

# MEMORANDUM

City Manager's Office



**DATE:** March 4, 2020  
**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers  
**THROUGH:** Steve McHarris, Interim City Manager *Steve McHarris*  
**FROM:** Brian Sherrard, Fire Chief  
**SUBJECT:** **Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update**

## COVID-19 INFORMATION

The health of our employees, residents and businesses remains the highest priority for the City of Milpitas. This memorandum provides an overview of the emergence of the threat posed by COVID-19 and a summary of our approach in response to COVID-19.

### **Our Response Priorities**

1. **Protecting our People**, so that they can provide essential City services;
2. **Continuity of Essential City Operations** for our residents, businesses and visitors;
3. **Effective Communication** with our employees, City Council and the community;
4. **Support the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department** as the lead agency in this pandemic response.

### **Overview of the COVID-19 Timeline**

In late December 2019, several cases of unusual pneumonia began to emerge in the Hubei Province of China. On January 7, 2020, a novel coronavirus, now known as COVID-19, was identified as the likely source of the illness. On January 23, the World Health Organization (WHO) said the outbreak, while increasing in China, did not yet constitute a public health emergency of international concern. Seven days later, January 30, the WHO declared coronavirus a global emergency.

The Santa Clara County (SCC) Public Health Department received confirmation from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, of two cases of novel coronavirus in SCC, one on Friday, January 31, and the second case, on Sunday, February 2. Both cases were directly related to travel in Wuhan, China, in the 14 days before they became ill.

As of 4 p.m., Friday, February 28, the SCC Public Health Department confirmed its third case of COVID-19 in SCC, the first transmission with unknown origin. As of Wednesday, March 4, fourteen cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Santa Clara County. The cases have been described as follows:

- Four cases related directly to travel
- Five cases resulting from direct contact (for example, transmission via family member)
- Two cases of community transmission, but what degree of transmission is unknown currently.
- As of March 4, three additional cases have been added to the Santa Clara County Public Health Department's list. No further information is known at this time.

### **City of Milpitas Protective and Preventative Measures**

The City of Milpitas is working directly with the Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Management, Dr. Sara Cody, and the SCC Public Health Department to manage information, response and public education. By California statute, the Santa Clara County Public Health Officer is the lead agency for monitoring, responding and reporting public health concerns, conditions and proclamations of emergency.

The health of our employees, residents and businesses remain the highest priority for the City of Milpitas. Milpitas City Departments have increased activity in attempt to prevent/minimize the spread of COVID-19 for all city staff. These activities include:

- Enhanced Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Enhanced medical response protocol
- Purchase of 20 wall-mounted hand sanitizing stations for areas of City facilities widely accessible to the public
- Public Education updates on the virus to the City's webpage, with multi-lingual translation.
- Elevated monitoring status of Emergency Services
- Hand sanitization stations at City Recreation Facilities
- Increased dining sanitation measures taken at the Senior Center
- Human Resources outreach to employees regarding sick leave
- Increased Facility Maintenance for disinfection in areas of high public traffic (door handles, countertops, handrails, elevators)

Protecting and prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of our City's workforce includes implementing hygiene protocols and social distancing strategies. Other significant modifications and prevention measures may be considered as necessary. Some of these measures include, reduced meeting schedules, telecommuting, reassessment of recreation community programs, and the reduction of socially dense community events. The Milpitas Office of Emergency Services continues to participate in ongoing countywide conference calls in order to receive the most up to date information regarding the spread of the virus, and safety and prevention protocol.

## **Pandemic Response Plan**

The Milpitas Office of Emergency Services is updating the Pandemic Response Plan. This plan, in coordination with the Emergency Operations Plan, will guide the actions of City leadership when a pandemic situation develops.

A pandemic is defined as a large-scale outbreak of easily transmittable disease that can greatly increase morbidity and mortality over a wide geographic area and cause significant economic, social, and governmental disruption. During a pandemic outbreak, the City of Milpitas will activate the Pandemic Response Plan to prioritize the safety and protection of its employees, maintain continuity of essential City services and operations, communicate emergency public information internally to employees and externally to the community, and provide support to the county and other partner agencies, as requested.

The unique characteristics and events of a pandemic may strain local, state, and federal resources. If so, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient personnel, equipment, and supplies to respond adequately to multiple areas of the country for a sustained period of time. Therefore, minimizing social and economic disruption will require a coordinated response. Governments, communities, and other public and private sector stakeholders will need to anticipate and prepare for a pandemic by defining roles and responsibilities and developing continuity of operations plans.

The City's Pandemic Response Plan will serve as a blueprint for the City of Milpitas pandemic preparedness, planning, and response operations. The scale and scope of the City's response will vary depending on the characteristics and severity of the disease.

The City's Pandemic Response Plan has the following four top priorities:

**1) Protecting Our People**

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees.

**2) Continuity of Essential City Operations**

Sustaining delivery of critical City Services

**3) Effective Communication**

Ensuring timely and consistent communication internally with employees and externally with the community.

**4) Support County of Santa Clara Public Health Department**

Provide resource and communication support to assist the County Public Health Officer and County of Santa Clara Public Health Department and other state and federal agencies as needed.

Protecting and prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of our City's workforce includes putting in place hygiene protocols and social distancing strategies such as telecommuting/work from home accommodations, alternate work schedule, modifying workplace behavior to reduce person-to-person contact that can mitigate transmission of illness by increasing physical distance or reducing frequency of congregation in socially dense community settings, such as schools or workplaces.

Having a viable workforce is critical to being able to continue delivery of critical City services such as water treatment operations, public safety, and transportation to our residents. Each department's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) will work to identify key assets, workforce redundancies, and critical services that will be prioritized during a pandemic outbreak. Another key function of this Pandemic Response Plan is ensuring timely and consistent communication internally with employees and externally with the community.

The plan provides for a graduated response with 5 levels of escalation as the severity and risk associated with a pandemic, or local epidemic increases. The levels are 1 monitoring, 2 low risk, 3 medium risk, 4 high risk, and 5 extremely high risk.

We are currently at level 3 medium risk. At this level there is suspected human to human transmission in the county but no indication of a widespread outbreak yet. The focus at this level is enhanced communication and accelerated preparation. No social distancing beyond ending hand shaking or shifts to service delivery are contemplated as part of level 3. At this point there is much that we do not know about the potential spread COVID-19 in the County. The potential for outbreak is real and could happen at any time. As we learn more this will inform our response, an escalation to level 4 or level 5 will be based on data on the local public health threat. Any shift to a higher level of response could happen very rapidly and will be communicated quickly to elected officials and employees.

## **Conclusion**

The City of Milpitas is committed to the safety of the employees, residents and businesses. The effectiveness of Milpitas' response relies on strong leadership, creative management, and resourceful staff to ensure the safety of all who work at and visit City facilities.

## **HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK AND THOSE AROUND YOU**

- Avoid customary handshaking.
- Stay up to date on immunizations, including the flu shot.
- Wash your hands often and with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. (Be sure the ingredient list is more than 60% alcohol based).
- Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough into a tissue or flexed elbow.
- After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.
- If you are sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them. If you have flu-like symptoms, the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine). Immediately contact your healthcare provider if conditions and symptoms get worse.
- If prescribed antiviral medication, please complete the entire treatment regimen.
- Stay informed and engaged, every step of the way. The County Public Health website can be found at [www.sccgov.org/sites/phd/diseaseinformation/novel-coronavirus/pages/home.aspx](http://www.sccgov.org/sites/phd/diseaseinformation/novel-coronavirus/pages/home.aspx)
- The CDC is the best source of regular updates: <https://www.cdc.gov/>