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Statement on COVID-19

What You Should Know

Dear Denise,

Bread for the City's leadership and clinic staff have been closely following the developing COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. Washington, DC, has confirmed cases and precautions are being made across the District to contain and combat contamination and spread.

For 46 years, Bread for the City has served the residents of DC with wrap-around direct services, which include food, clothing, legal advice and representation, social services, and medical care. We've provided care through every emergency this city has endured, and plan to remain steadfast in our care now. The spread of COVID-19 throughout the world and in the United States is an incident that presents agencies like ours with a series of extraordinary complications. But, as we've always met our clients and patients where they are, we are prepared.

In addition to closely monitoring our region's health and response to the spread of COVID-19, we are also keenly aware of additional health and economic impacts this epidemic can and will have on our community members, especially those living with low incomes: those who do not have sick days; the ability to take time off work; our Asian community members experiencing the [impact of racist stigma](#) associated with COVID-19; those who have compromised immune systems and chronic illness; and those who will not be able to

prepared to meet a higher level of need from our community, where the economic impact will be hard to bounce back from, even after the immediate crisis is contained.

Bread for the City is making plans to support our community in the following ways:

How are we communicating with our patients? We have posted information about the virus in English, Spanish, and Mandarin throughout our centers. We've also shared this information with patients through the Patient Portal. If patients are sick, we are encouraging them to stay home, but as always, our providers are available by phone to address their concerns directly.

What if there's a shortage of supplies? We are stocking our dispensary with some additional inventory in the event that our regular medical supply chains are disrupted. Our aim is to ensure minimum disruption to our patients and clients who depend on us.

Speaking of closing, Bread for the City is my provider. If you close, how will I get medical care? Bread for the City is closely following federal and DC government actions around closures and is in daily communication with partner organizations, including the DC Primary Care Association, and will make a thoughtful decision based on those recommendations. In the event of a closure, Bread for the City will have providers on-call, as we always do when we are not open. We will announce any closures on our [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) as well as on [our website](#), so follow us on social media and bookmark our page to stay in the loop.

What about your other services? Our program leadership is preparing to do whatever we need to for our community. We know that during difficult times like these, those with low incomes are at the greatest risk of instability and negative impacts due to loss of access to services. We are preparing to provide as much support as possible, including extra essentials like food, water, and diapers, as the need arises.

How can I protect myself? The best prevention is handwashing and, if possible, minimizing contact with people who are sick. You can keep yourself informed by following news from the [DC Department of Health](#), the [CDC](#), and the [WHO](#). Please feel free to reach out to your provider for more information, but the number one piece of advice we can give you is to stay calm.

Yours in solidarity,

George, Dr. Randi, and your friends at Bread for the City

PS: *The need to maintain services during a crisis puts a strain on our programs. If you wish to provide support, we are in critical need of added monetary donations so that we can stock up on food, additional medical supplies, and other necessary items (such as*

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[hand sanitizer and household items\) to give to our community members. Please give here if you are able](#)

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