



City of Gonzales

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PRESS RELEASE

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Maria Orozco
Mayor

City of Gonzales Declares State of Emergency Amidst Coronavirus Outbreak

Scott Funk
Mayor Pro Tem

Liz Silva
Councilmember

Lorraine Worthy
Councilmember

Paul Miller
Councilmember

René L. Mendez
City Manager

Gonzales, CA – March 16, 2020 – Gonzales City Manager Rene Mendez, in coordination with his south county partnering City Managers of Soledad, Greenfield and King City signed a Proclamation of a Local Emergency effective 2:00PM this afternoon. This proclamation should not cause a heightened sense of panic, rather this declaration provides the city the flexibility it needs to appropriately and effectively respond to any situation that arises during this time. The potential spread of the virus does pose a risk to our community and this Proclamation will help the city qualify for reimbursement of costs associated with efforts to prevent the disease in the community, as well as plans and actions that may become necessary to respond to and prevent the spread of an outbreak should one occur in the future.

The current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic state calls for cities to take action. Therefore, in the best interest of our community and in accordance with The California Emergency Services Act (California Government Code sections 8639. 8550. et seq.), which defines a local emergency as “the existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of person and property within the territorial limits of a city caused by conditions such as an epidemic, which are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of a city...” We are taking the necessary precautions to keep our community safe.

This action is not taken lightly and is in accordance with our state and local partners. Additionally, a comprehensive Influenza/COVID-19 Emergency Plan has been finalized and a number of steps have already been implemented to continue to protect all those residing and conducting business within our city. According to City Manager Rene Mendez, “We understand this is a time of great uncertainty, and the safety and wellbeing of the community of Gonzales is our top priority. We appreciate the contributions and patience of our community, and now more than ever ‘The Gonzales Way’ and how we ‘Love, Care and Connect’ and support each other and our most vulnerable community members as we continue to work through the challenging circumstances caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.”

In addition, to the proclamation, we are working collaboratively with our Gonzales Unified School District, local cities, county, state and federal partners. We will continue to closely monitor the situation to ensure the appropriate response is taken to address any unforeseen circumstances that may arise during this everchanging situation. The city is evaluating non-essential services, and some may be suspended or limited to appointment, phone and/or online over the next several weeks.

The public shall feel free to call City of Gonzales City Hall with any questions or concerns. However, we are requesting that our residents follow the state’s recommendations of social distancing as much as possible to stay safe and ensure the wellbeing of our community.

Gonzales will continue to be a safe, clean, family-friendly community, diverse in heritage, and committed to working collaboratively to preserve and retain its small town charm

Please refer to the City of Gonzales website at: <https://gonzalesca.gov/> and the City of Gonzales Facebook page for information and updates and the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html> and the Monterey County Health Department website at www.mtyhd.org/covid19.

For more information, contact Gonzales City Hall at 831-675-5000.

CITY OF GONZALES
PROCLAMATION OF EXISTENCE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the California Emergency Services Act (California Government Code sections 8639, 8550, et seq.) defines a local emergency as the existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of a city, caused by conditions such as an epidemic, which are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of a city, and require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section 8630 empowers the City Council to designate by ordinance a local official with the power to proclaim a local emergency as defined by the California Emergency Services Act when the City Council is not in session; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.08.040 of the Gonzales City Code identifies the City Manager as the Director of Emergency Services with the authority to issue a proclamation of a local emergency if the City Council is not in session; and

WHEREAS, in December of 2019, reports began spreading worldwide of a new flu-like virus first found in China, with the virus becoming known as the “Coronavirus” or “COVID-19”; and

WHEREAS, human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 has now been verified, as has community transmission through California and across the United States, and while it appears that the majority of individuals infected with COVID-19 recover from the virus without treatment, there is a significant potential of widespread infection requiring medical treatment and related deaths; and

WHEREAS, from January to March of 2020, COVID-19 spread globally to over 118 countries, with over 155,818 confirmed cases of individuals contracting COVID-19, and over 5814 confirmed cases of death from COVID-19 as of March 14, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of the COVID-19 virus in order to make additional resources available, formalize emergency actions already underway across multiple state agencies and departments, and to help the State prepare for the broader spread of COVID-19 following one officially confirmed State COVID-19 death; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2020, the Administrative Officer of Monterey County proclaimed a Local Emergency due to the threat of COVID-19 in Monterey County; and

WHEREAS, on or around March 10, 2020, the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services quarantined up to 24 passengers in Monterey County who had recently disembarked from the Grand Princess cruise ship in Oakland, California, which had over 20 confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection onboard; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020,

1. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued recommendations for 30-day “mitigation strategies” for the County based on the current situation with COVID-19 transmission and affected health-care facilities, including the recommendation to cancel large gatherings (e.g. larger than 250 people) or move to smaller groupings, and
2. The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services issued an updated policy on gatherings to protect health and slow the spread of COVID-19 and determined that non-essential gatherings of 250 people or more should be rescheduled or canceled, while smaller events can proceed only if the organizers can implement social distancing of 6 feet per person, with gatherings of individuals who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 being limited to no more than 10 people while also following social distancing guidelines, and
3. The World Health Organization classified the spread of COVID-19 internationally as a global pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-25-20 which established a series of measures that are intended to assist state and local governments to prevent and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety and welfare of the City of Gonzales’ residents, businesses, visitors, and staff is of the utmost importance to the City, and additional future measures may be needed to protect the community; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager of the City of Gonzales, acting as the Director of Emergency Services, does hereby find:

1. That efforts required to prepare for, respond to, mitigate and recover from the increasing spread of COVID-19 have imposed, and will continue to impose, extraordinary requirements and expenses on the City, requiring diversion of time, effort and resources from day-to-day operations.
2. In addition to facts stated above, conditions or threatened conditions caused by COVID-19, including but not limited to, potential isolation and quarantine of residents, employees, businesses, and public safety workers, give rise to conditions that will impact significant City community operations, including critical infrastructure and services, and which will require the provision of additional public safety and emergency services in order to protect the safety of persons and property within the City.
3. The conditions described above are likely to be beyond the control of the current services, personnel, equipment and facilities of the City of Gonzales.
4. As contemplated in the California Emergency Services Act contained in Government Code Section 8550 et seq., including Section 8558(c), a local emergency exists because


of the existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the City of Gonzales caused by the aforesaid conditions, and the proclamation of a Local Emergency is necessary to enable the City and other local governmental entities to adequately plan, prepare and engage resources to be able to effectively respond to the threat posed by COVID-19, and to warn residents and visitors of the threat posed by COVID-19 so as to enable them sufficient time to plan and prepare.

5. All City officers and employees should take all steps requested or required by federal, state and local authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to prevent or alleviate illness or death due to the virus.
6. All City officers and employees should take all steps requested or required by federal, state and local authorities to qualify the City for reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and for other state and federal relief as may be available to reimburse the City for the expenses it incurs in addressing this emergency.
7. At the time of this proclamation, the City Council of the City of Gonzales is not in session.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED, that a local emergency is hereby declared on March 16, 2020, at 2:00 p.m., within the City of Gonzales. During the local emergency, the powers and duties of the City Manager and of the City Council shall be defined in state and federal law, and the ordinances, resolutions and approved plans of the City of Gonzales in order to mitigate the effects of said local emergency.

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that this proclamation shall be transmitted to the City Council within seven (7) days of enactment for ratification, and this local emergency shall continue until terminated by further declaration of the undersigned or by resolution of the City Council.

SIGNED AND SUBSCRIBED on this 16th day of March, 2020.

By 
René L. Mendez, Gonzales Director of Emergency Services

Update 3/18/20: This press release has been updated to reflect the discovery of two cases of Coronavirus in Monterey County after it was initially distributed.