STATE OF ALASKA
DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death and that is a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans, as posing a significant public health risk.

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the outbreak of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern;

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, United States Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been spreading in other states, and throughout Canada, resulting in implementation of public health actions to contain the spread of COVID-19;

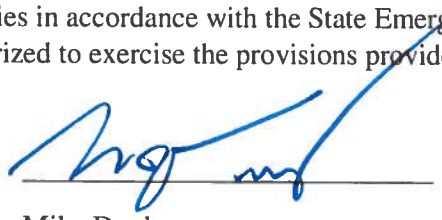
WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has certified that it is highly probable that an outbreak of COVID-19 will occur in this state in the near future in accordance with Alaska Statute 26.23.900(2)(E);

WHEREAS, the imminent threat of an outbreak of COVID-19 will impact every community in the State of Alaska and will significantly affect the life and health of Alaskans statewide;

WHEREAS, a statewide response under Alaska Statute 18.15.390, coordinated by DHSS, is needed to fully address this condition of public health importance;

THEREFORE, on this 11th day of March, 2020, under the authority granted by Alaska Statute 26.23.020(c), I hereby declare that a condition of public health disaster emergency exists statewide, and this condition is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant a public health disaster emergency declaration in order to provide assistance.

FURTHER, the Commissioners of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) and DHSS are hereby authorized to use funds made available for these purposes, that are considered necessary for public health disaster assistance. I anticipate spending of state funds under Alaska Statutes 26.23.020(i) and (k) and 26.23.050. The Commissioner of DMVA is further authorized to task state departments and agencies in accordance with the State Emergency Operations Plan. The Commissioner of DHSS is authorized to exercise the provisions provided under Alaska Statute 18.15.390(1-12).

By: 

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

This declaration will allow the governor to exercise his emergency powers to help meet, mitigate, and respond to the dangers posed by COVID-19. Specifically it will allow the Governor to:

- Activate the state's disaster response and recovery aspects of state, local, and interjurisdictional disaster emergency plans

- Direct distribution of any supplies, equipment, materials, and facilities assembled, stockpiled, or arranged to be made available under the state's disaster act

- Use all available resources of the state government and of each political subdivision of the state as reasonably necessary to cope with the disaster

- Transfer personnel or alter the functions of state departments and agencies or units in order to perform or facilitate performance of disaster emergency services

- Make provisions for the availability and use of temporary emergency housing

- Allocate food, water, fuel, clothing, medicine, or supplies

- Assure the release of funds from the state's Disaster Relief Fund to local or state agencies, and "set the table" for the state to obtain further federal disaster assistance

In conjunction with AS 18.15.390, and in coordination with DMVA, provide greater authority to respond quickly to an outbreak in appropriate circumstances, including by:

- Close, direct, compel evacuation of, or decontamination of any facility if there is reasonable cause to believe the facility may endanger public health

- Adopting and enforcing measures to provide for safe disposal of infectious waste or contaminated material as may be reasonable and necessary to respond to the disaster

- And additional authorities.

THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of
Health and Social Services

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COVID-19 DISASTER CERTIFICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Michael J. Dunleavy
Governor

THRU: Ben Stevens
Chief of Staff

FROM: Adam Crum
Commissioner

DATE: March 11, 2020

SUBJECT: 2020 COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus Disaster Certification

A novel (new) coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, has been identified and infecting humans since December 2019, causing an infection known as COVID-19. The infection is highly contagious, due to community (person-to-person) spread and an exponential infection rate.

- On January 30, 2020 the World Health Organization declared that the outbreak of COVID-19 was a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.
- On January 31, 2020 the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19, with retroactive effect to January 27, 2020.
- To date, over 100,000 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed worldwide, and over 600 cases in the United States.

Because COVID-19 is a new disease in humans, no one has an existing immunity to this virus. It appears likely that transmission can occur before the onset of symptoms. As such, some people who are infected could inadvertently transmit the virus to others. COVID-19 can cause severe disease, including pneumonia and death. Older individuals and people with serious underlying health

conditions (e.g., lung disease, heart disease, or diabetes) or immune disorders are at increased risk for severe illness. There have been no confirmed cases of infection with the novel coronavirus in Alaska.

For these reasons, under Alaska Statute 26.23.900(2)(E), I certify that an outbreak of COVID-19 has a high probability of occurring in the near future. I further certify that a disaster exists in the form of the imminent threat of widespread injury and loss of life due to illness and fatalities caused by COVID-19.

Adam Crum
Commissioner, Department of Health and Social Services

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Governor Michael J. Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 315

I, Mike Dunleavy, Governor of the State of Alaska, under the authority of Article III, Sections 1 and 24, Constitution of the State of Alaska, find and direct the following:

BACKGROUND

Recently, the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has determined that COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death and that is a new strain of coronavirus not previously identified in humans, poses a significant public health risk.

Further, the CDC has classified the public health threat posed by COVID-19 as "high", both globally and in the United States, and has advised that COVID-19 will continue to occur globally and in the United States.

Accordingly, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19 on January 31, 2020, retroactively applicable to January 27, 2020.

Currently, we are not aware of any diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in Alaska, but in anticipation of possible cases, and in order to ensure that Alaska's public is educated about the public health risk, I issue this Order.

ORDER

I direct the Department of Health and Social Services to establish, coordinate, and manage an information management structure to monitor COVID-19 developments, provide public health information, make recommendations for further responses, and implement actions to address the COVID-19 outbreak. Further, I direct the Department of Health and Social Services to consider its current statutory authority should it be necessary to implement public health measures under AS 18.15.355 – 18.15.385, and direct that it shall do so, as necessary, to address public health and safety.

This Order is to alert all departments, agencies, officials, and state entities to the seriousness of COVID-19, and of the need to stay informed and comply with official state, national, and global health directives.

All state departments, officials, and public corporations are to treat requests from the Department of Health and Social Services and the Chief Medical Officer, related to preparation and responses to the COVID-19 outbreak, as of the highest priority. All State departments, officials, and public corporations are further directed to use available resources and take actions reasonably necessary to implement steps recommended by the Department of Health and Social Services to address COVID-19.

The Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs is instructed to consider possible recommendations to the Governor, in consultation with the Department of Health and Social Services, regarding potential further action to protect public health and safety.

This Order takes effect immediately.

DATED at Juneau, Alaska on this 9 day of March 2020.

Mike Dunleavy
Governor