



EMPLOYMENT &
HUMAN SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

Kathy Gallagher, Director

40 Douglas Drive, Martinez, CA 94553 • (925) 608-5000 • Fax (925) 313-9748 • www.ehsd.org

To: All Staff, Code 2A

Date: March 11, 2020

From: Kathy Gallagher

Subject: Updates - Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Contra Costa County

The coronavirus situation is evolving and we are closely monitoring the developments as we work with our County leaders and departments such as Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) to provide accurate information and guidance. EHSD will continue to prioritize your health and safety in any way possible. We understand the heightened concerns, and appreciate your support for each other and our customers as we continue serving our community. You will find the most recent information for EHSD staff below and attached. If you have any questions, please check in with your supervisor or manager.

County Emergency Proclamation

On Tuesday, March 10th, the Board of Supervisors declared a state of emergency for Contra Costa County related to COVID-19 ([press release](#)). In addition to being a way for the County to potentially obtain additional financial assistance, this declaration authorizes the County to direct employees to provide emergency assistance as Disaster Services Workers. Please take a moment to review the attached memo, *Disaster Service Worker Information and Expectations*, which outlines our responsibility as county staff during an emergency.

As a Disaster Service Worker, employees may be asked to carry on with their work as usual, or to do something completely different from their everyday job. During an emergency, this may involve changes to work assignments, schedules, work location, and overtime for some employees. These would be temporary changes only for the duration of the emergency. Currently there are no plans to deploy our staff resulting from the County's emergency proclamation related to COVID-19.

Most Recent Guidance

Please familiarize yourselves with [CCHS' new guidance](#) for our community members to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Contra Costa County. It includes specific actions for people at high risk of severe disease, and recommendations about community gatherings, businesses and employers, schools, public transit and the general public.

Prevention

According to Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS), the best way to reduce with the spread of a respiratory virus, such as COVID-19, is to practice good hygiene:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available
- People who are sick should always cover their coughs and sneezes using a tissue or the crook of their elbow; wash your hands after using a tissue to wipe your nose or mouth
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school until they are well
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your unwashed hands Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Masks are for sick people. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not recommend that healthy people wear a face mask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
- Face masks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of face masks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a healthcare facility).

County Employees

At this time, EHSD is continuing to administer services and programs to our customers as always. All staff members should follow the County's policies and practices regarding illness:

- **Potential Exposure.** Employees exposed to COVID-19 as the direct result of their job duties (doctors, nurses, first responders) may be required to self-quarantine at home for up to 14 days following evaluation. These employees will receive paid administrative leave for the duration of the quarantine period, and should be prepared to complete workers compensations claim forms to submit in the event they test positive for COVID-19.
- **If you are sick, you should not be at work.** For the benefit of the sick employee as well as the rest of the staff, stay home if you are sick. The CDC guidance ([CDC info on preventing the spread](#)) is that employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness (coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, fever) should stay home and not return to work until they are free of fever (100.4°F or greater, using an oral thermometer), or free of signs of fever and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Speak with your supervisor about your ability to work from home. We are currently conferring with County Labor Relations about policy on working from home, and expect to have more information to share soon.
- **Use sick leave or other accruals.** Employees who take time off from work due to their own illness, or to care for a sick family member should use sick leave or other accruals to cover their absence. Employees who do not have sufficient accruals to do so would be considered absent without pay (AWOP).
- **We honor individual differences, value inclusion and equity for all.** Viruses do not discriminate and neither should we (CCHS' [Anti-stigma Fact Sheet](#)). Do not single out other staff members as being at risk for exposure to the coronavirus, based on knowledge of recent travel or health of their family members. Be sure to maintain confidentiality of staff and customer's health information at all times. Do not share information about the health of an employee with anyone who does not have a direct need to know.

EHSD Protocols

We are looking at emergency protocols and procedures specific to EHSD in order to support the most vulnerable community members through the programs we administer. This may include expediting benefits determinations, alternatives for providing food and other services to our seniors, continuity of

Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services, and more. We are also developing communication tools with information tailored toward our customers' various situations (seniors, those without homes, etc.). We will keep you apprised of any changes to our practices and procedures as we receive new information and guidance related to COVID-19.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to delivering quality services and programs to Contra Costa community members. These are undoubtedly trying times for all of us, both personally and professionally, and I encourage you to take the steps you need to care for yourselves, your families and your coworkers. I also want to underscore the importance of referencing trusted sources, such as those listed below (rather than blogs, hearsay, unverified social media posts, etc.), to ensure you are getting the most accurate information.

Additional Resources

[Contra Costa Health Services](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[County website](#)

[EHSD.org](#)



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40 Douglas Drive, Martinez, CA 94553 • (925) 608-5000 • Fax (925) 313-9748 • www.ehsd.org

To: All Staff (Code 2A)

Date: March 11, 2020

From: Kathy Gallagher, ESHD Director

Subject: Disaster Service Worker Information and Expectations

We live and work in an area that is subject to earthquakes, fires, floods, planned power outages and chemical releases. As a major entry point into the U.S., Contra Costa County could be one of the first areas to experience a pandemic disease outbreak. As a department, we deal with numerous vulnerable populations including the homeless, elderly, people with disabilities and children.

As public employees, we are designated by law as Disaster Service Workers (See California Government Code Section 3100-3109). This law applies to all public employees in California. In a declared disaster, we will be called upon and required to perform various tasks to assist in mitigating the effects of the disaster and in disaster recovery.

In the event of an emergency or disaster, ESHD is designated as the County's lead agency for Care and Shelter. In addition to continuing to deliver services to our customers, we will work closely with the Red Cross and others to set up shelters or Alternate Care Sites for those displaced from their homes by the disaster, prolonged power outages or disease outbreak.

As Disaster Service Workers (DSW), employees may be required to perform tasks to assist in disaster recovery. As Disaster Service Workers, employees may be asked to carry on with their work as usual, or they may be asked to do something completely different from their everyday job. During an emergency, it may be necessary for changes to be made to work assignments, schedules, work location, and overtime may be required of some employees. These changes will be temporary and only for the duration of the emergency. An information paper is attached.

A major disaster will disrupt our personal and professional lives. We should ensure we prepare our families and homes for a disaster so that we can get through at least the first 72 hours. Our families should also know that we would be required to perform as DSW. In a disaster, FAMILY FIRST! Ensure the safety of your own household including family members, friends and pets first before responding as a DSW. Attached is information on how to prepare yourself and your family for the first 72 hours after a disaster.

ESHSD has established a toll free emergency message phone number: 1-888-704-3473. In an emergency, this message will be updated with the latest information. After you learn that a disaster has occurred, call this number for instructions. We distributed stickers with this phone

number. If you do not have a sticker to affix to your ID card, please call 925-608-5020 or email EHSD_40Douglas_Personnel@ehsd.cccounty.us to obtain one. This sticker will serve as a quick reference of the number to call for instructions in a disaster.

Depending on the nature of the disaster, you may or may not be able to report to an assigned location in Contra Costa County. If you are not able to report to a location in Contra Costa County, you should make yourself available to the city or county where you live. They can make use of your skills until you are able to report to Contra Costa County.

None of us wants to think about a disaster response but when it happens, we must be prepared, at home and at work, to respond quickly. By working together, along with all the Departments in our County, we can help our citizens recover and resume their normal lives.

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1
**Contra Costa County
Employment and Human Services Department**

Preparedness and your role as a Disaster Service Worker

March 2020

The purpose of this short publication is to inform Contra Costa County EHSD staff about preparedness issues ranging from natural or manmade disasters, including planned or unplanned power outages, to emerging communicable diseases to personal preparedness.

Public Employees are Disaster Service Workers

California county, city, state agency or public district employees are, by law, Disaster Service Workers. The roles and responsibilities for Disaster Service Workers are authorized by the California Emergency Services Act and are defined in the California Government Code 3100-31; Labor Code 3211 .92(b).

What does that mean?

If a "Local Emergency" is declared during normal work hours, employees will be expected to remain at work to respond to the emergency needs of our community. If a "Local Emergency" is declared outside of normal work hours, employees may be called back to work and are expected to check in for instructions. Checking in means checking the Emergency Hotline number, checking email or EHSD.ORG for instructions.

It also means...

In order for us, as public employees to be effective Disaster Service Workers, it is important to be assured that our family members are safe and secure. The best way to have this assurance is to be prepared for a possible emergency by having personal/family emergency plans. It is vital that every employee take the necessary steps to prepare themselves and their families.

How will I know when a disaster has been declared?

The declaration will be announced on the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on radio and Television, email, our EHSD emergency noticing on phones and desktops. If the emergency is declared while you are at work, your supervisor will inform you. If you are at home and **do not** have a pre-assigned emergency duty, listen to the television or radio for EAS announcements for further instructions. If you have a pre-assigned emergency duty at your Department Operations Center (DOC) or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) report for work automatically. Do not wait for contact from your agency. *First, take actions to protect you and your family and then report for your assigned duty.*

EHSD Emergency Hotline

EHSD has established an Emergency Hotline to provide updated information in the event of an emergency that occurs after hours or on weekends. This Hotline message will be updated as needed to inform staff of such things as closures and to provide reporting instructions. The number is: 1-888-704-3473. All employees who do not have predesignated reporting instructions should check this number after learning of the disaster or emergency. EHSD will also publish information on its website, EHSD.ORG.

What are some assignments I might be given during an emergency?

In all probability, you may be assigned a task that you do not generally perform in your normal workday. For example, you may have more contact with the public as you provide childcare at a clinic; help register people at a service location such as a shelter or Alternate Care Site set up for people displaced by the disaster or disease outbreak. If you are fluent in another language, you may be asked to translate for non-English speaking individuals. Other typical tasks may involve logistical support. You may be asked to be a messenger at a designated site, or serve food to emergency staff, or answer phones.

CALIFORNIA CODES GOVERNMENT CODE

SECTION 3100-3109

It is hereby declared that the protection of the health and safety and preservation of the lives and property of the people of the state from the effects of natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies which result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life, property, and resources is of paramount state importance ...in protection of its citizens and resources, all public employees are hereby declared to be disaster service workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law. All disaster service workers shall, before they enter upon the duties of their employment, take and subscribe to the oath or affirmation required by this chapter.

The Oath Required of all Public Employees

Before entering upon the duties of employment, all public employees take and subscribe to the oath or affirmation set forth in the California Constitution. California Government code Section 3100-3109 states that all public employees are disaster service workers in time of need. This oath or affirmation is signed during the hiring process.

Do I get Paid? Can I be sued? What happens if I get hurt?

- Public employees acting as disaster service workers get paid if they have taken and subscribed to the oath or affirmation.
- Public employee disaster service working for non-profit organizations and government cannot be held liable for their actions during a disaster while acting within the scope of their responsibilities.
- Claims sustained by public employees while performing disaster services shall be filed as worker compensation claims under the same authorities and guidelines as with all employees within the agency.

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ATTACHMENT 2

Recommended Contents of Your Household Disaster Supply Kit to Remain Self-Sufficient for 3 Days

Disasters happen anytime and anywhere. And when disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond but you and your family will need to be self-sufficient for the recommended period of 3 days.

Disasters come in all forms from a highway spill or hazardous material, a public safety power shutoff, an earthquake, flood, or any other disaster could cut water, electricity, and telephones for days. Disasters can also include medical issues that result in widespread illnesses or a pandemic.

After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. You and your family should be prepared to cope with the emergency until help arrives, in three or more days.

Your family will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes. One way to prepare is by assembling a Disaster Supplies Kit. Once disaster hits, you will not have time to shop or search for supplies, but if you have gathered supplies in advance, your family can endure an evacuation or home confinement.

Prepare Your Kit: Review the checklist below. Gather the supplies that are listed. You may need them if your family is confined at home. Place the supplies you would most likely need for an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container. These supplies are listed with an asterisk (*).

There are six basics you should stock for your home: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to carry container--suggested items are marked with an asterisk (*).

Possible Containers Include: A large, covered trash container, a camping backpack, a duffle bag.

Water

Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more.

Store one gallon of water per person per day. Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for each person in your household for food preparation/sanitation).*

Food

Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight.

*Include a selection of the following foods in your Disaster Supplies Kit:

Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables

First Aid Kit

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car. A first aid kit* should include:

Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes

Assorted sizes of safety pins

Cleansing agent/soap

Latex gloves (2 pairs)

Sunscreen

2" sterile gauze pads (4-6)

4" sterile gauze pads (4-6)

Triangular bandages (3)

Non-prescription drugs

2" sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)

3" sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)

Scissors

Tweezers

Needle

Moistened towelettes

Antiseptic

Thermometer

Tongue blades (2)

Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant

Non-Prescription Drugs

Aspirin or nonaspirin pain reliever

Anti-diarrhea medication

Antacid (for stomach upset)

Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Laxative

Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Tools and Supplies

Phone and mobile device chargers and cords
Physical copies of contacts and phone lists
Mess kits, or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils*
Emergency preparedness manual*
Crank radio with charger capability
Battery-operated radio and extra batteries*
Flashlight and extra batteries*
Cash or traveler's checks, change*
Non-electric can opener, utility knife*
Fire extinguisher: small canister ABC type
Tube tent
Pliers
Tape
Compass
Matches in a waterproof container
Aluminum foil
Plastic storage containers
Signal flare
Paper, pencil
Needles, thread
Medicine dropper
Shut-off wrench, to turn off household gas and water
Whistle
Plastic sheeting
Map of the area (for locating shelters)

Sanitation

Toilet paper, towelettes*
Soap, liquid detergent*
Feminine supplies*
Personal hygiene items*
Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
Plastic bucket with tight lid
Disinfectant
Household chlorine bleach

Clothing and Bedding

*Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

Sturdy shoes or work boots*
Rain gear*
Blankets or sleeping bags*
Hat and gloves
Thermal underwear
Sunglasses

Special Items

Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons

For Baby*

Formula
Diapers
Bottles
Powdered milk
Medications

For Adults*

Heart and high blood pressure medication
Insulin
Prescription drugs
Denture needs
Contact lenses and supplies
Extra eyeglasses

Entertainment

Games and books

Important Family Documents

Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container:

Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
Passports, social security cards, immunization records
Bank account numbers
Credit card account numbers and companies
Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of the Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk of your car. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh. Replace your stored food every six months. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc. Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.

The above list was compiled from "Disaster Supplies Kit." developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross.

Additional information about disaster preparation can be found at www.ready.gov

To get copies of American Red Cross Community Disaster Education materials, contact your local Red Cross chapter or visit www.redcross.org