

COVID-19 Update From EKA – March 18, 2020

On what feels like an almost hour-by-hour basis, we are facing an onslaught of local regional and national responses to COVID-19. We have been closely monitoring how Los Angeles City and County, State and Congress have been responding to the coronavirus COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) pandemic. Here are some of the significant government developments over the past 24 hours.

County of Los Angeles

- A federal judge has scheduled an emergency status conference to address a lawsuit seeking to have the city and county of Los Angeles ordered to provide shelter space for the thousands of homeless at risk of contracting coronavirus. Defendants include the city and county of Los Angeles.
- The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority has canceled all its committee meetings this week, and also canceled its regular board meeting on March 26
- The Homeland Security Advisory Council at Pepperdine University's School of Public Policy has published real-time SALUS maps, in Spanish and English, for the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Los Angeles County. The interactive maps contain:
 - LAUSD Grab and Go Food Centers, Elderly Nutrition Programs, Higher Education Institutions that have or have not transitioned to online-only delivery
 - Spanish Map: <https://tinyurl.com/covid19salus-esp>
 - English Map: <https://tinyurl.com/covid19salus>

City of Los Angeles

- Mayor Eric Garcetti ordered a moratorium on commercial evictions of tenants unable to pay rent due to circumstances related to COVID-19.
- The City of Los Angeles has created a Small Business Emergency Microloan Program. The newly established Small Business Emergency Microloan Program provides financing needed to strengthen small business enterprises in this time of acute need that have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Businesses that meet the criteria below may apply online for a [City of LA Small Business Emergency Microloan](#). Please read through the information below prior to application. Users will need to create an account to submit their applications.
- The Los Angeles Council introduced over 40+ motions regarding COVID-19

The heads of several key Los Angeles departments updated the City Council on their plans of operation and problems they've incurred since the outbreak of coronavirus.

- Justin Erbacci, the interim director of Los Angeles World Airports, said there have been some airport employees, including an airport police officer and construction workers, who contracted COVID-19. LAWA has created an economic impact task force to see what airlines are doing to get through the outbreak, and they are planning on meeting with concessions operators and car rental companies. LAWA has also frozen its hiring process and is looking at contracts that may have to be canceled.

- Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Gene Seroka said the Harbor Department has canceled its public gatherings and programmatic events. Cargo moving through the port is about 85% of normal volume and all marine terminals are open for business.
- Martin Adams, the general manager of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, said most people have been coming to work and they are trying to implement some telecommuting conferences. At the same time, the DWP has stopped doing any water and power utility shut-offs to make sure people have the utilities they need. The DWP noted that they have been seeing a lot of scams sent to people with misinformation.
- Officials with the Los Angeles Department of Aging said they are trying to deliver more meals to homes of elderly people so they don't have to venture to senior centers to pick them up. People older than 65 have been recognized as particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus, according to the CDC.

City of Long Beach

- City of Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia [announced](#) measures to mitigate community spread of COVID-19. Effective March 17, 2020 and continuing through March 31, 2020, or until further notice, the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services mandated the closure of all bars, nightclubs, breweries and wineries, and limits restaurants and other food-serving establishments to delivery and takeout only.
- The ordinance also mandates the closure of gyms and other fitness facilities, large entertainment facilities such as movie theaters, bowling alleys and arcades and prohibits any mass gatherings of more than 50 people that take place in a confined or enclosed space. The policies are in line with those of the [County of Los Angeles Public Health](#). Social distancing is a key factor in preventing community spread of COVID-19. Business owners are encouraged to [read the declaration](#). The mayor emphasized that every step the city is taking is in "lock step" with county, state and local partners.

Sacramento

Gavin Newsom issued a sweeping executive order to protect homeowners and renters impacted by the pandemic. The action allows local governments to temporarily halt foreclosures and evictions, and shelters Californians from having their utilities shut off, according to the [Governor's office](#). That includes critical utilities like water, gas, internet and telephone — including cellphone — service.

The California Legislature unanimously passed emergency measures to fight COVID-19. Governor Gavin Newsom signed emergency legislation providing up to \$1 billion in funding to help California fight COVID-19. Lawmakers unanimously approved two spending bills to deal with the coronavirus.

- [The first](#) allocates \$500 million and allows for additional increments of \$50 million, up to \$1 billion. The money will be used to lease and activate hospitals, provide hotel beds for unsheltered people and aid health care facilities and local governments.
- [A separate measure](#) would funnel \$100 million to schools for protective equipment and sanitation.

- The Governor revised [Executive Order](#) dealing with state and local legislative bodies and meetings/hearings
- The Governor said California public schools are likely to be closed for the remainder of the school year in response to the escalating spread of coronavirus. Additionally, today, the Governor took the following actions:
 - [Governor Newsom Signs Executive Order to Allow Timely Delivery of Vital Goods During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
 - [California Releases New COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
 - [Governor Newsom Places National Guard Personnel on Alert to Support COVID-19 Community Readiness](#)
 - [Governor Newsom Signs Emergency Legislation to Fight COVID-19](#)
 - [California Requests Federal Government Waiver to Cover Medi-Cal Recipients and Expand Tele-Health Options](#)

National

The President invoked the Defense Production Act to mobilize U.S. private production capacity to combat the coronavirus outbreak. The Defense Production Act allows the President to force American businesses to produce materials in the national defense, such as ventilators and medical supplies for health care workers.

- The President is also suspending all foreclosures and evictions until the end of April to help those affected by the virus.
- The House passed legislation specifically addressing the coronavirus. The pending legislation, among other provisions, would amend the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to include "Emergency Public Health" leave, that would allow any employee who is employed by an employer with 500 employees or less and has worked for the employer for 30 days, to take 12 weeks of leave to care for their own medical condition, a family member's medical condition, or a child who is home due to a school closure. It also provides 80 hours of paid sick leave.