

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
1000 SAN PABLO AVENUE
ALBANY, CA 94706
www.AlbanyCA.org

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2020

MAYOR'S STATEMENT CORONAVIRUS #3

As you may know by now, the City declared a state of emergency last week, and activated its Emergency Operations Center last week in response to the Coronavirus crisis. Nearly nothing is normal right now. After all, this Council meeting, we are coming to you all electronic from our homes.

Relief is coming, both from the state and federal level. Congress has almost passed 3 bills now, and I understand they are working on more, and the Governor has issued a number of orders that should start to provide relief to those significantly impacted by the Coronavirus. I applaud our Governor's leadership during these times. I have also been personally contacted by Congresswoman Barbara Lee, State Senator Nancy Skinner, and State Assemblymember Buffy Wick's office. I want to thank them for reaching out during this time.

Supplies are still short, but are getting better. If you have a significant supply of face masks, please consider donating them to one of the hospitals around that is accepting them. Our first responders and health care workers need protection, otherwise they risk being sidelined by the very virus they are trying to protect us from. Other items needed are gloves, goggles, face shields, and hospital gowns. Donations of these items are gratefully accepted.

I remained concerned about the adequacy of testing in California, but a testing facility has opened up in San Leandro, so there is hopeful news on that front.

Please listen to your public health officials - stay home, and, if you're not home, stay 6 ft. away. The whole point of these drastic measures we are living under are to reduce transmission and force the spike in cases to be as small as possible - flatten the curve, as they say. Just two simple things you have to do. Isolate - stay home. And when you have to leave for essential matters, or for exercise, stay 6 ft. away from all others not from your household. This is advice from health care experts. Please don't think that, since you are young and healthy, even if you get it, you'll be fine. That's not the point. The point is not to get it, and therefore not to spread it to others who are more vulnerable. Being less than 6 ft. away greatly increases the chance of transmission. I have heard stories of children outside not trained to stay 6 ft. away, and I have heard, and seen, people passing others on the sidewalk with much less than 6 ft. clearance.

Please set an example. Walk slightly out into the street (safely) if you encounter someone else coming the opposite way on a sidewalk. If you are on a path, and you can't pass with 6 ft. between you, someone will need to back up. 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.

Please don't horde. Shop for what you need. Supplies are not dwindling. Some store shelves may be empty, but it's due to increased demand, due to those buying too much, to some extent. There's no need. We have an adequate supply of food and toiletries.

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.

The City has put in place a webpage at <https://www.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 have also called around to seniors in order to check on their welfare and see if they need something, and to the small businesses.

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 continues, and we set an example for how to continue in these tough times.

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.