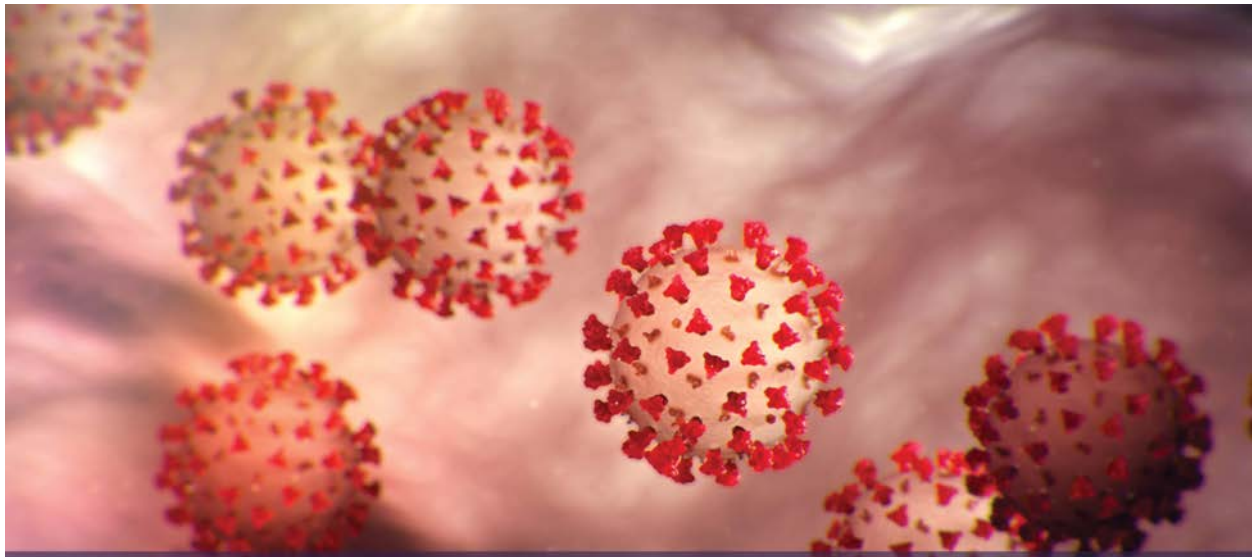




## **SSMRC creates COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Information Clearinghouse**



**Click here to access SSMRC's  
COVID-19 Information Clearinghouse**

As the COVID-19 public-health emergency evolves, we are committed to providing you and your families with the best possible support, resources, and services. Part of this effort involves regular communication of pertinent information. We have set up a [COVID-19 Information Clearinghouse on the News page](#) of our website and will update it as needed. In addition, we will send emails like this one weekly. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve our information services during this difficult time.

–SSMRC Communications Director Olivia McMurrey

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**MESSAGE FROM EST WAYNE JENNINGS**

Dear members of the SSMRC,

I am writing today to request that everyone remain alert and vigilant regarding COVID-19 updates. Take the advice you've read and heard: Wash hands often, wipe down busy surfaces, cover your sneezes and coughs, keep away from those with flu-like symptoms, etc. I believe that if we all remain diligent and implement the actions necessary, we will curtail and even stop the spread of COVID-19 in our own families and surrounding communities.

Our collective efforts will not only keep our families safe, but will also enable us to remain active contributors to the local economy and to provide for our families by continuing to work. I am certain there will be unusual adjustments to our standard work environments and conditions, and we must adapt to maintain members' opportunities for safe employment. An important strategy is to stay informed. This SSMRC COVID-19 Information Clearinghouse is designed to keep all updates in one spot. Check back often as we will add new information as it becomes available.

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## UPDATES

### Training Centers Update

- **Carpenters International Training Center** – The ITC in Las Vegas has been officially closed until April 16. Because preparing for classes after employees return will take some time, classes have been suspended until mid-May.
- **Gulf Coast Carpenters and Millwrights TTF (Texas and Louisiana)** – Classes are cancelled at training centers in Texas and Louisiana until April 10. Center directors will assess the situation April 2 and decide if cancellations need to be extended beyond April 10.
- **Arkansas/Oklahoma Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training** – All training centers are temporarily closed. We will reassess every two weeks the possibility of re-opening the training centers. We are exploring online training options, and our staff is at work preparing centers for reopening when the trustees deem it is fit to do so.
- **Mid-South Carpenters Regional Council TTF (Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee), Southeastern Carpenters TTF (Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina), and Florida Carpenters TTF** – Our training centers are suspending classes until further notice. We are observing CDC and state infection-control guidelines such as social distancing and gathering-size limits.

The Training Trust Funds covering these states are continuously monitoring the COVID-19 situation and will make necessary changes to ensure members' safety.

Please contact your [local training center](#) for specific policies and procedures.

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## Council Update



- The Southern States Millwright Regional Council is following the guidelines of the federal government and our parent organization, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, to reduce virus transmission and expansion. We will make necessary changes as needed to protect our members' health and safety.
- We will continue to provide all forms of service and support to our members.
- On March 16, the federal government recommended limiting gatherings to 10 people or fewer. Our Council will continue carrying out necessary business, but adjustments to usual procedures will be required. For instance, we will use videoconferencing for some meetings.
- SSMRC is following the UBC General Executive Board's example and allowing staff members to work from their homes through next week. Decisions will be made weekly on how to proceed concerning Local Union office operations.
- For the Locals that do not have an online dues payment system in place, a staff member will go into the office one or two days a week to process dues payments. Local leaders will inform members of scheduled operation days.

- We encourage you to use phone or email for routine questions and to visit an office only if necessary. Find contact info at [www.southernstatesmillwrights.org/Locals.xml](http://www.southernstatesmillwrights.org/Locals.xml).
  - If you must visit an office, please wash your hands or complete hand sanitization upon entering and exiting the building.
  - Representatives will continue to make job site visits as required.
  - The UBC General Executive Board is monitoring the COVID-19 situation closely and will continue to give us guidance, which we will pass on to members along with any additional instructions the Council might deem appropriate.
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## **Letter from the UBC General President**

*The following letter from Douglas J. McCarron, general president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, addresses the COVID-19 situation and provides tips and resources.*

"We are all facing difficult times as the novel coronavirus, and the COVID-19 disease it causes, impacts our economy and, for many, their health. We feel the reverberations as limits are placed on our social and working lives. We have seen large regions tell their citizens to shelter in place and other areas shut down construction projects. Even as we face this adversity, it is important to remember that we will get through this together, as we always have." [Read more...](#)

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## **Job Sites Update**

We expect contractors and owners to make changes and requests to address the COVID-19 situation and safeguard their projects and facilities. Our Council and UBC will review these requests, provide guidance on how to respond, and communicate information to affected members.

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## **Tax Fraud Days of Action postponed**

Out of an abundance of caution, most of the regional councils in the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (UBC) have suspended planning for the Tax Fraud Days of Action events scheduled for April of this year. [Read more...](#)

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## **Staff/Delegate meeting a success**



Our March staff and delegate meeting was a success despite challenges related to COVID-19. Following advice issued by health officials and the UBC after our staff meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, had already begun, we asked delegates to join us via video conference for our delegate meeting this past Saturday. Thanks to the effort and skill of Ron Fritzemeier, our IT director, delegates were able to see and hear activity in the conference room, ask questions, and vote using a computer connection. We would like to commend the delegates for their willingness to make travel changes and work with unfamiliar technology in order to carry out the Council's necessary business.

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### **What to do if you have lost your job due to COVID-19**

If your job has ended or you have been laid off because of COVID-19, immediately contact your business representative. If there are no additional opportunities for employment through your union, then file for unemployment benefits as soon as possible. On March 18, President Trump signed into law a bill that expands unemployment benefits.

**NOTE:** To avoid delay in receiving unemployment benefits, please make sure your dues are paid through the current month and you are on the out-of-work list. Your dues paid-through date can be found on your latest work card.



The resources below can help you begin the unemployment application process.

- Department of Labor – [www.dol.gov/general/topic/unemployment-insurance](http://www.dol.gov/general/topic/unemployment-insurance)
  - USA.gov – [www.usa.gov/unemployment](http://www.usa.gov/unemployment)
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## Why COVID-19 is a serious threat

Many people are understandably unsure of why COVID-19 warrants the closures, cancellations, and precautions we're seeing. [This letter](#) from an infectious-disease expert explains why COVID-19 is a serious threat.

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## Common symptoms of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)



COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may appear 2-14 days after exposure. Learn more at the [CDC's COVID-19 Symptoms page](#).

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## What to do if you have symptoms

- Stay home if you are sick.
- If you develop symptoms during the workday, ask to leave and then contact your Council representative as soon as possible.
- If you or someone in your household has a fever, cough, or shortness of breath and has not been diagnosed with a particular illness, check with your supervisor before going to work.
- If there is a case of COVID-19 at your child's school or child-care facility or at your partner's workplace, alert your supervisor and Council representative.

- If any staff or staff family member is diagnosed with COVID-19, we will work with local, state, and federal agencies to follow containment procedures.

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## How to protect yourself, your family, and your community



Currently, no vaccine exists to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent the illness and avoid spreading it is to reduce exposure risks. Please follow these guidelines from the CDC:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Practice social distancing, which means avoiding large gatherings and adhering to spacing recommendations (put at least 6 feet between yourself and others, when possible). This is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](#).
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. [Learn what to do if you are sick](#).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Wear a facemask if you are sick

- If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider’s office.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

## Additional resources

The screenshot shows the CDC website's Coronavirus (COVID-19) page. At the top left is the CDC logo with the text 'Centers for Disease Control and Prevention' and 'CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™'. To the right is a search bar containing 'Coronavirus' and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar is a yellow banner with an information icon and the text: 'The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America -- 15 Days to Slow the Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) [More at Whitehouse.gov.](#)'. The main heading is 'Coronavirus (COVID-19)'. Below this are two teal buttons: 'How to Protect Yourself' with a right arrow and 'If You Think You Are Sick' with a right arrow. Underneath is a section titled 'What You Need to Know' with three image-based cards: 'Symptoms' (a man holding his head), 'Older Adults & Medical Conditions' (a woman sneezing), and 'Prepare Your Family' (hands holding a house model).

- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)
- **National Institutes of Health:** [www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus](http://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus)
- **World Health Organization:** [www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public)
- **Mental health and coping with COVID-19:** [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html)
- **State health departments:**

-Florida Department of Health: [www.floridahealth.gov/](http://www.floridahealth.gov/)



- Alabama Department of Public Health: [www.alabamapublichealth.gov/](http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/)
- Arkansas Department of Health: [www.healthy.arkansas.gov/](http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/)
- Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov/>
- Louisiana Department of Health: <http://ldh.la.gov/>
- Mississippi State Department of Health: <https://msdh.ms.gov/>
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services: [www.ncdhhs.gov/](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/)
- Oklahoma State Department of Health: [www.ok.gov/health/](http://www.ok.gov/health/)
- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control: [www.scdhec.gov/](http://www.scdhec.gov/)
- Tennessee Department of Health: [www.tn.gov/health.html](http://www.tn.gov/health.html)
- Texas Department of State Health Services: [www.dshs.texas.gov/](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/)