

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO: 20-03-31-08

In the Matter of Establishing Additional
Legislative Policy: COVID-19

WHEREAS, a new Coronavirus and the sickness it can cause in human beings is termed COVID-19 and was first identified in November, 2019; and

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

WHEREAS, the President of the United States and the most state governors have declared COVID-19 to be an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the Oregon Legislature are acting with rapidity to quickly provide response resources and to mitigate impacts to the economy; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners, nor its Legislative Committee, are meeting with sufficient regularity to keep up with the dynamic nature of legislative policy reacting to the COVID-19 pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, the Board Chair has been corresponding to both federal and state policy makers as an individual Commissioner in the absence of an established framework to address specific issues arising from the pandemic.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

1. The Legislative Policy outlined in Attachment A will direct Lane County's response and input to both the United States Congress and the Oregon Legislature.

ADOPTED this 31st day of March, 2020.



Heather Buch, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

Attachment A

DATE: March 19, 2020
TO: Lane County Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Alex Cuyler, Lane County Intergovernmental Relations Manager
RE: State and Federal COVID-19 related Legislative Priorities

Commissioners:

As state and federal policy makers evolve what is basically emergency legislation, normal protocols and timeframes for analyzing such legislation are very likely to be limited. Given the volume of information and decisions that are coming at the Board of Commissioners, I am proposing that Lane County establish a set of principles and policies specific to COVID-19 related legislation. These priorities would mirror what already exist, that is, a practice that allows the Administrator or designee to use the Board's letterhead and allow the placement of an electronic signature of the Chair onto correspondence with elected officials at the state and federal level, or to key state and federal agency leads. I've noted our existing policy here:

For proposed legislation consistent with the County's Legislative Principles and Priorities, the County Administrator or designee shall be authorized to prepare position letters on behalf of the Board or an individual commissioner, and affix the Board Chair's or the individual commissioner's signature to those letters as appropriate. In both instances, the County Administrator or designee will provide the Board with a copy of the signed letter. Items not addressed in the County's Legislative Priorities may require further Board direction. Legislative priorities shall address issues directly relevant to or impacting the provision of county services.

The principles I am suggesting are somewhat different from our existing policy in that due to the enormity of this impact, our advocacy should extend beyond operational impact and include community wide issues. Thus, I propose the following principles related to COVID -19:

- Focus on increasing the volume and turnaround time for COVID-19 test kits and test results.
- Focus on increasing the supply of personal protective equipment for first responders and medical professionals.
- Focus on securing the necessary hospital beds and capacity as this pandemic continues to evolve.
- Ensuring Lane County employees have sufficient resources and flexibility to perform and maintain their professional duties.
- Ensuring Lane County businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are provided the necessary resources to recover.
- Ensure public safety resources are sufficient to maintain public order.
- Ensure public health resources are sufficient to provide adequate disease response.
- Ensure mental health resources are sufficient to mitigate disruptions associated with the pandemic.
- Ensure housing resources are sufficient to protect existing property owners, minimize impacts to renters, and are expanded for those who are now, or become, un-sheltered.
- Increasing federal share of cost reimbursement under Stafford Act.
- Ensuring county liability is minimized across all facets of response.
- Ensuring economic opportunities for businesses and individuals impacted by COVID-19 are maximized throughout all phases of the pandemic.