

Dear San Diego Residents,

Attached is my statement regarding my commitment to work collaboratively to make sure San Diego is prepared not only to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), but also to protect and assist those residents in our community who are affected by the pandemic. If you have any questions or concerns related to this statement please feel free to contact our office anytime at (619) 236-6699 or georgettegomez@sandiego.gov.

All public agencies are developing plans and making resources available, however, the County of San Diego is the agency leading our local response. Updates are coming frequently. Keep checking the websites shared below and as more information comes available, I will provide updates.

If you have questions about the COVID-19 virus, contact the County 2-1-1 system. Dial 211 on your phone or visit the website: <https://211sandiego.org/>.

*Please note that if you think you may have COVID-19, call a healthcare provider and seek medical advice—It is important that you call ahead before going to a doctor's office or emergency room (per 2-1-1). **Medically necessary screening and testing for COVID-19 is free.***

The City of San Diego has declared a local state of emergency due to the continued threat of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The declaration follows new statewide orders issued by Governor Newsom and directives from the County of San Diego (County). For more information about the City of San Diego, visit: <https://www.sandiego.gov/>

The State and County have mandated procedures to protect public health and slow the spread of disease. The policies include a directive to postpone or cancel all gatherings of 250 people or more. Additional guidelines call for frequent handwashing, those who are ill to stay home, limited physical contact, and a six-foot distance during social interactions. Information from the California Department of Public Health can be accessed here: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/> Up-to-date information from the County can be found here: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/coronavirus/>

Currently, the City is reviewing Continuity of Operations plans to protect employees, ensure essential services are delivered to our residents, and assist those who are financially impacted by the virus. As a result, effective immediately, the City is suspending all water shutoffs and exploring an option to defer water bills for those facing economic hardships related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional measures to alleviate impacts to San Diegans are also under consideration.

Yesterday, San Diego Unified School District announced that schools will be closed March 16 until April 6. For the most current information, visit the San Diego Unified School District website: <https://www.sandiegounified.org/>. For information about nutrition programs and other school system supports for families, visit the County Office of Education: <https://www.sdcoe.net/Pages/Home.aspx>

California has resources for workers and businesses. For a list, visit the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency website: <https://www.labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019/>.

San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) has announced that they will temporarily suspend service disconnections for nonpayment. Customers who are struggling to pay their utility bill due to financial hardships stemming from the coronavirus should contact SDG&E for assistance: <https://www.sdge.com/>

Both Cox and Spectrum/Charter Communications have announced that they will not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their ability to pay. They will also work with local school districts to offer free Internet service to households with K-12 and/or college students. Contact your Internet service provider to learn more.

In Solidarity,

Georgette Gómez
Council President, City of San Diego and District Nine