As we continue to work on the increasing challenges of the new coronavirus, COVID-19, we have seen signs of stigma toward our friends and neighbors born of fear of COVID-19. We encourage you to review yesterday’s update on quarantine procedures and to read today’s update on Stigma and Resilience.

Stigma and Resilience

Knowing and sharing Facts can help stop stigma

Public health emergencies, such as the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), are stressful times for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can lead to social stigma toward people, places, or things. For example, stigma and discrimination can occur when people associate a disease, such as COVID-19, with a population or nationality, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is specifically at risk for the disease. Stigma can also occur after a person has been released from COVID-19 quarantine even though they are not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others.

It is important to remember that people – including those of Asian descent – who do not live in or have not recently been in an area of ongoing spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, or have not been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 are not at greater risk of spreading COVID-19 than other Americans. Some groups of people who may be experiencing stigma because of COVID-19 include:

- Persons of Asian descent
- People who have traveled
- Emergency responders or healthcare professionals

Stigma hurts everyone by creating fear or anger towards other people.

Stigmatized groups may be subjected to:

- Social avoidance or rejection
- Denials of healthcare, education, housing or employment
- Physical violence.
Stigma affects the emotional or mental health of stigmatized groups and the communities they live in. Stopping stigma is important to making communities and community members resilient. See resources on mental health and coping during COVID-19. Here’s the link: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html

Everyone can help stop stigma related to COVID-19 by knowing the facts and sharing them with others in your community. Here’s the link: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts.html