

**COOK COUNTY
GOVERNMENT**

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President Preckwinkle Issues Cook County Proclamation for COVID-19 Response

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Building on its coordinated and collaborative approach to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle today signed a disaster proclamation, a proactive measure giving County officials another operational tool in its continuing response efforts.

The proclamation will enhance the County's ability to access the resources, equipment and personnel needed to address ongoing and changing circumstances on the ground. This is particularly necessary should the number of COVID-19 cases rise and the demands on County staff and partners continue to increase.

The proclamation will allow for greater collaboration with municipal, state and federal partners. It also positions the County, along with the state of Illinois which has also issued such a declaration, to access funding and support from the federal government when additional resources are necessary and funding is made available.

"The County's top priority is the safety and well-being of our employees, residents and visitors," President Preckwinkle said. "I want to urge everyone to heed the recommendations and guidance provided by the health care professionals at the Cook County Department of Public Health as well as the Chicago and Illinois Departments of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

To assist the Cook County Department of Public Health, the County's Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security (EMRS) has partially activated the County's Emergency Operations Center to allow for more robust collaboration between public safety stakeholders within County government and partner agencies. The Emergency Operations Center allows leaders of agencies responding to COVID-19 to meet together in one location while sharing information and deploying resources.

"This unified effort brings the expertise of many departments and levels of government together to address one mission: supporting the safety and wellbeing of all Cook County residents," said William Barnes, executive director of EMRS. "It's critical that we use all resources at our disposal."

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker on Monday issued a state disaster proclamation that will make additional resources available, such as expedited procurement and federal reimbursements for state response costs. This proclamation also allows the governor to activate Illinois National Guard reservists, including available doctors and nurses. Additionally, the state disaster declaration allows for health and public safety professionals to be deployed to areas of the state that are experiencing staff shortages.

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