

Gunnison County, Colorado

Local Disaster Emergency Declaration

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that originated in China and has since 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, 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

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, the Governor of Colorado declared a State of Emergency for the State of Colorado due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, Gunnison County Health and Human Services confirmed a case of COVID-19 within the county and the 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, Gunnison County will continue to see cases of the virus and its transmission within the community; and

WHEREAS, as of March 11, 2020, there are 938 cases of COVID-19 in the United States;

WHEREAS, as of March 11, 2020, there are 33 cases of COVID-19 in the State of Colorado;

WHEREAS, as of March 12, 2020, there are at least 3 cases of COVID-19 in Gunnison County;

WHEREAS, in response to this Pandemic, Gunnison County has activated its Community Disease Containment Plan;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Community Disease Containment Plan, Gunnison County has activated its Emergency Operations Center, assisted with closures and lockdowns of certain public spaces and locations (such as the Gunnison Senior Care Center and the Crested Butte Community Schools), initiated County-wide screening and testing protocols, assisted the Gunnison Valley Health system with screening and testing activities; and engaged in a comprehensive public information campaign to keep citizens and visitors alike informed and safe;

WHEREAS, Gunnison 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 may 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 ensuing event is far in excess of the county's available resources; and

WHEREAS, Colorado law provides for declaring of 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 only by the principal executive officer of a political subdivision. It shall not be continued or renewed in excess of seven days except by or with the consent of the governing board of the 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).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DECLARED by the County Manager of Gunnison County, Colorado:

THAT, pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-709, it is hereby determined and declared that the presence of the COVID-19 virus within Gunnison County constitutes a local disaster emergency that warrants the mobilizing of emergency response and the furnishing of aid and assistance.

THAT, this Declaration shall be promptly filed with the Gunnison County Clerk and Recorder and with the Colorado Office of Emergency Management.

THAT, this Declaration shall remain in effect for a period of seven (7) days unless continued or renewed by action of the Board of County Commissioners of Gunnison County, Colorado.

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

DECLARED this 12th day of March, 2020 at GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO at 2:45 pm.

Gunnison County, Colorado

By and through its County Manager



Matthew Birnie, County Manager

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