

**From:** The Secretary <[TheSecretary@dot.gov](mailto:TheSecretary@dot.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 7:29 PM  
**Subject:** Special Message from Secretary Chao re COVID-19

Throughout the day you have been receiving guidance about the Department's operations in regard to the ongoing COVID-19 (coronavirus) situation. *Please review that information very carefully.* The Department, and the entire Federal government, is seeking to do everything possible to ensure everyone's health and wellbeing and continue to perform mission-critical duties for our Nation.

There are also actions we can take as individuals to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and protect colleagues, loved ones and our communities. If you are sick, please stay home. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, via close contact (within about 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Please consult with your health care provider about additional steps you may be able to take to protect yourself. You can find additional helpful information at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Safety is always the top priority of the U.S. Department of Transportation and at the core of the culture of our workforce. The Department is well-versed in how to prepare for and respond to challenging situations. I am proud to be part of this department, a community of dedicated and caring professionals who serve our Nation. And thank you for everything you do, every day, to advance the Department's mission on behalf of the American people.

Take good care of yourself and your loved ones!

*Elaine*