

## **COVID-19 Member Communication for Louisiana Credit Unions**

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## SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

### Video message:

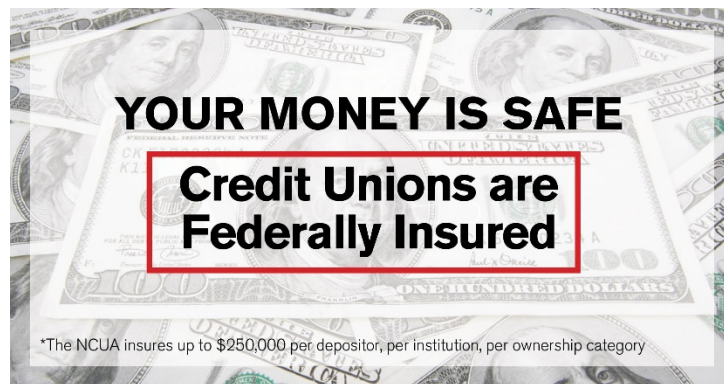
Our league system joined forces in providing this special video messaging for all credit unions to share with members across all communication channels. Like the rest of the information in this document, please use however you see fit. There are two versions with two different messages:

General Message: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aYDjWmJM9Xlw2f5MnmZdFYBDn2aGADB/view>

Alternate Message: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PrzPuZbx\\_xsglocfXYVtCCeJslPyLaaS/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PrzPuZbx_xsglocfXYVtCCeJslPyLaaS/view)

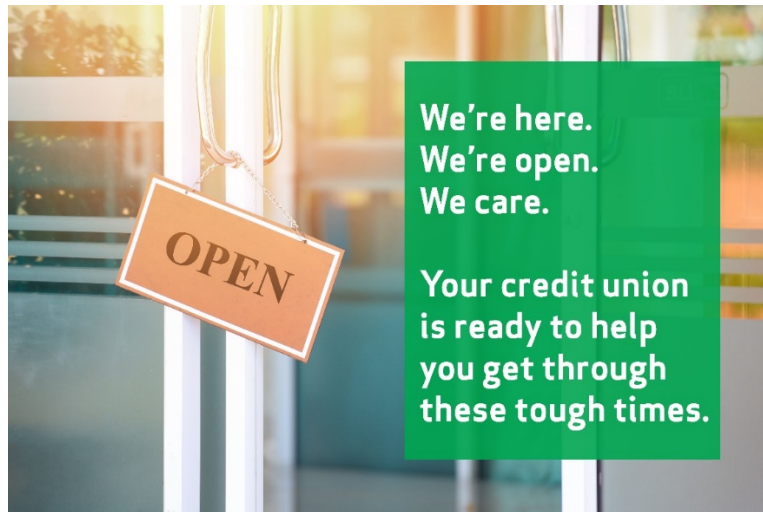
### Safety & Soundness:

- *Sample text to accompany image:* “Especially in times like this, credit unions are a safe place to keep and protect your money. Deposits are federally-insured by the NCUA up to at least \$250,000. Learn more at <https://www.ncua.gov/newsroom/press-release/2020/deposits-are-safe-federally-insured-credit-unions>.”



### Open to Help:

- *Sample text to accompany image:* “Louisiana credit unions are here for you and open for business. Some credit unions have adjusted hours and lobby logistics, but many offer online options. Reach out to your credit union today to learn about services to help you get through this challenging time.”

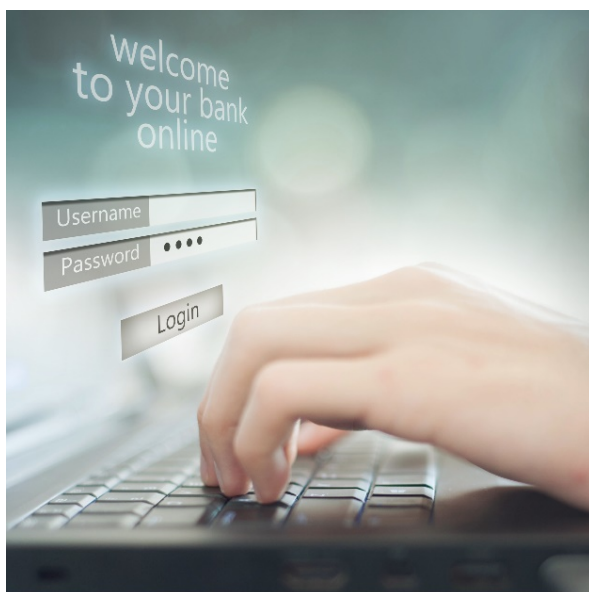


### Operating Schedule:

- The health and safety of our members and employees are our top priority amid concerns about the spread of the COVID-19. At this time we **[have/have not]** made any modifications to our operating schedule. **[Insert operational changes]**. Make sure we have your most up to date contact information and stay tuned for ongoing updates.

### Digital Reminder:

- *Sample text to accompany image:* “The health and safety of our members and employees are our top priority amid concerns about the spread of the Coronavirus. Access online banking or download our mobile app to stay up to date on your account and complete all your transactions remotely! **[Insert relevant features such as: You can check your balances, transfer money, deposit checks, and find ATMs, etc.]**”





### Cyber Scams:

- *Sample text to accompany image:* “It is important to note that if we reach out to you, we will NEVER ask for confidential information such as your name, password, personal identification number (PIN) or other account information. You can review the [Federal Trade Commission's](#) advice for consumers to protect yourself from scams.”
- *Facebook & Instagram:* “Are you washing your hands more often to steer clear of COVID-19? Well, be sure you’re using good web “hygiene,” too, by avoiding scams related to the disease. Watch for fake appeals for research funding, fake news that comes in malware-laden emails and phony purchase orders for health supplies such as masks and gloves. Be sure to get your news from reputable sites. Keep yourself (and your information and money) safe!”
- *Twitter:* “Scams preying on #coronavirus fears are spreading as fast as the disease itself, with nefarious scammers trying to exploit public panic for their own gain. We’ve got the info!”





## **SAMPLE COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS**

### **Sample 1: *How Your Credit Union is Dealing with the Coronavirus***

As an organization that is fully committed to our members' health and well-being, **[Insert credit union]** has been and will continue to monitor the situation with the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and plan accordingly.

In following with the guidelines set by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), we are taking extra precautions to ensure our branches and offices are as clean and germ-free as possible. These include extra resources dedicated to more frequent cleaning and disinfecting, and frequent communication with our team members regarding our strategies and recommended practices during the outbreak.

At this time, we encourage all our members to follow the CDC guidelines for preventing the spread of the coronavirus as well as:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, including your phone.
- Sanitize your debit and credit cards on a regular basis.
- Use digital payments when available.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling cash.
- Use online account access options.
- Avoid scams related to this outbreak.

We are committed to serving your financial needs with uninterrupted service during the outbreak. To minimize the rate of infection through frequently-touched surfaces, we encourage you to take advantage of our online services, including **[Insert credit union]** mobile app and online banking available at **[Insert credit union website]**

For the latest updates, visit us online at **[Insert credit union website]**, check out our **[Facebook page and follow us on Twitter and Instagram]**. You can also find out the best ways to keep your family safe by visiting the [CDC website](#).

Please reach out to us with any questions you may have regarding our services during this time, or for assistance with managing your finances during the outbreak. Give us a call at, or send us an email at **[Insert credit union email]**.

### **Sample 2: *How to Safely Manage Your Money During the Coronavirus Pandemic***

If you've been following the guidelines set by the CDC to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus, you're careful to avoid touching your face and to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. But did you know that the cash in your wallet is carrying thousands of germs and other microorganisms? Debit cards aren't much better, and usually carry their own armies of germs and microorganisms.

As the coronavirus continues to spread, it's best to stick to these guidelines for hygienic money management:

- Bank online. **[Use our mobile app and]** visit our website at **[Insert credit union website]** to check the balance in your accounts, deposit checks and more.
- Disinfect and clean debit cards. They can pick up germs from every surface they contact and should be cleaned and sanitized often.
- Minimize the use of cash. Cash can carry a tremendous amount of germs since it changes hands very often.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds after touching cash, or a debit or credit card.
- Wash your hands before and after touching a payment terminal or an ATM.

Follow these guidelines to keep safe and to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.

### **Sample 3: Watch Out for These Coronavirus Scams**

As the situation surrounding the coronavirus continues to develop, your health and financial security continues to be our priority. Beware of the many circulating scams which exploit the fear and the uncertainty surrounding the virus.

Here are some of the most prevalent ones:

- **The fake funding scam.** In this scam, victims receive bogus emails, text messages or social media posts, asking them to donate money to a research team which is on the verge of developing a drug to treat COVID-19, and/or a vaccine to immunize the population against the virus. There have also been ads circulating on the internet with similar requests. Unfortunately, nearly all of these are fakes, and any money donated to these “funds” will go directly into the scammers’ pockets.
- **The bogus health agency.** There is so much conflicting information on the coronavirus that it’s really a no-brainer that scammers are exploiting this confusion. Scammers are sending out alerts that appear to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the WHO, when in fact they’re created by the scammers themselves. These emails sport the logo of the agencies that allegedly sent them, and the URL is similar to those of the agencies as well. Some scammers will even invent their own “health agency,” such as “The Health Department,” taking care to evoke authenticity with (bogus) contact information and logos.
  - Victims who don’t know better believe these emails are sent by legitimate agencies. While some of these emails and posts may actually provide useful information, they often also spread misinformation to promote fear-mongering, such as non-existing local diagnoses of the virus. Even worse, they infect the victims’ computers with malware which is then used to scrape personal information off the infected devices.

- **The phony purchase order.** Scammers are hacking the computer systems at medical treatment centers and obtaining information about outstanding orders for face masks and other supplies. The scammers then send the buyer a phony purchase order listing the requested supplies and asking for payment. The employee at the medical treatment center wires payment directly into the scammer's account. Unfortunately, they'll have to pay the bill again when contacted by the legitimate supplier.

Basic preventative measures can keep the scammers from making you their next target.

- It's important to keep the anti-malware and antivirus software on your computer up-to-date and to strengthen the security settings on all of your devices.
- Practice responsible browsing when online. Never download an attachment from an unknown source or click on links embedded in an email or social media post from an unknown sender. Don't share sensitive information online either. If you're unsure about a website's authenticity, check the URL and look for the lock icon and the "s" after the "http" which indicate that the site is secure.

If you are unsure of whether you are being targeted by a scam, feel free to reach out to us for help. We're here for you during this challenging time.

#### **Sample 4: *Preparing for Quarantine***

You may be wondering why your neighbors are stockpiling cases of hand sanitizer and toilet paper. Should you really be preparing for a complete quarantine?

Some people are stocking up on groceries and dry goods so they will be fully prepared in case they become infected and need to remain at home for two weeks. Other people anticipate the execution of a full-country quarantine to stop the virus from spreading, but the government has given no indication of implementing anything of the sort. Still, others are fearful that the economic downturn will lead to a shortage of basic groceries and supplies and are stocking up accordingly.

According to the CDC, however, only those over the age of 60 or those with existing health conditions are advised to prepare for a possible two-week quarantine. The 60+ age group, as well as those with underlying medical issues, including diabetes, heart disease, lung disease and other serious conditions, are more at risk for being fatally impacted by the virus, and for exhibiting severe symptoms if they were to become infected. The CDC recommends that individuals in this group avoid non-essential travel and consider a self-imposed two-week quarantine if the coronavirus comes to their community.

There is a possibility that quarantined people may be able to order some nonperishable items to their homes, but the CDC recommends stocking up on all they'd need to get through two weeks at home in case some supplies are no longer available through delivery service.

A coronavirus preparedness kit should include the following:



- ***A supply of nonperishable foods to last 14 days.*** This can include canned foods, meat products, fish, beans, soups, broths and stews, dried fruit, fruit juices, frozen vegetables, canned (or powdered) milk, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, nuts, trail mix, granola bars and bouillon cubes. Stock up on pantry staples, such as flour, oil and sugar, and include the dietary needs of pets as well.
- ***Water and other liquids.*** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests stocking up on fluids, including bottled water and fluids with electrolytes, such as Pedialyte or Gatorade.
- ***Dry goods,*** including toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, laundry detergent, disinfectant, batteries, baby diapers, toiletries, etc.
- ***Medications,*** such as prescription drugs, and over-the-counter pain relievers.

In case of a family quarantine, some people are preparing entertainment options as well, including new board games, toys, puzzles and books to keep everyone occupied at home.

You can stock up on some nonperishables and dry goods, but it's in everyone's best interests if people don't go overboard and leave some staples in the store for those who actually need them.

Please feel free to reach out to us for financial assistance during this trying time. You can reach us at **[Insert credit union contact]**.



### **Article 1: Taking Care of Business During a Pandemic**

The COVID-19 virus has impacted everyone's life and regular routines are being affected, including taking care of banking needs. Fortunately, most of your banking can now be handled safely online, via your mobile device. To help you take care of your credit union business safely, we offer the following suggestions:

- Use our online banking service **[Insert credit union website]**. If you haven't set up your online banking and would like some help with it, give us a call at **[Insert credit union phone]**.
- If you need to set up a new account or apply for a loan, you can do that using our secure website. **[Insert credit union website]**
- If you don't have a debit card, apply for one now. It will enable you to access your money at any ATM without going into a branch. Debit cards can be used wherever **[select VISA or MASTERCARD]** cards are accepted. You can also access your money, surcharge free, by going to any **[Insert Network]** ATMs.
- Our call center at **[Insert credit union phone]** is also available to help you with most banking needs.

In addition, if your employer offers direct deposit, we suggest getting that set up. Your HR department will be able to help you with that.

Rest assured that **[Insert credit union]** will do our utmost to help you with your financial concerns. To stay informed of our schedule and updates regarding our operation, please make sure we have your current email address and follow us on our Facebook page **[Insert Link]**.

### **Article 2: Managing Your Finances During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only causing fear and uncertainty about our health, but our livelihood as well. Many wonder "What happens to me and my family if my employer has to lay off people or my hours are cut?"

Now more than ever, it's important to keep track of your expenses to make sure you're not spending more than you make or increasing your credit card debt. If you feel like you live paycheck to paycheck, then now is definitely time to take a hard look at your expenses, see where you can make adjustments, and take firm control.

To get control, you need to know exactly what you're dealing with – how much money is coming in each month and how much is going out. To get a clear picture, create a budget. There are many apps and online templates you can choose from. Many of them provide visual images, like pie charts, that help you see how big of a chunk each expense is taking from your take-home pay.

A budget will tell you if you're setting aside enough money for the essentials (rent, utilities, food) and how much is being eaten up by non-essentials (like concerts, eating out, cable, or



gym membership). If money is tight, cancel non-essential subscription services temporarily. You can always restart them when things get better. The silver lining of this pandemic is that since most of us are practicing social distancing to minimize contagion, you may already be saving money by not going out.

If your credit card debt is high, see if any of your existing cards are offering low interest rates on balance transfers. **[Add info about your cu's low interest cards.]** Transfer the balance from the highest card to a lower interest card and pay more than the minimum whenever possible. Also, until you have paid off the debt, only use your credit card for emergencies.

Another important task is to beef up your emergency savings or start an emergency savings account if you haven't done so. Ideally, you want to save at least 3 months of your take-home pay. You can start with as little as \$5 a week. Simply save \$5 consistently each week and when you think you can add a little more, increase your deposit. To make this easier, set up an automatic transfer from your checking account. It's easy to do on our website **[Insert credit union URL]** , but if you need help, just contact us a **[Insert credit union email]** or give us a call at **[Insert credit union phone]**.

We are also offering our members **[Insert any special loans, skip a pay, etc.]** for the next **[Insert time period]**. Know that **[Insert credit union]** is always by your side and we will do everything in our power to help you get through this crisis.