



DOUGLAS COUNTY COVID-19 COMMAND CENTER



Mercy Medical Center



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2020

DOUGLAS COUNTY COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM DAILY LOCAL UPDATE

(Douglas County, Ore.) – Douglas County continues to coordinate efforts with partner agencies with regard to the local COVID-19 response. The Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team is working diligently to plan for and respond to the public health emergency.

The County announced yesterday the establishment of an Incident Management Team (IMT), which is named the Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team. On Wednesday, April 1, 2020, the IMT entered into a unified command structure by adding Douglas Public Health Network to the role of co-incident commander. KC Bolton (EOC) and Teresa Mutschler (Douglas Public Health Network) will lead the County's response to the emergency. This allows for all parties to have equal input into the operational tasks of the IMT.

“There is a tremendous amount of work that is going on here locally at the county. We have a great team of skilled individuals who are strategically working through this problem for the welfare of our community,” commented Commissioner Tim Freeman. “The unified command which has been established will strengthen the County’s preparedness and planning.”

The IMT consists of a leadership group who represent areas such as County Health Authority, Emergency Management, the medical community, a planning team, finance, public information and safety. The IMT is working directly with the Board of Commissioners who have oversight. The Commissioners have established five incident objectives, which are:

- Minimize loss of life of for Douglas County citizens due to the COVID-19 virus through education, mitigation and containment.
- Protect Medical System from being overwhelmed with COVID-19 Cases by coordinating long term strategic response plans and identifying local thresholds with appropriate local response
- Ensure safety of all health care providers by facilitating the acquisition and distribution of available PPE by utilizing local, state and federal resources.
- Ensure appropriate, timely and coordinated communications to cooperators and the public.

- Support operational needs by leveraging available Douglas County resources.

“We are creating a very strong group for this situation and are proud of the hard work that is being done,” commented Commissioner Freeman.

Local COVID-19 Test Results

As of this 12:00 pm, Wednesday, April 1, 2020, County Public Health Officer, Dr. Bob Dannenhoffer announced there are no new cases of COVID-19 in Douglas County, leaving the confirmed number of local cases at ten. A total of five Douglas County residents have been hospitalized related to COVID-19, with only two individuals remaining hospitalized in different hospitals. Currently, there are zero deaths and 268 negative tests for COVID-19 in Douglas County.

“We encourage community members to continue practicing social distancing. We truly believe this practice is the very best way to combat this disease and it seems to be working to help flatten the curve,” stated Dr. Dannenhoffer. “It can be difficult, but please remember we are not asking you to be confined to inside your home. It is appropriate, and even recommended, to get out and enjoy some fresh air, go for a walk, run or some other outdoor activity, just do so while adhering to the recommendations of social distancing.”

Oregon COVID-19 Case Update

Oregon Health Authority reports new cases once a day on its website and today new demographic information was added www.healthoregon.org/coronavirus. The Oregon Health Authority is now releasing the daily situation status report, which is produced jointly with Oregon Office of Emergency Management. It details the overall picture of the COVID-19 outbreak and the response across government agencies. [Read more here about the daily situation status report.](#)

Lower Umpqua Hospital Restricts Visitation

To protect the health and safety of our patients, our community, and our employees during the COVID-19 outbreak, Lower Umpqua Hospital is closed to visitors effective Tuesday, March 31, 2020. Exceptions for visitors will be made on a case by case situation. We encourage patients to visit with their loved ones by phone calls, FaceTime, and Skype.

“Should someone need their circumstances evaluated, we encourage them to call us at (541) 271-2171 and ask for the unit's nurse manager,” said Ryan Fowler, Chief Administrative Officer.

In addition, anyone entering the hospital is subject to medical screening before entering. For general concerns, please contact Rosa Solano, Public Relations Director at (541) 271-6336 or by e-mail at info@luhonline.com.

Paycheck Protection Program

Small businesses with fewer than 500 employees, private nonprofits and veterans' organizations affected by COVID-19 are eligible to apply for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans through the Small Business Administration (SBA). The recently signed CARES Act included \$349 billion for these loans, which are designed to help keep workers on the payroll.

Eligible recipients may qualify for a loan of up to \$10 million, with amounts determined by 8 weeks of prior average payroll, plus 25 percent of that amount. The SBA will fully forgive all loans if employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest or utilities. The program is available through June 30, 2020. Businesses in certain industries that have more than 500 employees may apply if they meet SBA standards for the program.

Businesses can apply through any existing SBA lender or through any federally insured depository institution. Interested business owners are advised to check with their local lenders about whether they are participating in the program. Lenders may begin processing loan applications as soon as April 3, 2020.

Loans are limited to one per business. For more information on PPP loans, visit the [SBA's website](#). Additionally, here is a [fact sheet](#) on these loans.

Other federal assistance is also available, including:

- [Disaster assistance](#)
- [Enhanced Debt Relief](#)
- [Other lending options](#)

There will be a local Zoom conference call on the available SBA funds and other resources tomorrow, Thursday, April 2, at 10 a.m. To participate, download the Zoom app and use the following link to join: <https://Bizcenter.zoom.us/j/838739143>

EOC Statement

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners have been leading the effort within the county to minimize the effects of COVID-19. The Commissioners' goals are to protect lives, businesses and property and to see a return to normality as soon as possible.

To that end, the Board of Commissioners has overseen the formation of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The EOC model requires the attendance of representatives from several agencies and organizations. The number of people required to attend EOC meetings is large and is growing as the COVID-19 situation develops. The first EOC meeting was held in the County's traditional EOC at the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, but was determined to be too small to be utilized while practicing and modeling effective social distancing. The second meeting was held in Room 310 at the Douglas County Courthouse, in an effort to offer participants more space.

On Tuesday, March 31, 2020, a courtesy photo from that meeting was sent to the media along with the press release announcing the formation of the EOC. The courtesy photo is drawing comments from the public criticizing officials for not following proper social distancing recommendations.

While the photo shows several people sitting relatively close to one another, even in the larger room, officials were sitting as far apart as possible. Other precautions were also taken, including generous use of hand sanitizer, covering coughs and sneezes with elbows, and a complete sanitation of the room after the meeting.

Actions are being taken to prepare Room 220 to host meetings in a larger space for the protection of everyone involved, and just as importantly, the protection of the public. In order to practice social distancing as recommended, future meetings will be held in room 220 as soon as the room is prepared. This should provide enough space for at least 6 feet of room between EOC members.

For more information about the EOC, read the press release from the Douglas County Commissioners:

http://www.co.douglas.or.us/media_room/coronavirus/press_releases/03-31-2020DC%20DPHN%20DAILY%20LOCAL%20UPDATE%20COVID-19.pdf

Is it allergies?

If you are sniffling, sneezing or coughing, you may be wondering if it's due to allergies or perhaps something more serious like COVID-19, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is offering some tips to help you decide on a course of action. The first tip: Consider whether your symptoms are the same as symptoms you've experienced in previous allergy seasons.

“Think about how you normally feel when you have allergies, and take your usual allergy medications and see if you respond,” said Ann Thomas, MD, a Public Health Physician with OHA.

If you have questions or are worried that you may need to be seen, call ahead to your doctor or use your provider's online triaging service, if one exists. Your provider may offer phone or online advice on whether you should come in or medications you should try at home.

“I think the key things that would make you more concerned about COVID-19 are more coughing than usual, or certainly if you were having difficulty breathing,” Thomas said.

If you have a fever, that may also indicate that the symptoms you are experiencing are not allergy-related. Anyone experiencing symptoms that are different than what they typically experience during allergy season should contact their doctor.

Local schools offer uplifting messages for students

Some Douglas County schools have taken to Facebook to offer positive messages and daily updates for students. The messages provide a sense of reassurance, continuity and community during this disruptive time.

Melrose Elementary School Principal Tammy Rasmussen shared updates and announcements in a cheerful Facebook Live greeting this morning.

“Good morning, Bulldogs!” she said at the start of her 6-minute talk, which included a lesson on the importance of empathy. She ended her message with, “I want you all to know how much we love and miss you. I hope you have a wonderful day. I hope you work hard and that you be a contributor at home. And remember, always do your best. I love you!”

Brockway Elementary also went live this morning to lead students through the Pledge of Allegiance and talk about the concept of reliability. Some Brockway teachers have also posted individual video messages on the school’s Facebook site. Starting today, Sutherlin High School is launching a daily “Senior Spotlight” at 6 p.m. to recognize students from the graduating class of 2020. Douglas High School staff created a video montage for students, offering a caring message that ends with, “Stay strong Trojan Nation, we love you.”

Stay Informed with the Accurate Information

Your Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Douglas County Public Health Officer, Dr. Robert Dannenhoffer and the Douglas County COVID-19 Response Team have been working hard to cooperatively provide accurate and timely information and a response to Douglas County residents. **If you have questions about resources available, call the COVID-19 hotline, staffed by local volunteers at (541) 464-6550.** Stay up to date on COVID-19 in Douglas County on the DPHN website at www.douglaspulichealthnetwork.org. Find additional information on state, federal and international COVID-19 response from the following websites: Oregon Health Authority, Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization and by calling or logging onto 211Info.

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