



March 25, 2020

Dear ASVA Members and Virginia Licensed Acupuncturists,

On Monday, March 23rd, Governor Ralph Northam issued [Executive Order Fifty-Three](#) which orders the closure of certain non-essential businesses, bans all gatherings of more than 10 people, and closes all K-12 schools for the remainder of the academic year. The order specifically exempts “the provision of health care or medical services.”

Since the announcement on Monday afternoon, we have been inundated with questions from licensed acupuncturists throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia inquiring as to whether 1) licensed acupuncturists are considered “essential healthcare workers”, and 2) if they can remain in operation. The simple answer is yes. At this time, you are not obligated to close your practices. However, the Governor’s office is recommending that “non-essential medical care like eye exams, teeth cleaning, and elective procedures should be cancelled or rescheduled. Non-urgent medical appointments should be cancelled or held via telehealth.” See [FAQs regarding Executive Order Fifty-Three](#) for more information. If you choose to continue treating patients, ASVA strongly recommends that you adhere to the [COVID-19 guidelines](#) issued by the [American Society of Acupuncturists](#) (ASA).

At this time, ASVA is encouraging all of you to err on the side of caution. This is an extremely delicate situation that must be taken seriously. Asymptomatic transmission is the major reason why the virus continues to spread. Face-to-face treatment should be reserved for critical patients only. If, at any time, you doubt your ability to keep yourself or your patients safe, please cancel appointments or close your clinics.

A note about “essential healthcare workers”: The ASVA Board of Directors has recently learned that there is no current language to define an essential healthcare worker nor is there an official list of providers who are considered essential. At this time the Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources is assembling a workforce to remedy this deficiency. We have requested to be a part of this workforce and intend to make sure licensed acupuncturists are included on the list of providers considered essential.

How can I help state-wide efforts? We have two recommendations! The first is to give blood. The [American Red Cross](#) has announced that there is a critical need for blood and platelets due to an urgent shortage. The second is to volunteer with the [Virginia Medical Reserve Corp](#) (MRC) – an organization of volunteers who support the community in the event of a public health emergency. The ASVA Board of

Directors has also reached out to the Medical Society of Virginia who is looking for telephone triage volunteers. We will provide more information about this opportunity as it develops.

The ASVA Board is committed to supporting licensed acupuncturists through this difficult time. We will continue to monitor legislative changes that affect the healthcare industry in Virginia. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out. You can contact ASVA at acusova@gmail.com.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors
Acupuncture Society of Virginia