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Public Health
Seattle & King County

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER ORDER

Whereas on February 29, 2020, Governor Inslee proclaimed a state of emergency within the State of Washington due to COVID-19;

Whereas on March 1, 2020, King County Executive Constantine proclaimed a state of emergency within King County due to COVID-19;

Whereas state law, RCW 70.05.070(2)-(3), requires and empowers the local health officer to take such action as is necessary to maintain health and to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction;

Whereas state regulation, WAC 246-100-036, requires the local health officer, when necessary, to institute disease control and containment control measures, including social distancing measures he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment;

Whereas, there is evidence of increasing transmission of COVID-19 within King County, scientific evidence and national public health guidance support strategies to slow the transmission of COVID-19 and protect vulnerable members of the public from avoidable risk of serious illness or death resulting from exposure to COVID-19;

Whereas, the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of King County places it at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, persons with mild symptoms and asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk; whereas a large surge in the number of persons with serious infections can compromise the ability of the regional healthcare system to deliver necessary healthcare to the public;

Whereas, the implementation of limitations on large gatherings and use of social distancing decreases the risk of COVID-19 transmission to our most vulnerable populations, and is especially important for people who are over 60 years old and those with chronic health conditions due to the higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19;

Whereas, this Order will reduce the likelihood that many individuals will be exposed to COVID-19 at a single event, and will thereby slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community;

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Whereas, this Order will help preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in the County by reducing the spread of COVID-19;

Whereas, this Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the March 11, 2020 Governor's Executive Proclamation on COVID-19 Community Mitigation Strategies;

Whereas this Order is issued in light of the existence of 234 cases of COVID-19 (including 26 deaths) in King County, as of March 11, 2020, and a significant and increasing number of assumed cases of community transmission and at a time when implementation of large-scale social distancing measures is recommended;

Whereas, social distancing measures can reduce COVID-19 transmission by decreasing the frequency and duration of social contact among persons of all ages, this Order is issued to prevent circumstances often present in mass gatherings that may exacerbate the spread of COVID-19, such as: (a) the increased likelihood that mass gatherings will attract people from a broad geographic area; (b) the a physical environment in which large numbers of people are in close proximity and have multiple opportunities for close contact with one another that facilitates the spread of COVID-19 and; (c) the difficulty in tracing exposure and implementing traditional public health containment measures when large numbers of people attend a single event;

Whereas, this Order comes after the release of substantial guidance from Public Health—Seattle & King County, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other public health officials throughout the United States and around the world. The Local Health Officer will continue to assess this quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this Order, or issue additional Orders, related to COVID-19;

Whereas, the Local Health Officer hereby finds it is necessary to institute social distancing measures within King County;

Therefore, as Local Health Officer I **ORDER** as follows:

1. All events of 250 people or more , are prohibited.

2. Events with fewer than 250 attendees are prohibited unless event organizers take the following steps to minimize risk:
   - Older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions that are at increased risk of serious COVID-19 are encouraged not to attend (including employees);
   - Social distancing recommendations must be met (I.e., limit contact of people within 6 feet from each other for 10 minutes or longer);
   - Employees must be screened for coronavirus symptoms each day and excluded if symptomatic; and
   - Proper hand hygeine and sanitation must be readily available to all attendees and employees.

- Environmental cleaning guidelines from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are followed (e.g., clean and disinfect high touch surfaces daily or more frequently)

For the purposes of this Order, an "event" is a gathering for business, social, or recreational activities including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities.

Signed and ordered this day of March 11, 2020, in Seattle, Washington, by

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Dr. Jeff Duchin
Local Health Officer
Public Health – Seattle & King County