



MALHEUR COUNTY

COUNTY COURT

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March 18, 2020
For Immediate Release

VALE, OR – This morning, County Commissioners Larry Wilson, Don Hodge, and Judge Dan Joyce signed a Declaration of Emergency for Malheur County in response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The declaration is available on the County web site and attached.

“We need to be as prepared as possible to help keep our community safe,” said Judge Dan Joyce. “This emergency declaration will help us to best serve our residents. We appreciate the public working with us to protect public health and minimize the spread of COVID-19.”

The declaration specifically authorizes the County to:

- Seek state and federal assistance and potential reimbursement for local funds spent on COVID-19 response;
- Use streamlined processes for purchasing goods and services as allowed under Oregon law during emergency situations; and
- Follow emergency plans and procedures as may be needed to protect the public health.

In addition, the County’s emergency operations center (EOC) has been partially activated to assist the Health Department with multi-agency coordination, public information and community outreach. The activation also provides a venue for mobilizing resources and developing plans across multiple Malheur County departments.

“The Emergency Declaration and EOC will help us support County staff, first responders, and healthcare partners so we can quickly respond and utilize all available resources to best protect the health of our community,” said Malheur County Emergency Manager Rich Harriman.

Malheur County employees will remain on the job and working to fulfill the obligations of the County. All departments are implementing recommendations from the Oregon Health Authority, such as increased cleaning, social distancing, and teleconferencing where possible. Sick employees have been asked to stay home.

Members of the public who need to access County offices are encouraged to conduct as much business as possible online, by phone, or by mail. Appointments can be made for necessary and time-sensitive business that cannot be handled over the phone, internet or through the mail. Members of the public are asked to please call the respective office first so that staff can provide assistance over the phone and online and to request an appointment if necessary. Measures will be taken to enhance social distancing and minimize the number of visitors in our offices at one time. Public appointments and screening procedures are subject to change due to the rapidly-changing nature of the COVID-19 outbreak. Updated information particular to each office can be found on the County website at malheurco.org.

“The Malheur County Court is committed to making every effort to stop and prevent the spread of the virus to our citizens,” said Commissioner Don Hodge. “We encourage everyone to limit their contacts in the community in the days ahead and conduct as much business as possible online, by phone, or through the mail.”

There are 0 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Malheur County at this time. The Malheur County Health Department is working closely with the Oregon Health Authority, local emergency management, Malheur County Jail, Environmental Health, and medical providers to monitor the COVID-19 outbreak. You can find up to date numbers on cases of COVID-19 in Oregon by calling 211 or visiting healthoregon.org/coronavirus. You may find more local information on COVID-19 on the Malheur County Health Department website: malheurhealth.org

DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY

BEFORE THE COUNTY COURT

FOR MALHEUR COUNTY

In the Matter of Declaring)
A State of Emergency within)
Malheur County)

R20-10

RESOLUTION

This matter coming before the County Court at a regular meeting dated the 18th Day of March, 2020, the Malheur County Court finds Malheur County in a state of Emergency due to the worldwide pandemic of **COVID-19 or Coronavirus**.

WHEREAS, ORS 401.305 provides authority for Malheur County to act as an emergency management agency, including authority to establish policies and protocols for defining and directing responsibilities during time of emergency; and

WHEREAS, ORS 401.309 and the Malheur County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) authorize the county governing body to declare a state of emergency within the county or within a designated portion of the county and to establish procedures to prepare for and carry out activities which are necessary to prevent, minimize, respond to, or recover from an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the following conditions have resulted in the need for a local state of emergency: (a) the presence of presumptive cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the State of Oregon and neighboring State of Idaho; (b) emergency orders from the Governor restricting gatherings, meetings, closing schools, restricting the operation of bars and restaurants and encouraging social distancing and remote business operations; and

WHEREAS, the presence of COVID-19 constitutes a high potential threat to public health, to wit, infectious Coronavirus (COVID-19) which is known to spread person-to-person through coughing, sneezing and close personal contact; and

WHEREAS, on March 8, 2020, Governor Kate Brown signed Executive Order No. 20-03, declaring a statewide emergency due to COVID-19 outbreak in Oregon and on March 12, 2020 signed Executive Order 20-05, Prohibiting large gatherings; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the following disruption of important services, damage to life, or damage to property can be expected in association with COVID-19: (a) COVID-19 is expanding world-wide including a declared global pandemic and a declared outbreak in Oregon; (b) County resources will be needed to respond to this threat to keep the public as safe as possible; (c) Resources related to contact tracing, disease investigation and prevention, continuity of operations, public information, and funding are expected to be exhausted; now therefore,

THE MALHEUR COUNTY COURT hereby ORDERS as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to ORS 401.309, and the Malheur County EOP, the Malheur County Court formally declares a state of emergency for Malheur County, effective on this 18th day of March, 2020 and continuing for sixty (60) days from the date of this Order, unless extended or terminated earlier by the County Court.

Section 2. Upon this declaration of a state of emergency the County Court shall be authorized to take and/or direct such actions and issue such orders as are determined to be necessary to protect the public and property and to efficiently conduct activities that minimize or mitigate the effect of the emergency as authorized by ORS and the Malheur County EOP.

Section 3. The County Administrator, Malheur County Health Administrator and Emergency Manager shall take all necessary steps authorized by law to coordinate response and recovery from this emergency including, but not limited to, coordinating with the State of Oregon and the federal government in order to qualify Malheur County for all available state and federal emergency assistance, not limited to use of shared resources, assistance from state and federal agencies, and financial assistance and reimbursements.

Section 4. Emergency procurements of goods and services are authorized pursuant to ORS 279B.080, ORS 279C.335(6), ORS 279.380(4), and Malheur County contracting rules.

Section 5. With regard to county employees, the County Court may authorize modification(s) to relevant personnel leave, payroll processes, and workplace

requirements/designations as deemed necessary by the County Court to address impacts associated with COVID-19.

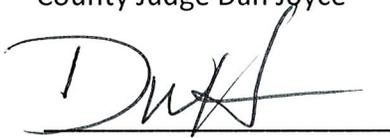
Section 6. The scope of this declaration is in support of the COVID-19 public health response being overseen and directed by the State of Oregon; the residents of Malheur County are encouraged to follow standard hygiene protocols, stay at home when ill and use prudent “social distancing” measures to prevent the spread of this virus in Malheur County.

Section 7. This Order is effective upon signing.

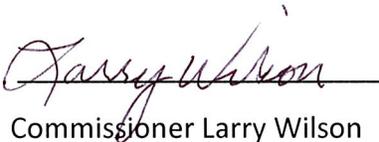
MALHEUR COUNTY COURT

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan P. Joyce". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

County Judge Dan Joyce

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Hodge". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Commissioner Don Hodge

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Commissioner Larry Wilson