

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
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MAYOR'S STATEMENT CORONAVIRUS #2

By now you know that the Bay Area shelter-in-place order has been extended to the entire state. I support this unprecedented measure in order to ensure the best outcomes for everybody in the wake of the discovery of this Novel Coronavirus which causes the disease COVID-19.

I wanted to say a few words about this crisis, and the effect on Albany, and what we are doing.

There is still a great deal of uncertainty regarding the public health response to this crisis. There is a shortage of supplies, such as face masks, and it's unclear to me if enough testing is taking place. I was alarmed to hear that the federal government allowed many Grand Princess cruise passengers (currently still quarantined) to opt out of being tested. My feeling is that more testing needs to happen, not just for those who are symptomatic.

Speaking of supplies, there is almost no benefit to your using a face mask, but medical professionals continue to have a short supply. Please save the masks and gloves for them, and do not buy more, and donate, if you have a significant supply.
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Donating-masks-other-medical-supplies-to-15147574.php>

Please do what you can to help out our small businesses. Many are offering gift cards/certificates, that give businesses needed cash now. Many also are offering take-out, drive-by pickup, and delivery. Please take advantage if you can. Many businesses have an online store. Look them up, give them a call, and see what they are willing to do - be it phone orders, curbside pickup, deliveries, etc. And when tipping is called for, tip well. I am very concerned for the future of many small businesses and their employees and I ask you to keep them in your thoughts and do what you can.

An essential part of what you can do is to limit contact with people outside of your household, even if they are other family members. Again, the intent is to limit contact, because we know that COVID-19 can easily be spread by contact.

Outdoor activity is ok, but please maintain social-distancing - the 6 feet or more rule. Maintain your distance when encountering others. Walk slightly out into the street (safely) if you encounter someone else coming the opposite way on a sidewalk. Be patient in stores. Wait until you can enter an aisle/other space, until you are sure you can maintain the social distance. Although you may want to get together with friends, especially youth and younger ones - don't. No pickup basketball games. And I would discourage the use of play structures in parks, unfortunately.

The City has put in place a webpage at <https://albanyca.org/coronavirus> that details all the measures the city is taking, and resources available to everyone. The City is taking care to continue, in some form, as many services to our most vulnerable that we can - seniors and those experiencing homelessness, especially. Please see the details there.

Some of us are also calling around to seniors in order to check on their welfare and see if they need something.

The business of the City continues, albeit remotely now for many. Council Meetings, and other meetings, will continue electronically (with the ability to take public comment as always). It's important to me that the business of the City continue, and we set an example for how to continue in these tough times.

The City Council will soon consider ordinances temporarily banning evictions, and rent increases, to ensure that those who have suddenly fallen on hard economic times due to the Coronavirus will not inadvertently be put in even worse circumstances.

I know this is hard, and I think almost everyone is taking this seriously, and I thank you for that. Please continue to follow the advice of public health officials, and shelter-in-place, only venturing out for necessities and outdoor time. The more we follow the advice of these officials, the more we slow the spread and make it possible for our health system to manage this global pandemic in our area, and control the outbreak.

Stay safe, stay healthy, wash your hands (always a good habit anyway), and keep your distance, for now.