

STATE OF ALASKA  
DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death and that is a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans, as posing a significant public health risk.

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the outbreak of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern;

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, United States Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been spreading in other states, and throughout Canada, resulting in implementation of public health actions to contain the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has certified that it is highly probable that an outbreak of COVID-19 will occur in this state in the near future in accordance with Alaska Statute 26.23.900(2)(E);


WHEREAS, the imminent threat of an outbreak of COVID-19 will impact every community in the State of Alaska and will significantly affect the life and health of Alaskans statewide;

WHEREAS, a statewide response under Alaska Statute 18.15.390, coordinated by DHSS, is needed to fully address this condition of public health importance;

THEREFORE, on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020, under the authority granted by Alaska Statute 26.23.020(c), I hereby declare that a condition of public health disaster emergency exists statewide, and this condition is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant a public health disaster emergency declaration in order to provide assistance.

FURTHER, the Commissioners of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) and DHSS are hereby authorized to use funds made available for these purposes, that are considered necessary for public health disaster assistance. I anticipate spending of state funds under Alaska Statutes 26.23.020(i) and (k) and 26.23.050. The Commissioner of DMVA is further authorized to task state departments and agencies in accordance with the State Emergency Operations Plan. The Commissioner of DHSS is authorized to exercise the provisions provided under Alaska Statute 18.15.390(1-12).

By:



Mike Dunleavy  
Governor

This declaration will allow the governor to exercise his emergency powers to help meet, mitigate, and respond to the dangers posed by COVID-19. Specifically it will allow the Governor to:

- Activate the state’s disaster response and recovery aspects of state, local, and interjurisdictional disaster emergency plans
- Direct distribution of any supplies, equipment, materials, and facilities assembled, stockpiled, or arranged to be made available under the state’s disaster act
- Use all available resources of the state government and of each political subdivision of the state as reasonably necessary to cope with the disaster
- Transfer personnel or alter the functions of state departments and agencies or units in order to perform or facilitate performance of disaster emergency services
- Make provisions for the availability and use of temporary emergency housing
- Allocate food, water, fuel, clothing, medicine, or supplies
- Assure the release of funds from the state’s Disaster Relief Fund to local or state agencies, and “set the table” for the state to obtain further federal disaster assistance

In conjunction with AS 18.15.390, and in coordination with DMVA, provide greater authority to respond quickly to an outbreak in appropriate circumstances, including by:

- Close, direct, compel evacuation of, or decontamination of any facility if there is reasonable cause to believe the facility may endanger public health
- Adopting and enforcing measures to provide for safe disposal of infectious waste or contaminated material as may be reasonable and necessary to respond to the disaster
- And additional authorities.