

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

03.17.20



Okaloosa County Commissioners Take Proactive Steps on COVID-19

Shalimar -In an abundance of caution, in order to protect citizens and employees, the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners took the following steps to do its part to 'flatten the curve' of the Coronavirus in Okaloosa County.

- The board has declared a state of emergency in Okaloosa County. This allows us to more-easily seek additional resources and apply for federal and state aid to assist our efforts to address the economic impacts of the coronavirus. The additional resources provide logistical support during the response phase while the aid would serve to make help taxpayers whole during the recovery phase. Further, it allows access to policies and draws upon state statutes which allow us to act with great efficiency .
- We are following all guidance and Executive Orders issued by the office of Governor Ron DeSantis, the Florida Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and the Florida Division of Emergency Management as we work jointly to tackle this challenge.
- We are engaging in behaviors we wish our citizens to emulate: we have cancelled all work-related travel, instituted new sanitation protocols and procedures and have instituted a modified leave plan for anyone who displays symptoms associated with COVID-19 or becomes ill with the virus.
- Additionally, we have reassigned staff to needed critical functions in order to better respond to the conditions created by the virus.
- We are revoking permits for events on the beach and in parks after March 22nd until the end of April. We will not issue new permits until further notice.
- Water and Sewer office lobbies will be closed after Friday, March 20th, 2020. The drive thru window, online bill pay, drop off and mail in methods will remain open.
- We are minimizing lobby access in our buildings throughout the county to reduce the potential for contact with infected persons at our transit operations. We are also implementing heightened cleaning measures for public facilities.
- All board meetings, until further notice, will be held at our location at 1250 N. Eglin Parkway in Shalimar. We are taking these measures in order to practice social distancing in a larger space.
- We are cancelling all workshops until further notice.

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- We are suspending all county board and committee meetings for the next 30 days. This does not include the board of county commissioners. Regular bid and procurement meetings will continue as scheduled.
- We will sanitize our meeting rooms before and after all meetings until further notice. We will have hand sanitizer available upon entry to the meeting room.
- We are engaging in social distancing practices as recommended by the Department of Health in regard to the county board meetings and the visiting public, so everyone is at least six feet apart at all meetings.
- We are requesting everyone that does not have business in front of the board of county commissioners to remain home and watch our live feed.
- The Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center is closed for events after 03.17.20 until the end of April.

These measures are enacted to encourage the public and our employees to practice social distancing and protect the health of all in Okaloosa County. Please consider reviewing and practicing protective measures to reduce the number of cases of COVID-19 as outlined by the Department of Health located at <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/resources/#toolkitJump>

**For more Okaloosa County-Specific information, please visit
our website**

[Myokaloosa.com/bcc/covid-19](https://myokaloosa.com/bcc/covid-19)

By Authority,

Robert A. "Trey" Goodwin, III

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Chairman, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT CHRISTOPHER SAUL AT
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