



Virginia Sheriffs' Association

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April 1, 2020

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Executive Director
John W. Jones

The Honorable Ralph Northam
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218
Sent via email

Dear Governor Northam,

The Virginia Sheriffs' Association is requesting you to extend to all first responders the same presumptive illness provisions for the coronavirus as are in place for other job presumed illnesses, such as heart and hypertension related diseases.

As you know, our deputy sheriffs are out protecting the public, transporting the mentally ill, participating the judicial process and running jails, exposing themselves to a much higher likelihood of contracting this virus because of their vital role in public safety. Many others can stay at home, but deputy sheriffs must leave the comfort of their home and perform this vital service to protect all.

We have several deputy sheriffs that have tested positive, including deputy sheriffs that perform patrol and jail duties.

Accordingly, the Virginia Sheriffs' Association respectfully request you to take all action necessary, possibly in the upcoming reconvened session of the General Assembly, to immediately extend benefits resulting in illness from presumptions for COVID-19 as are in place for other presumptive illnesses. I'm sure the other first responders share our support for this request. Your action will send a clear signal to first responders that their service and enhanced risk is both appreciated and recognized and would be consistent with similar benefits for job related medical issues experienced by first responders.

Sincerely,

John W. Jones
Executive Director