



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Local Health Organizations Partner to Reach Most Vulnerable During Coronavirus Crisis**

(St. Louis) – The Regional Health Commission, together with the City of St. Louis Department of Health and the Saint Louis County Department of Public Health, have joined forces to conduct a unified communications and outreach campaign to reach the most vulnerable and under-resourced populations during the coronavirus pandemic. The campaign, called PrepareSTL, is targeted to people of color, particularly black Americans who are disproportionately dying from COVID-19 compared to other Americans, immigrants/New Americans, low-to-moderate income, and seniors living in St. Louis City and County. “There are still people not taking this virus seriously and we want everyone to be prepared to handle it,” says Angela Fleming Brown, CEO of the Regional Health Commission, which exists to improve the health of the uninsured and underinsured in the City and County. “We want them to understand what COVID-19 is, how to stop the spread and how to survive the shutdown physically, emotionally and economically.” Central to the PrepareSTL campaign is a website with the latest information about COVID-19 and how to access resources such as food, utility assistance and childcare. It also includes tips on how to cope with stress such as: get active; limit news and social media; get at least seven hours of sleep; and get some fresh air. “PrepareSTL provides the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County with a means to reach all segments of our community with COVID-19 messaging, especially those who do not have internet access and those who do not rely on traditional media,” says Dr. Fredrick Echols, director of health for the City of St. Louis.

PrepareSTL kicks off Thursday, April 9 with a local advertising campaign that includes television, radio, online, streaming apps and digital marketing, as well as social media. Campaign materials are also being translated into various languages to reach immigrants and New Americans. “We hope that community members and organizations will share our campaign with their networks.”

(more)

says Spring Schmidt, Acting Co-Director for the Saint Louis County Department of Public Health. “The more people we can reach, the more we can stop the spread and give people who need help the assistance they need.”

Part of the PrepareSTL campaign also includes community canvassing and mobile outreach led by the St. Louis Integrated Health Network, STL Community Health Worker Coalition, Alive and Well Communities, STL Mental Health Board and Emerging Wisdom. Starting this weekend, April 11<sup>th</sup>, canvassers, outfitted in personal protection equipment, will be going to high visibility community hotspots such as grocery and convenience stores, gas stations, laundromats, and check cashing businesses. They will be placing posters, sandwich boards and flyers at these locations. Zip codes with the highest poverty rates have been selected for the community canvassing. Many are in north St. Louis City and County, including: 63106, 63107, 63115 and 63120 in the City and 63136 in the County.

The communications campaign is powered by Missouri Foundation for Health.

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