HEALTH INSURANCE & COVID-19 TESTING



Health insurers are required to cover the COVID-19 diagnostic test **at no cost to individuals**, including individuals who are uninsured. If you are sick with COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, and shortness of breath), please contact your health provider about getting tested.

If you have lost medical coverage or do not have health insurance, please use these resources to seek coverage:

Federal HealthCare Marketplace:

Online – healthcare.gov/unemployed/get-started-in-the-marketplace/

Phone – 1-800-318-2596 (24/7, 7 days/week)

Medicaid – Department of Human Services:

Online – medical.mybenefits.hawaii.gov

Phone – 1-800-316-8005

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE



The COVID-19 relief packages expanded benefits and eligibility for unemployment insurance. The State also waived the one-week waiting period and the three-job search requirement. To learn more and file a claim, visit labor.hawaii.gov/UI.



FOOD ASSISTANCE

Food assistance (SNAP) benefits are available for low-income households, with expanded eligibility during the COVID-19 crisis. To find out if you may qualify and apply, please visit:

Online – humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/snap

Phone – (808) 775-8854 or (808) 775-8856

SMALL BUSINESSES



Loans (with forgiveness) and other relief are available to help small businesses cover payroll and operating expenses. Independent contractors, sole proprietors, and those who are self-employed may also be eligible. To learn more, please visit sba.gov.



RENTERS & HOMEOWNERS

If you are unable to pay your rent, you should inform your landlord to discuss options. Please also visit the following resources for State and Federal guidance to assist homeowners and renters during the COVID-19 pandemic:

State of Hawai'i – bitly.com/landlord-tenant-FAQ

Federal – schatz.senate.gov/coronavirus/assistance-for-homeowners-and-renters

Mental Health and Well-Being Resources

Loss of employment, major financial stress, and the stay-at-home order can cause depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and domestic violence. If you are in a crisis, please use these resources. Please also reach out and pass this information on to others — it could save a life.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & ABUSE

Home is not safe for everyone, especially when economic and social pressures are high. The stay-at-home order keeps victims at home and subject to physical and psychological abuse. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, free and confidential assistance is available. In an emergency, please call 911 as soon as you safely can. Individuals needing support can contact:

Hawai'i Domestic Violence Action Center
hotline Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. by:

Text – 605-956-5860
Call – 808-531-3371
Toll-free – 1-800-690-6200

National Domestic Violence Hotline available
24/7:

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
www.hotline.org/help

Individuals needing a safe place to stay should contact:

West Hawai'i Child & Family Services Shelter
at 808-322-7233.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Help is also available for anyone experiencing substance abuse by reaching out to the **Big Island Substance Abuse Council**:

808-322-3100
www.bisac.org

There are also support groups which meet virtually via phone or video, offering fellowship and community support:

West Hawai'i Alcoholics Anonymous,
www.westhawaiiiaa.org

Narcotics Anonymous, na-hawaii.org

MENTAL HEALTH CRISES

The **Hawai'i Department of Health Crisis Line** offers support for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis. Please reach out:

Call 1-800-753-8679
Text the word "ALOHA" to 741741

For health and human services information and

What you can do

Please continue to do your part by following State and County orders, wearing a cloth face covering in public settings, staying home when sick, and practicing rigorous hygiene and social distancing. We all play an essential role in flattening the curve to ensure our community is safe and healthy during this pandemic.

If you have extra supplies, can sew masks, or have spare time, please consider donating or volunteering to help support a community initiative, such as:

- Community resource hub: Vibranthawaii.org
- Food: Hawaiifoodbasket.org/donate
- Personal Protective Equipment: Supporthawaii.org

If you would like to volunteer ideas or resources to assist in the State's response effort, please email the COVID-19 operations center at CovidKokua@hawaii.gov.



For Information or Questions about COVID-19:

Call 2-1-1 from any location in the state, open daily between 7 a.m. – 10 p.m.

Text 877-275-6569

Email info211@auw.org

Call Hawaii County call center at 808-935-0031

Visit hawaiiicovid19.com or coronavirus.gov

Browse the County of Hawai'i's COVID-19 Resources at bitly.com/coh-covid19resources

Sign up for DOH's daily email updates at health.hawaii.gov/news/covid-19-updates

Explore vibranthawaii.org for a collection of COVID-19 community resources

Census 2020 –Your Response Matters!

If you did not complete the census, please respond now! Your response is critical for our community's allocation of federal funding and resources. Please make sure you are counted by responding:

Online – 2020census.gov

By Phone – 844-330-2020

By Mail – every home was mailed a paper questionnaire to complete and return in the envelope provided.

Hawai'i Votes by Mail

The State of Hawaii will implement all mail-in elections, beginning with the 2020 Election. All properly registered voters will automatically receive a mail ballot approximately 18 days prior to the election. Please check that your voter registration record is up-to-date with your current mailing address:

Online – olvr.hawaii.gov

Phone (County Clerk's Office) – 808-961-8277

For more information about voting by mail, please visit elections.hawaii.gov/voters/hawaii-votes-by-mail/.