



March 5, 2020

Dear Friend of HDSA,

I am writing to update you on the status of the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual HDSA Convention scheduled for June 4 – 6, 2020 in New Orleans, Louisiana. We are closely following recent events and the progression of COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) and at this time, we're still planning to hold Convention.

However, we are closely monitoring official federal guidance, and are prepared to consider all options as new information becomes available from sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control, and the National Institutes of Health, among others.

At the Huntington's Disease Society of America, there is nothing we take more seriously than the safety and well-being of our families and staff. We encourage volunteers, caregivers, and care providers to use their best judgement when planning community activities, such as support groups, in the coming weeks and to follow all health and safety guidance from HDSA and other official sources, which we will continue to make available as we learn more.

Please remember that the best protection is self-protection and self-monitoring, especially in this flu season. Health officials recommend the following measures to minimize your risk of contracting any virus:

- Wash hands frequently especially after sneezing or coughing, shaking hands/bodily contact with another individual, and before eating. Use soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick — health officials call this “social distancing” and recommend staying about three feet away from someone who is sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, like your phone or computer.
- Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing then throw the tissue in the trash, or as a last resort cough or sneeze into the elbow.
- Stay home when you are not feeling well.
- Get plenty of sleep, good nutrition, stress-relief, and exercise – a healthy body is the best defense against illness.

For additional information and resources about the COVID-19, we recommend the following:

[CDC website](#) – The CDC is publishing its latest updates, health tips, and country-specific travel information.

[Coronavirus Q&A](#) – The World Health Organization has published a helpful Q&A addressing many of the common questions about this virus.

We appreciate your patience as we consider the impact of COVID-19 on the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual HDSA Convention, and we will provide more information as soon as it becomes available. Thank you.

**Louise Vetter**

President & CEO

Huntington's Disease Society of America, Inc.