

RESOLUTION 2020 258

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BENTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON:

IN THE MATTER OF DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY IN BENTON COUNTY; GRANTING AUTHORITY TO ADJUST OFFICE HOURS EFFECTIVE MARCH 18, 2020 AND APPROVE TELE-COMMUTING OPTIONS AND/OR PAID ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE FOR THE PERIOD MARCH 23, 2020 THROUGH APRIL 5, 2020

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2020, the Washington State Department of Health confirmed the first case of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United States in Snohomish County, Washington, and local health departments and the Washington State Department of Health have since that time worked to identify, contact, and test others in Washington State potentially exposed to COVID-19 in coordination with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and

WHEREAS, COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person; and

WHEREAS, the CDC identifies the potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 both globally and in the United States as “high”, and has advised that person-to-person spread of COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, beginning on January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, this worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 and the effects of its extreme risk of person to-person transmission throughout the Washington State and the residents of Benton County significantly impacts the life and health of our people, as well as the economy of region, and is a public disaster that affects life, health, property or the public peace; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020 the Governor of the State of Washington declared that a state of emergency exists in all counties in the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Military Department, State Emergency Operations Center, is coordinating resources across state government to support the Department of Health and local officials in alleviating the impacts to people, property, and infrastructure, and is assessing the magnitude and long-term effects of the incident with the Washington State Department of Health;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Benton County Commissioners, in consideration of the above findings of fact:


1. A state of emergency is declared due the COVID-19 Virus situation in Benton County.
2. The Benton County Emergency Management Director is hereby directed to activate those portions of the Benton County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan necessary to combat the effects of the virus to the extent possible.
3. Designated departments are authorized to enter contracts and incur obligations in order to combat the emergency.
4. Each designated department is authorized to exercise the powers vested in this resolution in light of the extreme emergency situation without regard to time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by law (excepting mandatory constitutional requirements). In order to prepare for, prevent and respond to this emergency, the requirements of competitive bidding and public notice are hereby waived pursuant to RCW 36.40.180, RCW 38.52.070(2) and purchasing/contracting requirements pursuant to RCW 36.32.270.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Benton County Administrator is authorized to make and adjust Human Resources and Personnel Policies related to leave usage and other issues related to employees necessitated by the impacts of COVID-19; and

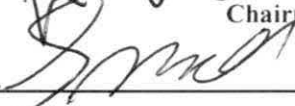
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED effective March 18, 2020 the Board of Benton County Commissioners grants authority for each separately and independently elected official, as well as County Administration for those departments under the direction of the Board of Benton County Commissioners, to adjust their respective office hours as needed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED for the work period March 23 through April 5, 2020 the Board of Benton County Commissioners grants authority to independent elected officials and the County Administrator to approve paid administrative leave and/or tele-commuting options for those employees that are deemed non-essential during that time period, provided that they regularly check their office email and provide a telephone number where they can be reached for work related issues and are available to physically report to work as deemed necessary.

Dated this 17 day of March 2020.


Chairman of the Board


Chairman Pro Tem


Member

Attest: 
Clerk of the Board

Constituting the Board of County
Commissioners of Benton County,
Washington