

Like all of you, EKA has been intently following reports of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). To help you better understand the impact on local government, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti ordered City departments and agencies to take additional steps that can help slow the spread of COVID-19.

To help you continue your government relations efforts, we have been monitoring local and state government actions. In the City of Los Angeles, the Mayor has taken [emergency action](#) to stop large gatherings of people in the City to slow the spread of COVID-19. In addition, City Departments have taken the following measures:

- Temporary closure of the Los Angeles City Hall complex to members of the public, except for public meetings of the City Council;
- Transitioning board and commission meetings to accessible phone or video conference sessions that will allow constituents to make comments, ask questions, and engage with local leaders;
- Development of plans to stagger entry for visitors in public buildings to no more than 50 at a time — including City museums, libraries, parks, pools, and community centers. Transit locations and similar facilities, including LAX and the Port of Los Angeles, as well as all City shelters, are exempt from this requirement at this time;
- Ordering all General Managers to develop an Emergency COVID-19 Telecommuting Plan, which may be implemented in the event that it becomes unsafe for staff to travel to or work from their normal work location safely.

In Los Angeles County, the Board of Supervisors has canceled its regular meeting of Tuesday, March 17, 2020, to determine how best to conduct business while minimizing the spread of COVID-19. In addition, the County has taken the following measures:

- The Board of Supervisors has declared a [state of local emergency](#) as a result of the increased transmission of COVID-19. As a result, Los Angeles County will close all of its buildings to the public. Like the City, Los Angeles County has announced that all bars, restaurants (except takeout/delivery), entertainment venues, gyms and other establishments in the County will be closed. Grocery stores will continue to operate and county officials reminded the public that there is no shortage of food or interruption to local food supply, meaning residents do not need to overly stock up on supplies.
- County hospitals and clinics will remain open. Essential services from first-responders will continue, and many departments will continue to operate with modified services to minimize in-person contacts.
- The Superior Courts Presiding Judge Kevin Brazile has indicated that he will suspend all pending and in-progress criminal jury trials for approximately thirty days. Individual judges will decide either to grant or deny mistrials for those jury trials currently in progress. It remains unclear as to what will happen with court trials.

At the state level, Governor Gavin Newsom has released [new statewide guidelines](#) which detail new California Department of Public Health policy that includes guidance to cancel or postpone all gatherings of 250 people or more, along with additional direction on protecting public health and slowing the spread of COVID-19. The Governor also issued an [Executive Order](#) further

enhancing state and local government's ability to respond to COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor's Order includes the following measures:

- Waives the one-week waiting period for people who are unemployed and/or disabled as a result of COVID-19;
- Delays the deadline for state tax filing by 60 days for individuals and businesses unable to file on time based on compliance with public health requirements related to COVID-19 filings;

The full executive order can be found [here](#).

Communications are critical to how companies provide public health information to employees and clients. To help guide conversations with stakeholders, EKA's crisis and media relations team are assisting several clients with communications with stakeholders regarding COVID-19. The common themes include that the company or organization:

- Has been monitoring and continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation;
- Considers the health, well-being, and safety of its customers and employees its highest priority;
- Is adopting the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other (often local) health authorities;
- Is cleaning and scrubbing its facilities down to the window latches;
- Has instructed staff to stay home if feeling ill;
- Has suspended or discouraged employee business travel (especially international); and
- Is asking customers, members, and guests to stay away if they have flu-like symptoms.

In some cases, the dynamic nature of the COVID-19 pandemic demands a more advanced approach to communications. A single mode of communication cannot be relied upon as an effective means to reach a variety of audiences. If you need assistance with COVID-19 communications, please let us know.