

## Community update during this public health emergency

*April 14, 2020: Message from Council Chair Sara Scott:*

I've got a few updates I'd like to share but first I want to say thank you Los Alamos and White Rock. We've continued to work hard to protect each other through taking the Stay at Home Instruction and other important measures seriously. These actions are having a real impact and they show that we respect and care for each other and our community.

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Let's keep on it and make more progress on social distancing of six feet and on wearing face coverings when we must be out in public. Face coverings are an important additional personal measure we can and should take to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It needs to become the norm. If you need a mask you can make one (see [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) or ask for help from one of the many groups in town who have rallied to provide support for our citizens (for example, Los Alamos Helping Each Other During COVID-19 facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1415112578673222>).

The state recently expanded eligibility for testing to include those that are asymptomatic but have been in close or indirect contact with a confirmed case and/or have had a fever or cough in the last 2 weeks. The County is aggressively working to continue to increase the availability of testing in Los Alamos; as of April 13<sup>th</sup>, we have five confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the County and we will

continue to see new cases. While the timing of the peak number of infections will differ from region to region, we anticipate that the peak will occur during April, emphasizing the need for us all to continue to remain vigilant in our personal actions that help mitigate the spread of the disease.

To keep apprised of evolving trends, procure needed protective equipment, and ask for needed help the County's Emergency Manager (EM) and EMs from around the state have a daily call with the NM Department of Health, National Guard and other organizations. Locally there are twice weekly operational coordination meetings with the hospital, Laboratory, and the Los Alamos, Santa Fe and Rio Arriba County EMs. This level of coordination, coupled with incredible community support – from sewing masks, to providing meals, buying gift cards from local businesses, and volunteering to help others with basic needs such as shopping - are promoting our readiness as well as helping folks through current challenges and isolation.

For those in need, there are a number of resources available – please call the County help line at 662-8333 to help identify services, find help for working through applications with aid programs, or how to get the latest information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in New Mexico (also see [cv.nmhealth.org](http://cv.nmhealth.org)). The Los Alamos Senior Center (662-8920) and All Together Los Alamos (<https://sites.google.com/view/alltogetherlosalamos/home>) are examples of both existing and new resources for our community and provide meals and other support for those staying at home. Also, for those who wish to help, please consider giving more to the many organizations providing critical support at this time; the need for help with food, utility payments, and other basic needs is growing and these organizations' resources are becoming depleted more quickly than usual.

The community continues to express concern about the Covid-19 pandemic impact on our local businesses – let's keep doing what we can to support them. Additionally, the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street and Small Business Development Center are working aggressively to help support all businesses in the County. They are monitoring new federal legislation to address some of the impacts on small businesses by identifying opportunities and potential benefits available through this legislation

and sharing that information with the business community. If businesses need help determining which resources are available, getting started on applications for funds, or have any other questions they should not hesitate to contact Patrick Sullivan (Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation, 469-438-1328 Patrick@LosAlamos.org) or Monther Jubran (Small Business Development Center, 505-203-3237, [mjubran@unm.edu](mailto:mjubran@unm.edu)).

What we are doing is hard and new but what I see is a community that always rises to the challenge doing it again – we'll need to keep that determination strong. And please take care of yourselves – we need you.