

# Heber Public Utility District

## Report to the Board of Directors

**MEETING DATE:** March 19, 2020

**FROM:** Laura Fischer, General Manager

**SUBJECT:** Items related to the California Department of Public health concerns and Governor Newsom's Executive Order enhancing State and Local government's ability to respond to COVID-19 pandemic.

### **ISSUE:**

The nation is facing a national health emergency. The State and Federal government have declared a state of emergency. There was a Declaration of Local Health Emergency issued by the Health Officer, and a Proclamation of Local Emergency issued by the County Director of Emergency Services on March 5, 2020. The Governor signed the Proclamation of State Emergency on March 4, 2020 and followed with Executive Orders N-25-20; N-27-20 and N-28-20 on March 16, 2020. And Proclamation 9984 was issued by the President of the United States on March 11, 2020.

There are new health regulations and guidelines coming from the CDC, WHO and other health regulating agencies, as well as the Governor's office daily. HPUD management is monitoring the changing regulations and guidelines and we have taken several steps to continue to follow the health protocol.

### **GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize the General Manager to execute mutual aid agreements, modify staff work hours, and make necessary changes to the District's operations to comply with health and safety guidelines and recommendations during the COVID 19 pandemic.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The HPUD Board met on Monday night at 6pm to discuss the changes to operations and authorized the General Manager to prepare for further operational changes.

The HPUD issued a press release on March 17, 2020 that outlines the current operational changes and bill pay options. We have implemented these operational changes regarding bill pay methods and restricted access to the HPUD offices. Additionally, management has developed a reduced work hour plan that can be implemented if needed. I have attached the documents mentioned above that have been prepared and presented to the press, staff and customers.

In addition, staff has been working with the County Public Works and County Environmental Health departments to develop a list of operators that can be called in case operators in other districts, cities or the County fall sick or must be isolated and cannot work. HPUD will cooperate and should the need arise we will provide mutual assistance as needed.

The Seeley County Water District's General Manager and I have discussed a mutual aid agreement that would allow the two Special District's to provide assistance to ensure continued water treatment and distribution services, sewer treatment and collection services, and administrative services continue during the national health emergency.

**CONCLUSION:**

The COVID – 19 pandemic is constantly evolving and the HPUD Board of Directors has authorized the General Manager to comply with regulations, mandates, and guidelines as they are made public.

Staff recommends authorizing the General Manager to execute mutual aid agreements that are in the best interest of the public and the HPUD, modify staff work hours without loss of pay to our employees, waive late fees and suspend water shutoffs, and make any changes as may be necessary to HPUD operations in all departments to ensure continued services and protect the health and safety of our employees and the good citizens of Heber.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Fischer, General Manager

Attachment: Backup material

# NEWS RELEASE

## Heber Public Utility District

**Date:** February 26, 2020

**To:** Tom Bodus, Editor in Chief, I. V. Press  
Arturo Bojorquez, Editor, Adelante Valle  
Michael Maresh, Staff Writer for Government and Local News

**From:** Laura Fischer, General Manager Heber Public Utility District  
Phone: 760-482-2440  
Email: [lfischer@heber.ca.gov](mailto:lfischer@heber.ca.gov)

**When Announced:** March 17, 2020

**Announcement:** In abundance of caution and in an effort to safeguard the health of our employees and the good citizens of Heber, the Heber Public Utility District has implemented the following precautions and operational changes.

The Heber Public Utility District will waive late fees during this national health emergency, and we will suspend shut offs until further notice.

Should any customer have a need for payment assistance after the health emergency is over, we have payment plans available. Contact our office for more information at 760-482-2440.

Beginning March 18, 2020, the Heber PUD will no longer accept payment in our office. We have several bill pay options available:

- We encourage all customers to use our online **Quick Pay** service that can be accessed at [www.heber.ca.gov](http://www.heber.ca.gov). This is easy to use. Just go to our website and click on Access Bill Pay, then Utility Billing, then Quick Pay. You will need your account number, last payment amount and your debit/credit card information. Contact us if you need assistance.
- We also have two mail boxes available for payment drop off. We will accept cash, checks and money orders in the mail boxes. The boxes are located in the south parking lot and inside the building next to the HPUD office door. You must include your name, address, phone, and the amount of payment to ensure your payment is processed correctly.
- You can also pay over the phone using your debit/credit card. This is a new temporary service we are providing. You can call our office at 760-482-2440 and our friendly office staff will process your payment. We may encounter a high call volume so please leave a message and we will call you back as soon as possible to assist.

Our office will be open and new customers wishing to start services should come in during business hours for assistance.

Be assured that Heber Public Utility District's Water is SAFE and our water and wastewater treatment plants are operating safely as usual, and that we are following the guidelines from the CDC. For more information please contact the Heber Public Utility District off at 760-482-2440. The Heber Public Utility District Board and staff thank you for your patience during this health emergency. Stay Safe!

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-28-20

**WHEREAS** on March 4, 2020, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** despite sustained efforts, the virus remains a threat, and further efforts to control the spread of the virus to reduce and minimize the risk of infection and otherwise mitigate the effects of COVID-19 are needed; and

**WHEREAS** the economic impacts of COVID-19 have been significant, and could threaten to undermine Californians' housing security and the stability of California businesses; and

**WHEREAS** many Californians are experiencing substantial losses of income as a result of business closures, the loss of hours or wages, or layoffs related to COVID-19, hindering their ability to keep up with their rents, mortgages, and utility bills; and

**WHEREAS** Californians who are most vulnerable to COVID-19, those 65 years and older, and those with underlying health issues, are advised to self-quarantine, self-isolate, or otherwise remain in their homes to reduce the transmission of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** because homelessness can exacerbate vulnerability to COVID-19, California must take measures to preserve and increase housing security for Californians to protect public health; and

**WHEREAS** local jurisdictions, based on their particular needs, may therefore determine that additional measures to promote housing security and stability are necessary to protect public health or to mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** local jurisdictions may also determine, based on their particular needs, that promoting stability amongst commercial tenancies is also conducive to public health, such as by allowing commercial establishments to decide whether and how to remain open based on public health concerns rather than economic pressures, or to mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** in addition to these public health benefits, state and local policies to promote social distancing, self-quarantine, and self-isolation require that people be able to access basic utilities—including water, gas, electricity, and telecommunications—at their homes, so that Californians can work from home, receive public health information, and otherwise adhere to policies of social distancing, self-quarantine, and self-isolation, if needed; and

**WHEREAS** many utility providers, public and private, covering electricity, gas, water, and sewer, have voluntarily announced moratoriums on service disconnections and late fees for non-payment in response to COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** many telecommunication companies, including internet and cell phone providers, have voluntarily announced moratoriums on service disconnections and late fees for non-payment in response to COVID-19;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM**, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes of the State of California, and in particular, Government Code sections 8567 and 8571, do hereby issue the following order to become effective immediately:

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

- 1) The time limitation set forth in Penal Code section 396, subdivision (f), concerning protections against residential eviction, is hereby waived. Those protections shall be in effect through May 31, 2020.
- 2) Any provision of state law that would preempt or otherwise restrict a local government's exercise of its police power to impose substantive limitations on residential or commercial evictions as described in subparagraphs (i) and (ii) below—including, but not limited to, any such provision of Civil Code sections 1940 et seq. or 1954.25 et seq.—is hereby suspended to the extent that it would preempt or otherwise restrict such exercise. This paragraph 2 shall only apply to the imposition of limitations on evictions when:
  - (i) The basis for the eviction is nonpayment of rent, or a foreclosure, arising out of a substantial decrease in household or business income (including, but not limited to, a substantial decrease in household income caused by layoffs or a reduction in the number of compensable hours of work, or a substantial decrease in business income caused by a reduction in opening hours or consumer demand), or substantial out-of-pocket medical expenses; and
  - (ii) The decrease in household or business income or the out-of-pocket medical expenses described in subparagraph (i) was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, or by any local, state, or federal government response to COVID-19, and is documented.

The statutory cause of action for judicial foreclosure, Code of Civil Procedure section 725a et seq.; the statutory cause of action for unlawful detainer, Code of Civil Procedure section 1161 et seq., and any other statutory cause of action that could be used to evict or otherwise eject a residential or commercial tenant or occupant of residential real property after foreclosure is suspended only as applied to any tenancy, or residential real property and any

occupation thereof, to which a local government has imposed a limitation on eviction pursuant to this paragraph 2, and only to the extent of the limitation imposed by the local government.

Nothing in this Order shall relieve a tenant of the obligation to pay rent, nor restrict a landlord's ability to recover rent due.

The protections in this paragraph 2 shall be in effect through May 31, 2020, unless extended.

- 3) All public housing authorities are requested to extend deadlines for housing assistance recipients or applicants to deliver records or documents related to their eligibility for programs, to the extent that those deadlines are within the discretion of the housing authority.
- 4) The Department of Business Oversight, in consultation with the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency, shall engage with financial institutions to identify tools to be used to afford Californians relief from the threat of residential foreclosure and displacement, and to otherwise promote housing security and stability during this state of emergency, in furtherance of the objectives of this Order.
- 5) Financial institutions holding home or commercial mortgages, including banks, credit unions, government-sponsored enterprises, and institutional investors, are requested to implement an immediate moratorium on foreclosures and related evictions when the foreclosure or foreclosure-related eviction arises out of a substantial decrease in household or business income, or substantial out-of-pocket medical expenses, which were caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, or by any local, state, or federal government response to COVID-19.
- 6) The California Public Utilities Commission is requested to monitor measures undertaken by public and private utility providers to implement customer service protections for critical utilities, including but not limited to electric, gas, water, internet, landline telephone, and cell phone service, in response to COVID-19, and on a weekly basis publicly report these measures.

Nothing in this Order shall be construed to invalidate any limitation on eviction enacted by a local jurisdiction between March 4, 2020 and this date.

Nothing in this Order shall in any way restrict state or local authority to order any quarantine, isolation, or other public health measure that may compel an individual to remain physically present in a particular residential real property.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

**I FURTHER DIRECT** that as soon as hereafter possible, this proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Order.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 16th day of March 2020.



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GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor of California

**ATTEST:**

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ALEX PADILLA  
Secretary of State

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-25-20

**WHEREAS** on March 4, 2020, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** despite sustained efforts, the virus remains a threat, and further efforts to control the spread of the virus to reduce and minimize the risk of infection are needed; and

**WHEREAS** state and local public health officials may, as they deem necessary in the interest of public health, issue guidance limiting or recommending limitations upon attendance at public assemblies, conferences, or other mass events, which could cause the cancellation of such gatherings through no fault or responsibility of the parties involved, thereby constituting a force majeure; and

**WHEREAS** the Department of Public Health is maintaining up-to-date guidance relating to COVID-19, available to the public at <http://cdph.ca.gov/covid19>; and

**WHEREAS** the State of California and local governments, in collaboration with the Federal government, continue sustained efforts to minimize the spread and mitigate the effects of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** there is a need to secure numerous facilities to accommodate quarantine, isolation, or medical treatment of individuals testing positive for or exposed to COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, many individuals who have developmental disabilities and receive services through regional centers funded by the Department of Developmental Services also have chronic medical conditions that make them more susceptible to serious symptoms of COVID-19, and it is critical that they continue to receive their services while also protecting their own health and the general public health; and

**WHEREAS** individuals exposed to COVID-19 may be temporarily unable to report to work due to illness caused by COVID-19 or quarantines related to COVID-19 and individuals directly affected by COVID-19 may experience potential loss of income, health care and medical coverage, and ability to pay for housing and basic needs, thereby placing increased demands on already strained regional and local health and safety resources such as shelters and food banks; and

**WHEREAS** in the interest of public health and safety, it is necessary to exercise my authority under the Emergency Services Act, specifically Government Code section 8572, to ensure adequate facilities exist to address the impacts of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS** under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this order would prevent, hinder, or delay appropriate actions to prevent and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM**, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes of the State of California, and in particular, Government Code sections 8567, 8571 and 8572, do hereby issue the following order to become effective immediately:

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. All residents are to heed any orders and guidance of state and local public health officials, including but not limited to the imposition of social distancing measures, to control the spread of COVID-19.
2. For the period that began January 24, 2020 through the duration of this emergency, the Employment Development Department shall have the discretion to waive the one-week waiting period in Unemployment Insurance Code section 2627(b)(1) for disability insurance applicants who are unemployed and disabled as a result of the COVID-19, and who are otherwise eligible for disability insurance benefits.
3. For the period that began January 24, 2020 through the duration of this emergency, the Employment Development Department shall have the discretion to waive the one-week waiting period in Unemployment Insurance Code section 1253(d) for unemployment insurance applicants who are unemployed as a result of the COVID-19, and who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.
4. Notwithstanding Health and Safety Code section 1797.172(b), during the course of this emergency, the Director of the Emergency Medical Services Authority shall have the authority to implement additions to local optional scopes of practice without first consulting with a committee of local EMS medical directors named by the EMS Medical Directors Association of California.
5. In order to quickly provide relief from interest and penalties, the provisions of the Revenue and Taxation Code that apply to the taxes and fees administered by the Department of Tax and Fee Administration, requiring the filing of a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts for a claim for relief, are suspended for a period of 60 days after the date of this Order for any individuals or businesses who are unable to file a timely tax return or make a timely payment as a result of complying with a state or local public health official's imposition or recommendation of social distancing measures related to COVID-19.
6. The Franchise Tax Board, the Board of Equalization, the Department of Tax and Fee Administration, and the Office of Tax Appeals shall use their administrative powers where appropriate to provide those individuals and businesses impacted by complying with a state or local public health official's imposition or recommendation of social

distancing measures related to COVID-19 with the extensions for filing, payment, audits, billing, notices, assessments, claims for refund, and relief from subsequent penalties and interest.

7. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services shall ensure adequate state staffing during this emergency. Consistent with applicable federal law, work hour limitations for retired annuitants, permanent and intermittent personnel, and state management and senior supervisors, are suspended. Furthermore, reinstatement and work hour limitations in Government Code sections 21220, 21224(a), and 7522.56(b), (d), (f), and (g), and the time limitations in Government Code section 19888.1 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 300-303 are suspended. The Director of the California Department of Human Resources must be notified of any individual employed pursuant to these waivers.
8. The California Health and Human Services Agency and the Office of Emergency Services shall identify, and shall otherwise be prepared to make available—including through the execution of any necessary contracts or other agreements and, if necessary, through the exercise of the State's power to commandeer property – hotels and other places of temporary residence, medical facilities, and other facilities that are suitable for use as places of temporary residence or medical facilities as necessary for quarantining, isolating, or treating individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or who have had a high-risk exposure and are thought to be in the incubation period.
9. The certification and licensure requirements of California Code of Regulations, Title 17, section 1079 and Business and Professions Code section 1206.5 are suspended as to all persons who meet the requirements under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of section 353 of the Public Health Service Act for high complexity testing and who are performing analysis of samples to test for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, in any certified public health laboratory or licensed clinical laboratory.
10. To ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities continue to receive the services and supports mandated by their individual program plans threatened by disruptions caused by COVID-19, the Director of the Department of Developmental Services may issue directives waiving any provision or requirement of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, the California Early Intervention Services Act, and the accompanying regulations of Title 17, Division 2 of the California Code of Regulations. A directive may delegate to the regional centers any authority granted to the Department by law where the Director believes such delegation is necessary to ensure services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The Director shall describe the need justifying the waiver granted in each directive and articulate how the waiver is necessary to protect the public health or safety from the threat of COVID-19 or necessary to ensure that services to individuals with developmental disabilities are not disrupted. Any waiver granted by a directive shall expire 30 days from the date of its issuance. The Director may grant one or more 30-day extensions if the waiver continues to be necessary

to protect health or safety or to ensure delivery of services. The Director shall rescind a waiver once it is no longer necessary to protect public health or safety or ensure delivery of services. Any waivers and extensions granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be posted on the Department's website.

11. Notwithstanding any other provision of state or local law, including the Bagley-Keene Act or the Brown Act, a local legislative body or state body is authorized to hold public meetings via teleconferencing and to make public meetings accessible telephonically or otherwise electronically to all members of the public seeking to attend and to address the local legislative body or state body, during the period in which state or local public officials impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing, including but not limited to limitations on public events. All requirements in both the Bagley-Keene Act and the Brown Act expressly or impliedly requiring the physical presence of members, the clerk or other personnel of the body, or of the public as a condition of participation in or quorum for a public meeting are hereby waived.

In particular, any otherwise-applicable requirements that

- (i) state and local bodies notice each teleconference location from which a member will be participating in a public meeting;
- (ii) each teleconference location be accessible to the public;
- (iii) members of the public may address the body at each teleconference conference location;
- (iv) state and local bodies post agendas at all teleconference locations;
- (v) at least one member of the state body be physically present at the location specified in the notice of the meeting; and
- (vi) during teleconference meetings, at least a quorum of the members of the local body participate from locations within the boundaries of the territory over which the local body exercises jurisdiction

are hereby suspended, on the conditions that:

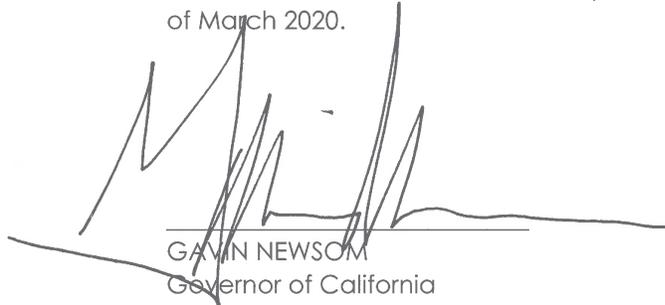
- (i) each state or local body must give advance notice of each public meeting, according to the timeframe otherwise prescribed by the Bagley-Keene Act or the Brown Act, and using the means otherwise prescribed by the Bagley-Keene Act or the Brown Act, as applicable; and
- (ii) consistent with the notice requirement in paragraph (i), each state or local body must notice at least one publicly accessible location from which members of the public shall have the right to observe and offer public comment at the public meeting, consistent with the public's rights of access and public comment otherwise provided for by the Bagley-Keene Act and the Brown Act, as applicable (including, but not limited to, the requirement that such rights of access and public comment be made available in a manner consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act).

In addition to the mandatory conditions set forth above, all state and local bodies are urged to use sound discretion and to make reasonable efforts to adhere as closely as reasonably possible to the provisions of the Bagley-Keene Act and the Brown Act, and other applicable local laws regulating the conduct of public meetings, in order to maximize transparency and provide the public access to their meetings.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 12th day of March 2020.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat messy.

GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor of California

**ATTEST:**

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ALEX PADILLA  
Secretary of State



## **Could Risk of COVID-19 Merit Adjustments to Special District Board Meetings?**

California's special districts are committed to ensuring that their business is conducted in open and public meetings where all persons are permitted to attend and participate. In the wake of concerns regarding the novel COVID-19 coronavirus, a recent thread on CSDA's Open Forum contemplated the options available under the Brown Act should health and safety conditions within a community require a special district to reconsider how it conducts board meetings. An accurate understanding of the parameters under state law is necessary to help special districts develop plans that permit for the conduct of ongoing business, reduce health risks, and ensure legal requirements are met for open and public meetings.

The fundamental principle of the Brown Act is that, "all meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open and public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the legislative body." Given this requirement, how can special districts reduce health risks should an emerging situation, such as COVID-19, evolve in a manner that could jeopardize the health of meeting participants?

The Brown Act provides local governments a degree of flexibility in determining the time, place, and manner in which meetings are conducted. Should local conditions warrant them based on guidance from state and federal authorities, special districts may seek to reduce the potential for exposure to COVID-19 for board members, staff, and the public by:

1. **Increasing Sanitation Efforts:** Many businesses, including airlines and hotels, are dedicating increased resources to sanitizing frequently touched spaces. Special districts may seek to adopt similar procedures for public meetings.
2. **Adjusting Meeting Space:** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). Therefore, special districts may seek to adjust board meeting space to allow for greater physical distance between participants. This may require changing to a different meeting location within the boundaries of the district. In doing so, districts must meet all notification standards. (Government Code § 54954).
3. **Affording Virtual Public Engagement:** Special districts may choose to provide alternative means for viewing proceedings and submitting public input, such as using an Internet-based livestream and dedicated email address or text line. While the board meeting may not be legally closed to the public except when in closed session, taking such steps could encourage vulnerable populations, and residents who may have been exposed to COVID-19, to engage the board without physically attending the meeting.
4. **Allowing Board Members to Teleconference:** Depending on the meeting space available, board members within identified vulnerable populations may feel more comfortable participating from an alternative location via teleconference. The Brown Act permits such participation so long as:
  - a. The agenda specifies all teleconference locations and is posted at each teleconference location;
  - b. Public access is provided at each teleconference location;
  - c. Public opportunity to speak is provided at each teleconference location;
  - d. All votes are taken by roll call; and
  - e. At least a quorum of the members of the legislative body participate within the boundaries of the district.



**California Special  
Districts Association**

*Districts Stronger Together*

5. **Communicating Proactively with the Public:** One of the best tools for public health remains active communication with residents. Some businesses, arenas, places of worship, and other venues are sharing the steps they are taking regarding COVID-19, and are also proactively encouraging those who are experiencing symptoms, or who believe they may have been exposed, to stay home and not visit public spaces. Such communication, in combination with the availability of online or virtual public engagement, may help reduce the potential COVID-19 risk at public meetings.
6. **Providing Staff with Flexibility to Operate and Inform the Board:** Special district boards may choose to delegate enhanced authority permitted under the law to their general manager to handle district business on an interim basis in a manner that could reduce the frequency and duration of board meetings.
7. **Cancelling or Delaying Non-Essential Business:** A last resort for special districts may be to simply cancel or delay non-essential board-related business as necessary. However, districts should be careful to monitor their respective minimum meeting requirements and understand that all applicable statutory requirements remain in effect.

As conditions evolve regarding COVID-19 it may be appropriate for special districts to reassess these steps and consider other approaches. **This communication is not intended as medical or legal advice and all districts are encouraged to consult their legal counsel when developing policies.** Special district officials may also wish to obtain a copy of CSDA's [Brown Act Compliance Manual](#) for Special Districts for a more detailed analysis of California's open meeting laws.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is actively working with the White House, CDC, local governments, health facilities, and health care providers across the state to prepare and protect Californians from COVID-19. For the latest information and updates, please visit:

- **Guidance and Information:** For a complete [list of guidance](#) documents available for employers and other entities, please visit the [CDPH website](#).
- **Public:** For more information on COVID-19, please visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website](#).
- **Coronavirus News Releases:** For the latest information on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), please see the CDPH [News Releases](#) page.

**If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.**

## Stay home except to get medical care

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

## Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

**People:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

**Animals:** Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) for more information.

## Call ahead before visiting your doctor

If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

## Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

## Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

## Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

## Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

## Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

## Monitor your symptoms

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). **Before** seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department. Persons who are placed under active monitoring or facilitated self-monitoring should follow instructions provided by their local health department or occupational health professionals, as appropriate.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

## Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.



# What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. At this time, however, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath



## What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

## How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

## There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

### These include

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



# Heber Public Utility District

## CHANGE IN OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES DUE TO COVID-19

The Heber Public Utility District wants to assure our customers that our water is safe. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the COVID-19 virus is not found in drinking water. The water treatment method used by the HPUD removes the virus.

The HPUD Board as determined that the District **WILL NOT CHARGE ANY LATE FEES and will SUSPEND SHUTOFFS until further notice.** You can still call our office at 760-482-2440 with any questions or concerns, and our On-Call Operator will be available for any after hour emergencies at 760-353-0457.

In abundance of caution and in an effort to safeguard the health of our employees and the good citizens of Heber, the Heber Public Utility District has implemented new bill pay rules:

**HPUD will not accept payments in our office starting March 17, 2020.**

**We have several bill pay options available:**

### **BILL PAY ONLINE @ [www.heber.ca.gov](http://www.heber.ca.gov)**

It is quick and easy to pay using your phone or other electronic device. Simply go to [www.heber.ca.gov](http://www.heber.ca.gov) and click on the **ACCESS BILL PAY** button on the upper right side of the page. This will take you to a screen that has a **UTILITY BILLING** link. Click on that button then click on **QUICK PAY**. You will need your *account number* and the *last payment amount* as well as your *debit/credit card information*. If you have trouble, give us a call at 760-482-2440 and we can help you pay online!

### **PAY WITH CASH OR CHECK IN ONE OF OUR MAIL BOXES LOCATED OUTSIDE AND INSIDE BY THE OFFICE DOOR**

*Use the envelope provided* and pay with **CASH, CHECK OR MONEY ORDER** and drop off in one of our mail boxes, which are located on the curb in the south parking lot, and inside by the office door. **NO CHANGE AVAILABLE so round DOWN. Pay the lower amount. You won't be charged a late fee on remaining balance. You MUST fill out the information on the outside of the envelope to ensure your payment is processed correctly.**

### **PAY WITH DEBIT/CREDIT CARD VIA PHONE – 760-482-2440**

You can call our office during business hours (8am to 4:30pm) to request that payment be made over the phone. This is a new practice and we may experience a high call volume so please leave a message and we will call you back as soon as possible. We encourage you to pay your bill online as it is quick and easy to sign up with easy instructions.

**Thank you for your understanding and we hope that you stay healthy!**

**Heber Public Utility District Board of Director and Staff.**



# Heber Public Utility District CAMBIO EN PROCEDIMIENTOS OPERATIVOS DEBIDO AL COVID-19

El Distrito de Servicios Públicos de Heber quiere asegurar a nuestros clientes que nuestra agua es segura. Según los Centros de Control y Prevención de Enfermedades (CDC) el virus COVID-19 no se encuentra en el agua potable. El método de tratamiento de agua utilizado por HPUD elimina el virus.

La Junta de HPUD determinó que el Distrito **NO IMPONDRA NINGUN CARGO POR FALTA DE PAGO y SUSPENDERA LOS CORTES hasta nuevo aviso**. Sin embargo usted puede llamar a nuestra oficina al 760-482-2440 con cualquier pregunta o inquietud, y nuestro operador en servicio estará disponible para cualquier emergencia después de horas hábiles en el 760-353-0457.

Por aumento en cautela y en un esfuerzo por salvaguardar la salud de nuestros empleados y de los buenos ciudadanos de Heber, el Distrito de Servicios Públicos de Heber ha implementado nuevas reglas de pago de facturas:

**HPUD no aceptará pagos en nuestra oficina a partir de  
Marzo 17, 2020.**

**Tenemos diferentes opciones para el pago de su recibo:**

## **PAGO EN LINEA @ [www.heber.ca.gov](http://www.heber.ca.gov)**

Es rápido y de fácil de acceso en su teléfono u otro dispositivo electrónico. Simplemente vaya a [www.heber.ca.gov](http://www.heber.ca.gov) y haga clic en el botón **ACCESS BILL PAY** en la parte superior derecha de la página. Esto le llevará a una pantalla que tiene un enlace (LINK) **"UTILITY BILLING"**. Haga clic en ese botón y luego haga clic en **QUICK PAY**. Necesitará su número de cuenta y el último monto de pago, así como la información de su tarjeta de débito/crédito. Si tiene problemas, llámenos al 760-482-2440 y podemos ayudarle a inscribirse.

## **PAGUE CON EFECTIVO O CHEQUE AFUERA EN EL BUZON.**

*Use el sobre proporcionado y pagar en efectivo, cheque o "money order" y dejar en nuestro buzón que se encuentra en la acera del estacionamiento sur frente a las oficinas de HPUD. **Debe llenar la información en el exterior del sobre para asegurarse de que su pago se procese correctamente.***

## **PAGUE CON TARJETA DE DEBITO O CREDITO POR TELEFONO (760) 482 2440**

Puede llamar a nuestra oficina durante horas de servicio (8am a 4:30pm) para solicitar que el pago se realice por teléfono. Esta es una nueva práctica y podemos experimentar un alto volumen de llamadas, así que por favor deje un mensaje y le llamaremos tan pronto como sea posible. Le recomendamos que pague su factura en línea, ya que es rápido y con instrucciones fáciles.

**¡Gracias por su comprensión y esperamos que se mantenga saludable!  
Heber Public Utility District – Junta Directiva y Personal.**

Heber Public Utility District  
Office of the General Manager

INTEROFFICE  
MEMORANDUM

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Date: March 17, 2020

To: HPUD Employees

From: Laura Fischer, General Manager

Re: Safety Precautions Related to the COVID -19 Pandemic

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The Heber Public Utility District is monitoring the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The information and guidance for employees is changing daily with new guidelines to help prevent workplace exposures in our industry. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread community outbreaks of COVID-19.

The Heber Public Utility District will immediately employ the following strategies to protect the health of our employees and the people of Heber:

**Effective Immediately**

Every employee has a role to play to protect yourself and your family. These practices should be followed at work and at home.

- Wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover a cough or sneeze with your sleeve, or disposable tissue. Wash your hands afterward.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.
- When at work always wear personal protective equipment such as gloves when handling items not sanitized.

**Effective Immediately**, HPUD is implementing the following rules as we follow guidelines from public health officials including adherence to Social Distancing at work.

- Only one HPUD employee or person in vehicle at a time.
- Clean and sanitize your touch spaces in your vehicle, desk and public areas after every use or daily. This includes door handles, steering wheel, seats, tool boxes and other high touch areas.
- Work alone at your task unless there is an emergency requiring additional personnel to assist you. Your supervisor will assign you tasks that can be done alone or under visual supervision from at least six (6') feet away.

- Eat your meals alone or with at minimum six (6) feet between yourself and the person in the room with you. Keep your distance from your coworkers and others.
- Avoid direct physical contact, such as hand-shaking, holding hands, and hugging.
- Field personnel will not be allowed past the door/window in the HPUD office unless they have a physical necessity to be present. Just talk to each other through the glass, pass papers through the glass and wear gloves.
- We will not receive payments in the office starting March 18<sup>th</sup>. All payments must be made online, in the drop off mail boxes, or over the phone.

**NEXT PHASE Not Implemented at This Time.** Be prepared should it become necessary to implement the **WORK HOUR REDUCTION PLAN**.

The General Manager will determine when to implement the work hour reduction strategy to limit exposure to other employees and the public:

### **Operators and Parks Employees:**

The following work hour reductions may be implemented as needed.

You will be assigned to work one week on then one week off. You will **continue to be paid as if you were working full time**. You must make yourself available to come in to work should there be an emergency requiring additional staff. You must have your cell phone on and you must follow the guidelines as if you were on call. These include:

1. Not to go to Mexico.
2. Must respond to the call within thirty (30) minutes
3. Must arrive at the job site within one hour (60) minute of receiving the call.

Instead of call back pay, any employee who is not working his/her regularly schedule work schedule due to the national health emergency from the COVID-19 will receive full pay. If you are asked to work during your off week, you will be able to take that time off in the future. You will not receive overtime, comp time or call back/standby pay. If you are called back to work outside of regular business hours, you will be eligible for call back pay. If you are called back to work during regular business hours, you will be able to take that time off at a later date.

The **WORK HOUR REDUCTION SCHEDULE** will be implemented. Please ask the Chief Operator, Mr. Francisco Rodrigues, for your assigned work reduction schedule should this action be implemented.

Only one operator will be assigned to work at the Wastewater Treatment and Water Treatment Plants per day. This schedule will be followed for one week on then one week off.

Employees who are to rotate one week on and one week off at the Wastewater Treatment Plant are: Edoardo Gonzalez and Gustavo Pantoja

Employees to rotate one week on and one week off at the Water Plant are:  
Guillermo Verdugo and Matt Hughes

Operators-in-Training, Steve Sambrano and David Bermudez, will be rotated and assigned to work one week periods with Lead Operators, Edoardo Gonzalez at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, or Guillermo Verdugo at the Water Treatment Plant. They will be assigned alternating one week on and one week off schedule and will continue their training while observing the Social Distancing requirements of six feet separation between persons.

Operators-in-Training will also be assigned to work in the Parks Department on a rotating basis as assigned by the Chief Operator. They may be assigned to complete parks maintenance tasks during this national health emergency.

Marcos Rosas, Parks Maintenance will work from 6:30am to 10:30am five days per week with one 15 minute break. This will limit his contact with people using the parks.

Officer personnel will be rotating work schedules. We are implementing new bill pay options to limit staff contact with customers.

### **Office Personnel**

Liz German and Raquel Carrillo will alternate work schedules to limit exposure.

The Work Reduction Plan does not include closing the office and we plan on having someone here working and answering phones during operating hours.

Should additional restrictions be placed on Imperial County residents to shelter at home or self-quarantine, we have the ability to transfer our office phone calls to a cell phone that can be answered by staff.

Please know that we are monitoring the situation and will do everything we can to ensure your safety and the health and safety of our community.

Should you have questions, please give me a call at 760-336-1572 cell.