



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER

File #: 20-091

Board Meeting Date: 3/10/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Louise Rogers, Chief, San Mateo County Health
Scott Morrow, MD, San Mateo County Health Officer
Subject: Declaration of Local Health Emergency

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution ratifying and extending the declaration of local health emergency by the San Mateo County Health Officer.

BACKGROUND:

Section 101080 of the California Health and Safety Code authorizes a local health officer to declare a local health emergency within the health officer's jurisdiction, or any part of that jurisdiction, when the health officer determines that there is an imminent and proximate threat of the introduction of, among other things, any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease.

Under the Health and Safety Code, a local health officer's declaration of a local health emergency shall remain in effect for no more than seven days, unless the declaration has been ratified by the governing authority of the local jurisdiction in which the local health emergency has been declared.

DISCUSSION:

On March 3, 2020, County Public Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow declared a local health emergency in San Mateo County due to the introduction in the County of a novel coronavirus, named "COVID-19" by the World Health Organization ("WHO"). In his declaration, Dr. Morrow noted that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has stated that COVID-19 is a serious public health threat.

He also stated that the number of reported COVID-19 cases has escalated dramatically over a short period of time and that, as of March 1, 2020, the WHO reported 87,137 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 79,968 cases in China and the remaining 7,169 cases in 58 other countries. The WHO also reported that, as of March 1, 2020, there have been 2,873 deaths in China due to COVID-19, and another 104 deaths in other countries. (These numbers continue to increase; in its March 3, 2020

update, the WHO reports 90,870 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with 10,566 outside of China in 72 countries, along with a total of 3,112 deaths.)

Dr. Morrow's declaration also states that, as of March 2, 2020, the CDC reported 43 cases of COVID-19 in the United States, not including 48 individuals returned to the United States from overseas flights. (Again, these number continue to increase, with the CDC reporting on March 3, 2020, that 60 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed, in addition to the 48 individuals returned from overseas.)

Finally, cases of COVID-19 have been identified in San Mateo County, as well as in other Bay Area counties and beyond, including the County of Santa Clara, the County of Alameda, the County of Solano, the County of Santa Cruz, and the City and County of San Francisco, have made declarations of local health emergency and/or proclamations of local emergency.

As noted, under the Health and Safety Code, a local health emergency declared by a health officer shall remain in effect for no more than seven days unless it is ratified and extended by the governing authority of the jurisdiction where the local health emergency has been declared.

In light of current circumstances, we recommend that the Board of Supervisors ratify and extend the declaration of local health emergency. Under the Health and Safety Code, the Board of Supervisors must review the declaration of local health emergency at least once every thirty days to determine the need for continuing the local health emergency.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Approving the action recommended here may assist with the receipt of mutual aid resources from the State of California and from neighboring jurisdictions. Further, in the event that the Governor proclaims a state of emergency and requests a Presidential Declaration, the County could become eligible for cost recovery funds related to the COVID-19 outbreak.