



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Douglas County Courthouse, Room 217
1036 SE Douglas Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Health and Safety is Our Top Priority

(Douglas County, Ore.) Your Douglas County Board of Commissioners have spent the last six weeks focusing all of their efforts on the Emergency Response for the COVID-19 crisis in our county. They have worked endless hours to secure additional resources, organize health services, support local businesses, develop short and long term care plans, keep the citizens informed and provide vital county services. From the beginning your Commissioners have placed the health and safety of our citizens as their top priority. So, they were surprised to discover that they are apparently in the midst of a debate over comments made at the March 11, 2020 Board of Commissioners Business Meeting. Commissioner Freeman, who was given delegated authority to work directly on the COVID-19 outbreak, took a moment at the end of the meeting to address serious concerns about the outbreak. Commissioner Freeman is very passionate about the health and welfare of our citizens. He provided an outline of the current known data, presented a list of necessary precautions for our residents, and encouraged everyone to please take care of their health overall. The COVID-19 current data was provided by Dr. Bob Dannenhoffer, the Douglas County Health Officer, and at the time was based on the latest information provided by the CDC, WHO, Oregon Health Authority and Douglas Public Health Network (DPHN). [Click here](#) for an excerpt from the March 11 meeting video showing Commissioner Freeman’s important conversation about COVID-19.

Let’s take a look at the rapid escalation of events:

February 28, 2020	Oregon announces its first COVID-19 case.
March 4, 2020	Douglas County Commissioners Issue Prevention Guide for COVID-19
March 8, 2020	Douglas County announces first presumptive positive COVID-19 case. Oregon’s Governor Declared State of Emergency for Oregon for COVID-19
March 11, 2020	CDC issues a report about the coronavirus, stating that at that time, “ <i>The potential global public health threat posed by this virus is high, but right now, the immediate risk to most Americans is low.</i> ”
March 12, 2020	Oregon’s Governor Orders All Oregon K-12 Schools to Close and Prohibited Gatherings of 250 people or more.
March 13, 2020	President of the United States declared Outbreak a National Emergency
March 13, 2020	Douglas County and DPHN Open COVID-19 HOTLINE
March 14, 2020	State Officials Announce first COVID-19 related Death in Oregon. Douglas County Commissioners Declare State of Emergency for Douglas County
March 16, 2020	Oregon’s Governor announced the prohibition of gatherings of 25 people or more, banned on-site food and drink consumption in food establishments statewide, extended K-12 school closures and encouraged social distancing measures.
March 17, 2020	Douglas County Public Health conducts first drive-through testing clinic.
March 18, 2020	Oregon’s Governor suspends in-person instructional activities at higher education institutions.
March 19, 2020	Oregon’s Governor ordered postponement of all non-urgent health care procedures in order to preserve PPE. Oregon’s current presumptive positive cases are at 161 and there are now 5 deaths associated with COVID-19 in Oregon.
March 23, 2020	Oregon’s Governor issues strict Stay Home, Save Live Executive Order 20-12 .
March 25, 2020	Douglas County Commissioners establish an Emergency Command Center.

Fast forward to today, a little over a month since the March 11 meeting: The CDC has a full blown [website](#) dedicated the COVID-19 Crisis and Response. The United States and Oregon’s Governor have issued Stay Home orders; The State of Oregon has dedicated a [website](#) in conjunction with the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Office of Emergency Management about the COVID-19 Crisis. Douglas County Government changed their [website](#), newsletters and social media posts to only provide updates on the COVID-19 Crisis; [Douglas Public Health Network](#) dedicated their homepage and Facebook page to the COVID-19 Crisis. None of this existed prior March 11, 2020.

The rapid escalation of events related to the COVID-19 outbreak have been mind-boggling. The COVID-19 virus remains a largely unknown, rapidly changing scientific research project, and experts have yet to be definitive about all the aspects of transmission, care and recovery. It should go without saying that statements or recommendations previously made by any Health Authority, Government Agency or News Media about the COVID-19 crisis need to be equated with the current state of the crisis today. Your Douglas County Commissioners in conjunction with Dr. Dannenhoffer and DPHN, have issued coordinated daily updates, social media posts and newsletters to our residents and members of the media diligently since March 12, 2020, in order to help our citizens, stay abreast of the COVID-19 crisis. This pandemic has been like nothing we have ever seen before, and on March 11, we had no idea what would transpire in our county, state or in the nation in the weeks to follow. The closures and executive orders are unprecedented and uncharted territory for everyone. We hope that our citizens recognize the importance of staying current with their COVID-19 information. For the latest update on COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage you to subscribe to our daily local update newsletter [here](#).

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