

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER'S
ORDER FOR THE NEED FOR NON-CONGREGATE HOUSING/SHELTER AND DESIGNATING MOTEL 6
AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE
NON-CONGREGATE SHELTER

Whereas, on February 29, 2020, the Governor of Washington State declared a state of emergency in response to the emergency caused by novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, citing his authority in, among others, chapter 43.06 RCW; and

Whereas, on March 10, 2020, Whatcom County Executive, Satpal Sidhu issued a Proclamation of Emergency regarding the significant health emergency caused by novel coronavirus, or COVID-19 in Whatcom County; and

Whereas, COVID-19 coronavirus disease continues to spread rapidly and affect Whatcom County residents; and

Whereas on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a state of pandemic due to COVID-19;

Whereas on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency due to COVID-19;

Whereas on March 23, 2020, Governor Inslee imposed a Stay Home – Stay Healthy Order throughout Washington State prohibiting all people in Washington State from leaving their homes or participating in social, spiritual and recreational gatherings of any kind regardless of the number of participants, and all non-essential businesses in Washington State from conducting business, until midnight on April 6, 2020, unless extended beyond that date:

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 measures, including assessment, quarantine and isolation as he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment, current standards of practice, and the best available medical and scientific information;

Whereas, the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of Whatcom 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, symptomatic persons, including persons with mild symptoms, and asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk;

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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, and Whatcom County has a significant homeless population in need of non-congregate shelter;

Whereas currently in Whatcom County, there may be numerous individuals who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19, are symptomatic, and should quarantine while waiting for test results and/or to avoid potentially exposing others;

Whereas Whatcom County seeks pre-approval from FEMA for a non-congregate medical sheltering of homeless citizens who have tested positive for COVID-19, who are symptomatic, or who are pending testing or are close contacts of confirmed cases, and a Health Officer Order is necessary in the event FEMA reimbursement is required;

Whereas directing the isolation and quarantine of homeless persons who have tested positive for COVID-19, who are symptomatic, or who are pending testing or are close contacts of confirmed cases is the best available health authorities' guidance;

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

Whereas Whatcom County is actively seeking out both congregate and non-congregate shelter options to house homeless citizens to help control the spread of COVID-19 and to meet its public health needs;

Based upon the above, the Local Health Officer HEREBY FINDS that:

1. It is currently necessary to establish non-congregate sheltering to address the public health needs of Whatcom County arising from the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. That non-congregate sheltering is a reasonable and necessary means to reduce, limit, and prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in Whatcom County;
3. That the Motel 6 property located at 3701 Byron Avenue, Bellingham, Washington ("Motel 6") can house up to 60 persons in individual units (rooms); each unit is equipped with a bathroom and individual heating, cooling, and ventilation (HCV);
4. That acquiring the use of Motel 6 to provide for voluntary quarantine and isolation shelter for homeless citizens OF Whatcom County who have tested positive for COVID-19, who are symptomatic, or who are pending testing or are close contacts of confirmed cases will reduce the risk of transmission in the community;
5. That there will be site management staffing, case management staffing, and security on site; that there is a plan for hospital transportation as needed; that cleaning schedules will be established; and that personal protective equipment will be available for staff on site;
6. That this health order designating the need for non-congregate shelter in Whatcom County shall not extend beyond the duration of the COVID-19 state of emergency in Whatcom County;

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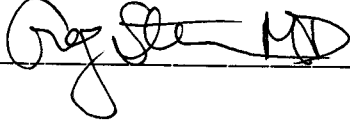
EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, as Local Health Officer I hereby DIRECT and ORDER as follows:

I designate that local authorities utilize non-congregate shelter for homeless persons as needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19;

Further, I designate Motel 6 located at 3701 Byron Avenue, Bellingham, Washington to be an appropriate and necessary non-congregate property for purposes of quarantine and isolation shelter.

This ORDER will remain in effect until further notice, but shall not extend beyond the duration of the

COVID-19 public health emergency. Signed and ordered this 30th day of March 2020, in Bellingham,

Washington, by  _____ Greg Stern, MD, Whatcom County Health Officer.