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COVID-19 Action Plan 3/23/2020

The 2019 Coronavirus has spread quickly across the globe affecting operations in all facets of life. Habitat for Humanity International has suspended Global Village Builds and encouraged all employees and affiliates to work from home and suspend volunteer construction, fundraising events, ground breakings, and other activities that bring people together. Many Habitat for Humanity affiliates in the U.S. and across the world are taking action based on recommendations from public health officials in their community. The Red River Valley Habitat for Humanity's action plan during the COVID-19 pandemic is below.

How Does it spread?

When someone coughs or exhales they release drops of infected fluid. Most of these drops fall on nearby surfaces and objects such as desks, tables, or telephones. People could catch the illness by touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. If they are standing within one meter of an infected person they can catch it by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them. Most persons infected experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some people go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care.

Who is at risk?

All of us! (Program participants, Volunteers, Donors, Staff, and our families when we bring it home.) However, risk of serious illness rises with age. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

How is the Red River Valley Habitat Affected?

Not so much.. Yet. We have a one person staff so the risk of passing it to other workers in our office space is not a concern and we have no volunteer activities planned until April. However, if the spread and quarantine last longer than March, we could be affected in the following ways:

- Canceling volunteer events causing a delay in finishing our current build. This would delay the family's move in.
- Cancellation of the postponed Forx Builders Home Design & Garden show and our fundraiser at the event.
- Canceling our annual stakeholder meeting in April.

- Habitat homeowners' potential job loss or income reduction causing difficulty to make mortgage payments to Habitat which would temporarily reduce our funding.
- Reduction in public and private donations from the community and local businesses.
- Delayed grant funding.

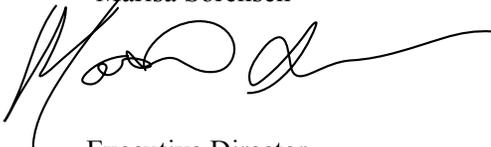
And many other negative effects that may not be foreseen at this time. Cancelled events can always be rescheduled. Lack of funding can be detrimental to our mission, so we ask that if you're able, please donate to keep our cause going! Find the online donation portal on our website www.rrvhabitat.org or mail a check to our PO Box. But our biggest concern is our homeowners and their financial and medical wellbeing during this time. Our action plan below is designed with our partner families in mind.

- We will not initiate foreclosures on homeowners who were unable to pay on their mortgages because of the effects of the Coronavirus.
- We sent a letter to North Dakota representatives in Congress urging them to consider the importance of a stable home when passing aid legislation. (Read the letter [here](#)).
- We are gathering resources for our homeowners about unemployment, virus protection, and finance management during this time.
- We are working with other Habitat for Humanity affiliates in North Dakota and Minnesota to develop a plan for families struggling with income reduction or increased medical bills due to the virus.
- We are reading all relevant news and updates concerning the virus, Habitat, and the nonprofit sector to stay informed and make educated decisions.

The health and safety of our stakeholders, volunteers, donors, and homeowners is our number one priority during this time. If you have any questions or would like to make a donation to support our advocacy and operations, please reach out to our executive director. If you'd like more info about the virus and how to protect yourself and loved ones, please visit the CDC website [here](#) or the WHO website [here](#). To learn more about how the virus affects nonprofits and what you can do to help, visit the National Council of Nonprofits website [here](#). To read the House of Representatives proposed emergency aid bill, click [here](#).

Thank you for your consideration of Habitat for Humanity, it's homeowners, and the nonprofit sector during this difficult time.

-Marisa Sorensen



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