

March 12, 2020

Col. Martin Kumer
Albemarle Charlottesville Regional Jail
160 Peregrory Lane
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Col. Kumer:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
acluva.org

Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

We are writing to urge you to develop and implement without delay evidence-based and proactive plans for the prevention and management of COVID-19 in local and regional jails.

People in prisons and jails are highly vulnerable to outbreaks of contagious illnesses. They are housed in close quarters and are often in poor health. Without the active engagement of the administration, they have little ability to inform themselves about preventive measures, or to take such measures if they do manage to learn of them.

We ask that you reach out to the local or state department of health immediately to develop plans to address the virus in institutions. You can find a directory here: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/>. This is an urgent matter. Having an appropriate, evidence-based plan in place and ready to implement can help prevent an outbreak and minimize its impact if one does occur. Not having one may cost lives.

While the plan should be developed collaboratively by your agency and your local or state health department, some of the critical issues that must be addressed are:

- **Education of the people in your custody:** People housed in prisons and jails need to be informed about the virus and the measures they can take to minimize their risk of contracting or spreading the virus. They must be educated on the importance of proper handwashing, coughing into their elbows, and social distancing to the extent they can. Information about the spread of the virus, the risks associated with it, and prevention and treatment measures must be based on the best available science.



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION

Virginia

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Executive Director

- **Education of the staff:** Correctional, administrative, and medical staff all must be educated about the virus to protect themselves and their families, as well as the people in their custody.
- **Staffing plans:** Regardless of how many staff stay home because they are sick, prisons and jails will have to continue functioning. There must be a plan for how necessary functions and services will continue if large numbers of staff are out with the virus.
- **Staffing plans for services provided by prisoners:** Many tasks in prisons and jails, such as food preparation and basic sanitation, are performed by prisoners. The plans for an outbreak must also address how necessary tasks performed by prisoners will continue if large numbers of prisoners are ill.
- **Provision of hygiene supplies and protective gear:** The most basic aspect of infection control is hygiene. There must be ready access to warm water and adequate hygiene supplies, both for handwashing and for cleaning. Refer to guidelines from your local health department on when to utilize masks, gloves and protective clothing to prevent the spread of germs.
- **Screening and testing of the people in your custody:** The plan must include guidance, based on the best science available, on how and when to screen and test people in your facilities for the virus.
- **Housing of persons exposed to the virus:** The plan must describe how and where people in the prison system will be housed if they are exposed to the virus and need to be quarantined, are at high risk of serious illness if they become infected, or become sick with it. Any prisoner segregation, lock-downs or interruptions in regular activities, such as exercise or visits and phone calls with families or attorneys, should be based solely on the best science available and should be as limited as possible in scope and duration.
- **Treatment:** Courses of treatment must be evidence-based, available immediately, and in compliance with accepted public health protocols.
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• **Data collection:** The collection of data regarding COVID-19 will be part of the public health response. As with any contagious disease, data collection is critical to understanding and fighting the virus. Prisons and jails must be part of this process. The same information that is tracked in the community must be tracked in the prisons and jails.

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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Administrator Timothy Trent
Blue Ridge Regional Jail
P.O. Box 6078
Lynchburg, VA 24505

Dear Administrator Trent:



701 E. Franklin Street
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Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Claire Gastañaga". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Frank Dyer
Central Virginia Regional Jail
13021 James Madison Hwy.
Orange, VA 22960

Dear Superintendent Dyer:



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Very truly yours,



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Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Chris Walz
Hampton Roads Regional Jail
2690 Elmhurst Lane
Portsmouth, VA 23701

Dear Superintendent Walz:



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Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Crystal Willett
Meherrin River Jail
9000 Boydton Plank Road
Alberta, VA 23821

Dear Superintendent Willett:



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Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Timothy Doss,
Middle Peninsula Regional Jail
PO Box 403
Saluda, VA 23149

Dear Superintendent Doss,:



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March 12, 2020

Superintendent Jeffrey Newton
Middle River Regional Jail
P.O. Box 2744
Staunton, VA 24402

Dear Superintendent Newton:



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AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION

Virginia

701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
acluva.org

Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Gregory Winston
New River Valley Regional Jail
108 Baker Road
Dublin, VA 24084

Dear Superintendent Winston:



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
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- **Education of the people in your custody:** People housed in prisons and jails need to be informed about the virus and the measures they can take to minimize their risk of contracting or spreading the virus. They must be educated on the importance of proper handwashing, coughing into their elbows, and social distancing to the extent they can. Information about the spread of the virus, the risks associated with it, and prevention and treatment measures must be based on the best available science.



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Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Edward Hull
Northern Neck Regional Jail
P.O. Box 1090
Warsaw, VA 22572

Dear Superintendent Hull:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
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Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent James Whitley
Northwestern Regional Jail
141 Fort Collier Road
Winchester, VA 22603

Dear Superintendent Whitley:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
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Executive Director

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Claire G. Gastañaga
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Very truly yours,

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Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Jim Davis
Piedmont Regional Jail
P.O. Drawer 388
Farmville, VA 23901

Dear Superintendent Davis:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
acluva.org

Claire G. Gastañaga
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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Peter Meletis
Prince William-Manassas ADC
9311 Lee Avenue JU130
Manassas, VA 20110

Dear Superintendent Meletis:



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Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Lt. Col. Kevin Hudson
Rappahannock Regional Jail
PO Box 3030
Stafford, VA 22555

Dear Superintendent Hudson:



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Executive Director

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Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Carmen DeSadier
Riverside Regional Jail
500 Folar Trail
North Prince George, VA 23860

Dear Superintendent DeSadier:

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Executive Director



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION

Virginia

701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
acluva.org

Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

- **Education of the staff:** Correctional, administrative, and medical staff all must be educated about the virus to protect themselves and their families, as well as the people in their custody.
- **Staffing plans:** Regardless of how many staff stay home because they are sick, prisons and jails will have to continue functioning. There must be a plan for how necessary functions and services will continue if large numbers of staff are out with the virus.
- **Staffing plans for services provided by prisoners:** Many tasks in prisons and jails, such as food preparation and basic sanitation, are performed by prisoners. The plans for an outbreak must also address how necessary tasks performed by prisoners will continue if large numbers of prisoners are ill.
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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Derek Almarode
Rockbridge Regional Jail
258 Greenhouse Rd
Lexington, VA 24450

Dear Superintendent Almarode:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

We are writing to urge you to develop and implement without delay evidence-based and proactive plans for the prevention and management of COVID-19 in local and regional jails.

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Executive Director

Very truly yours,



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Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Russell Gilkison
RSW Regional Jail
6601 Winchester Road
Front Royal, VA 22630

Dear Superintendent Gilkison:



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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Mark Shiflett
Southside Regional Jail
244 Uriah Branch Way
Emporia, VA 23847

Dear Superintendent Shiflett:



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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Stephen Clear
Southwest Virginia Regional Jail
P.O. Box 279
Meadowview, VA 24361

Dear Superintendent Clear:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
acluva.org

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Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent Roy Witham
Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail
9320 Merrimac Trail
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear Superintendent Witham:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
Richmond VA 23219
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Claire G. Gastañaga
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Very truly yours,

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Claire Guthrie Gastañaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Superintendent William Smith
Western Tidewater Regional Jail
2402 Godwin Blvd
Suffolk, VA 23434

Dear Superintendent Smith:



701 E. Franklin Street
Suite 1412
(804) 644-8022
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March 12, 2020

Superintendent Bobby Russell
Western Virginia Regional Jail
5885 W. River Road
Salem, VA 24153

Dear Superintendent Russell:



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People in prisons and jails are highly vulnerable to outbreaks of contagious illnesses. They are housed in close quarters and are often in poor health. Without the active engagement of the administration, they have little ability to inform themselves about preventive measures, or to take such measures if they do manage to learn of them.

We ask that you reach out to the local or state department of health immediately to develop plans to address the virus in institutions. You can find a directory here: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/>. This is an urgent matter. Having an appropriate, evidence-based plan in place and ready to implement can help prevent an outbreak and minimize its impact if one does occur. Not having one may cost lives.

While the plan should be developed collaboratively by your agency and your local or state health department, some of the critical issues that must be addressed are:

- **Education of the people in your custody:** People housed in prisons and jails need to be informed about the virus and the measures they can take to minimize their risk of contracting or spreading the virus. They must be educated on the importance of proper handwashing, coughing into their elbows, and social distancing to the extent they can. Information about the spread of the virus, the risks associated with it, and prevention and treatment measures must be based on the best available science.



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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

- **Education of the staff:** Correctional, administrative, and medical staff all must be educated about the virus to protect themselves and their families, as well as the people in their custody.
- **Staffing plans:** Regardless of how many staff stay home because they are sick, prisons and jails will have to continue functioning. There must be a plan for how necessary functions and services will continue if large numbers of staff are out with the virus.
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their access to medical care and limit the staff's ability to observe them.

• **Data collection:** The collection of data regarding COVID-19 will be part of the public health response. As with any contagious disease, data collection is critical to understanding and fighting the virus. Prisons and jails must be part of this process. The same information that is tracked in the community must be tracked in the prisons and jails.

We are closely monitoring this situation because of the importance of ensuring that all individuals in your custody are treated with dignity and care. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you wish to discuss further.

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Claire G. Gastañaga
Executive Director

Very truly yours,



Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

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Dear :



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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire G. Gastañaga", is written in a cursive style.

Claire Guthrie Gastanaga
Executive Director