



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

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February 27, 2020

Coronavirus Response Update from Newport Beach Mayor Will O'Neill

As Mayor, my highest priority is the safety and welfare of our City's residents, employees, and millions of annual visitors. When that safety and welfare is threatened, my fellow Council members and I will act.

On Friday, February 21, I received notification that our Costa Mesa neighbors had filed an application in Federal Court. The application asserted the federal government intended to transport patients from Northern California to the Fairview Developmental Center in Costa Mesa. The patients had tested positive for the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), or were exposed to it, aboard a cruise ship.

Newport Beach took immediate action to support Costa Mesa's position. That same night, a U.S. District Court judge issued a temporary restraining order prohibiting the transportation of infected or exposed patients into Costa Mesa. Newport Beach Council members attended a press conference the next afternoon standing along a bipartisan delegation of federal, state, and local officials demanding to know more about the federal and state plans for transportation and isolation of the patients.

On Sunday, our City Attorney Aaron Harp filed the City's legal brief and attached my declaration. These documents cited our responsibility to protect the health and welfare of Newport Beach residents, noted that Orange County has the second-highest concentration of people outside of San Francisco, referenced the high levels of domestic and international tourism activity in our area, and identified the negative health and welfare impacts of a quarantine site in this compacted area.

Our City Attorney and I attended the U.S. District Court hearing Monday. At that hearing, Costa Mesa's attorney cited Newport Beach's brief extensively. When the federal and state government attorneys were unable to answer basic protocol questions, the Federal District Court Judge extended the temporary restraining order one more week. Our City Attorney and I will attend the second hearing on Monday, March 2, where a decision may be made about whether the patients in Northern California can be transported to Costa Mesa.

On Tuesday of this week, we submitted questions to Costa Mesa that were routed to the federal and state governments. I thank our police chief, our fire chief, and Hoag Hospital staff for their help in crafting questions to enhance our public safety.

On Tuesday evening the Newport Beach City Council unanimously ratified its support for the City of Costa Mesa in its legal battle to stop a proposed coronavirus quarantine facility at the Fairview Development Center. The Council also authorized further legal support to Costa Mesa's position, as needed, to address this developing situation.

Newport Beach Council members and City staff recognize the need for regional, cooperative solutions as our public health agencies and local governments prepare to assist Coronavirus patients.

While the Coronavirus outbreak evolves daily on a global scale, local health officials with whom I have spoken in the past several days are urging preparedness, not panic, at this stage. Regardless of how the outbreak develops in the next weeks and months, Newport Beach stands ready to assist our community and regional partners.

Our City has a robust emergency operations plan in place to guide a comprehensive response to many natural disasters and crises, including pandemics. Our staff trains regularly, both internally and with regional partners, to prepare for emergencies. Our top leaders from our police, fire and emergency services teams are conferring and reviewing the City's plans and procedures to ensure the most timely and effective response possible.

Our City Council and staff will continue to stay engaged on this critical issue through legal channels and ongoing discussions with Costa Mesa, Orange County public health officials and the state Office of Emergency Services. In the meantime, I encourage you to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Hoag Hospital recommendations, including the following:

- If you have been to China and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, within 14 days after you left China, you should:
 - Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
 - Avoid contact with others.
 - Don't travel while sick.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.

For more information and frequent updates, visit the following web sites:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Novel Coronavirus Webpage](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Novel Coronavirus Fact Sheet](#)
- [OC Health Care Agency Novel Coronavirus Webpage](#)
- [OC Health Care Agency Novel Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Hoag Hospital Coronavirus Information](#)

We will not stop working to protect you and your loved ones.

Sincerely,



Will O'Neill
Mayor, City of Newport Beach