

COUNTY OF BERKS, PENNSYLVANIA

Office of the Commissioners

Services Center, 13th Floor
633 Court Street
Reading, PA 19601

Phone: 610.478.6136
Fax: 610.478.6293

E-mail: commissioners@countyofberks.com

Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair
Kevin S. Barnhardt, Vice Chair
Michael S. Rivera, Commissioner

Ronald R. Seaman, Chief Administrative Officer
Christine M. Sadler, Solicitor
Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk

DECLARATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY FOR THE COUNTY OF BERKS, PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, a novel coronavirus (now known as “SARS CoV-2”) emerged in Wuhan, China, began infecting humans in December 2019, and has since spread throughout the world, including the United States; and

WHEREAS, SARS CoV-2 is known to have the potential to cause Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) in humans; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) has declared COVID-19 a “public health emergency of international concern,” and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) Secretary has declared that COVID-19 creates a public health emergency; and

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

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Office of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency on March 6, 2020 due to COVID-19 under the authority of 35 Pa.C.S. §§ 7101, *et seq.* that authorized the suspension of certain procedures and formalities prescribed by law and urged counties to “act as necessary to meet the current exigencies;” and

WHEREAS, emergency management measures are required to reduce the severity of this disaster and to protect the health, safety and welfare of affected residents in Berks County; and

WHEREAS, Section 7501 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code (35 Pa.C.S. § 7501) authorizes Berks County to declare a disaster emergency “upon the finding a disaster has occurred or is imminent;”

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Berks County Board of Commissioners (“Commissioners”), pursuant to the provisions of Section 7501 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code (35 Pa.C.S. § 7501), do hereby declare the existence of a disaster emergency in Berks County due to COVID-19.

FURTHER, the Commissioners direct the Chief Administrative Officer and the County Emergency Management Coordinator to coordinate the County's activities of the emergency response, to work with state and federal authorities, to take all appropriate action needed to alleviate the effects of this disaster, to aid in the restoration of essential public services, and to take any other emergency response action deemed necessary to respond to this emergency.

FURTHER, the Commissioners hereby create a Leadership Council to advise the Chief Administrative Officer and County Emergency Management Coordinator in response to COVID-19 that shall consist of the Board of Commissioners, the Chief Administrative Officer, the County Emergency Management Coordinator, Human Resources and the Solicitor's Office and any and all additional members as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Commissioners. This Leadership Council shall meet as needed in response to COVID-19 without the need to formally advertise times and places of meetings due to the exigent and evolving circumstances of this disaster, although, as time permits, every effort will be made to list the times and places of such meetings in advance on the County website.

STILL FURTHER, the Commissioners, pursuant to 35 Pa.C.S. § 7501(d), authorize the temporary suspension of all formal requirements in light of the exigencies of this disaster emergency, including all time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by law (excepting mandatory constitutional requirements) pertaining to the performance of public work, entering into contracts, the incurring of obligations, the employment of temporary workers, the rental of equipment, the purchase of supplies and materials, the levying of taxes and the appropriation and expenditure of public funds.

This Declaration shall take effect immediately.

Authorized this 12th day of March, 2020

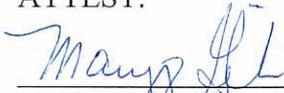
COUNTY OF BERKS


Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair


Kevin S. Barnhardt, Commissioner


Michael S. Rivera, Commissioner

ATTEST:


Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk