

Memorandum

*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life*

To: DISTRICT DIRECTORS
From:  for
CORY BINNS
Deputy Director
Maintenance and Operations

MICHAEL KEEVER
Deputy Director
Project Delivery

Date: March 26, 2020

Subject: **EXTENDED LANE CLOSURE OPERATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

This memorandum is to modify traffic control requirements during the current State of Emergency in California declared as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor's Executive Order N-33-20 of March 19, 2020, implements a statewide "stay home" order for all California residents except for essential needs and as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructure sectors, as outlined at <<https://www.cisa.gov/identifying-critical-infrastructure-during-covid-19>> and <<http://covid19.ca.gov/img/EssentialCriticalInfrastructureWorkers.pdf>>. Employees supporting or enabling transportation functions are considered essential critical infrastructure workers and excepted from the stay-home order.

Because of this worker exemption, it is expected highway work activities on the State Highway System (SHS) will continue. Because fewer people are traveling as a result of the stay-home order, traffic volumes on the SHS are lower than normal. These reduced traffic volumes provide opportunities for contractors, permittees, and Caltrans field maintenance crews to work on the SHS during what normally would be considered peak travel periods. Working extended hours will help complete projects quicker than expected and minimize impacts to the public in the long term.

The following guidance is to be implemented immediately and remain in effect until the termination of the statewide stay-home order.

1. Peak-period lane closures for maintenance and encroachment permit activities will be permitted if traffic conditions are closely monitored by field staff. The maintenance supervisor or the permit inspector will coordinate with the district traffic manager to determine appropriate times for lanes to be closed and a contingency plan for addressing any traffic delays.

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2. Lane closures for construction activities are determined by the lane requirement charts contained in the contract documents. Contractors who want to work outside the hours provided in the lane requirement charts, including shifting from night work to day work, must submit a request to the resident engineer. Modifications to the lane requirement charts shall be developed by the resident engineer in coordination with the district traffic manager. For additional construction contract guidance, please refer to Construction Procedure Directive 19–15, “Expanded Work Windows for Construction,” available on the Internet at <<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/construction/construction-procedure-directives-cpds>>.
3. Any planned maintenance or construction lane, shoulder, ramp, or full closure and corresponding detours that may affect COVID–19 related efforts such as but not limited to first responders' or emergency vehicles' access to a hospital or medical clinic are to be clearly communicated and coordinated with the affected hospitals, emergency responders, local law enforcement, local government (city, county, regional transportation planning agency, etc.), and the California Highway Patrol. Any lane closure extensions shall have contingency plans to accommodate emergency vehicle access to medical facilities. In addition, districts should continue to update the Caltrans Lane Closure System to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of information provided to the traveling public.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Jesse Bhullar, chief of the Division of Traffic Operations, at (916) 654-2352 or by e-mail sent to <jesse.bhullar@dot.ca.gov>; Dennis T. Agar, chief of the Division of Maintenance, at (916) 654-5489 or by e-mail sent to <dennis.t.agar@dot.ca.gov>; or Rachel Falsetti, chief of the Division of Construction, at (916) 654-2157 or by e-mail sent to <rachel.falsetti@dot.ca.gov>.

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