

COVID-19 LOCAL DISASTER EMERGENCY DECLARATION

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that has spread to numerous countries around the world, including the United States; and

WHEREAS, the virus may cause serious illness or death in certain cases, particularly where the elderly and persons with underlying health conditions contract it; and

WHEREAS, more than half of Clear Creek County's population is at higher risk for COVID-19 by virtue of age group alone; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 a "public health emergency of international concern;" and on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared the virus a public health emergency, and on March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 to be a worldwide pandemic, which means the outbreak of the disease is no longer isolated to one or several communities but rather spreads throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the Governor of Colorado declared a "Disaster Emergency Due to the Presence of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Colorado"; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Clear Creek County Public Health and Environment confirmed two cases of COVID-19 that were contracted elsewhere and are in isolation within the county; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Donald Trump declared a national emergency with respect to COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, public health experts anticipate that, due to the contagiousness of the illness and the fact that numerous travelers from around the world visit the county daily, Clear Creek County will see cases of the virus and its transmission within the community; and

WHEREAS, CDPHE recommends persons residing and recently visiting mountain communities, including Eagle, Pitkin and Summit Counties, isolate themselves and many County employees reside in or regularly visit those communities, and the primary route between these mountain communities and the metropolitan area runs through Clear Creek County; and

WHEREAS, Clear Creek County anticipates that without appropriately responding to the illness, numbers of cases within the county will rise, may result in serious illness or death for certain members of the community, and also will have the effect of interrupting the functioning of the community in terms of work attendance, school attendance, and the like; and

WHEREAS, the cost and magnitude of responding to and recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 virus is far in excess of the county's available resources or its legal authorities;

WHEREAS, Colorado law provides for declaring a local disaster emergency to assist local governments in responding to and recovering from emergency events, including epidemics; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-709(1) a local disaster may be declared by the principal executive officer of a political subdivision; and

WHEREAS, "The effect of a declaration of local disaster emergency is to activate the response and recovery aspects of any and all applicable local and interjurisdictional disaster and emergency plans and to authorize the furnishing of aid and assistance under such plans." C.R.S. § 24-33.5-709(2); and

WHEREAS, declaring a local disaster emergency can qualify local citizens and businesses for federal and state programs that exist or may be developed to mitigate against losses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic; and

NOW, THEREFORE, as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Clear Creek County, Colorado, I declare that the presence and likelihood of additional cases of the COVID-19 virus within Clear Creek County and the State of Colorado constitute a local disaster emergency that warrants an emergency response and furnishing aid and assistance to affected portions of the community;

THAT the Clear Creek County Public and Environmental Health Department, by and through its director, together with the Clear Creek County Sheriff - and in coordination with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, which is leading the statewide response to COVID-19 - are currently joint incident command for the response to COVID-19 within Clear Creek County. CCCPEH has authority under state law to issue orders and guidance, and take other actions as necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. County staff shall take such actions to effectuate the orders and guidance of CCCPEH and the incident command as necessary, in consultation with the Board where appropriate;

THAT this declaration shall remain in effect from this date until March 23, 2020, unless earlier rescinded or modified by the Board of County Commissioners;

THAT this declaration shall be promptly filed with the Clear Creek County Clerk and Recorder and with the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; and

THAT this Resolution and Declaration is necessary for the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the County of Clear Creek, State of Colorado.


Randall Wheelock, Chairman

Date: 3/16/2020