



# COUNTY OF SAN BENITO

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### County of San Benito declares Local State of Emergency to prepare for impacts associated with the COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2020

#### Contact:

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In light of the recent events quickly unfolding, we wanted to share some of the latest information on how the County of San Benito is moving forward addressing COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus).

After careful consideration, the County of San Benito has proclaimed a local state of emergency today, Friday, March 6, 2020, to prepare for impacts associated with the COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus). The proclamation will go before the Board of Supervisors for ratification Tuesday, March 10, 2020. The announcement and the proclamation is attached as "Exhibit A" for your information. Several California counties, as well as the State of California, have declared States of Emergency, primarily to access funds. This proclamation is about preparedness to better adapt and give the County the administrative ability and dexterity to adapt County Operations, request mutual aid if needed, and ensure the allocation of more resources as it relates to COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus). In addition, the Office of Emergency Services has activated the EOC to Level 3 – its lowest level – to support the Health Department and local health partners in monitoring and preparing for COVID-19 and to coordinate increased public information efforts.

It is also good to know that our hard-working professionals at Public Health regularly practice and prepare themselves and medical facilities for emergencies. The County's team of public health professionals and medical providers have been monitoring COVID-19 since the first outbreak of this and have been actively preparing. Public Health and our community partners including first responders, healthcare providers, schools, businesses, faith communities, and others are working collectively and collaboratively for the health of our community.

All of us have the responsibility to become prepared and ready for any of the changes that are likely to affect our daily lives. Staying informed is critical. This is not a time to panic, but to plan for the possible disruptions to our daily lives. So, be prepared, plan, stay calm, and informed. Public Health is working to keep our

community safe, but all of us have a part in this. All residents can do their part to help reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses like COVID-19 by using flu prevention measures such as handwashing and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and objects. Stay informed about the best measures to keep yourself and your family healthy.

For more information about novel coronavirus (COVID-19), see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and visit the San Benito County Public Health Services website for updated local information at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>

For more information, please contact Edgar Nolasco, Deputy County Administrative Officer at [enolasco@cosb.us](mailto:enolasco@cosb.us)

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## Operational Area Emergency Operations Center

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### LOCAL EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION

#### Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency (by County Administrative Officer)

**WHEREAS**, Government Code section 8630 authorize designated officials to proclaim a local emergency when the County of San Benito (“County”) is threatened by conditions of disaster or extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the County that are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the County, and the Board of Supervisors is not in session;

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance No. 833 of the County of San Benito empowers the County Administrative Officer of the County of San Benito to proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a local emergency; and,; and

**WHEREAS**, the County Administrative Officer hereby finds:

1) Conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property have arisen within the County due to the following:

a) A novel coronavirus (named COVID-19) was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the virus to be a very serious public health threat, based on current information. In part, the virus is considered a serious public health threat because much is unknown. The exact modes of transmission, the factors facilitating human-to-human transmission, the extent of asymptomatic viral shedding, the groups most at risk of serious illness, the attack rate, and the case fatality rate all remain active areas of investigation. The CDC believes at this time that the symptoms appear two to fourteen days after exposure. Currently, there is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19.

b) The number of reported cases of COVID-19 has escalated dramatically over a short period of time. To date, there are over 200 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States. Cases of COVID-19, though concentrated in China, have been reported in multiple countries, and include individuals who never visited China. Transmission from asymptomatic individuals has been documented. The World Health Organization has declared the outbreak to be a global health emergency. Actions are being taken to protect public health and limit the speed of COVID-19 in the United States.

c) San Benito County had two confirmed cases of COVID-19, and multiple cases have been confirmed in neighboring Santa Clara County, where many San Benito County residents travel routinely for work and other activities. There are more than 50 confirmed cases in California.

2) These conditions are beyond the control of services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the County and require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat.

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Supervisors is not in session (and cannot immediately be called into session),

**NOW THEREFORE**, the County Administrative Officer hereby:

1. Proclaims that a local emergency, as defined in Government Code Section 8558, now exists throughout said County; and
2. Requests that the Governor of the State of California proclaim a State of Emergency for the County of San Benito and request a federal declaration to provide assistance including, but not limited to, California Disaster Act (CDAA), Federal Individual Assistance Act, and U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Declaration, to assist with losses and emergency repairs required by the County and affected cities and districts within the County.

The local emergency shall not remain in effect for a period in excess of seven days unless it has been ratified by the Board of Supervisors.

**IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED** that during the existence of said local emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the County Administrative Officer and the emergency organization of this County shall be those prescribed by state law, ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of the County of San Benito.

By County Administrative Officer:



Approved as to form:

Date: 3/6/2020

Barbara Thompson  
County Counsel

Date: 3/6/2020