

Office of the Director

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1300
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

206-296-4600 Fax 206-296-0166
TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov/health

AMENDED LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER ORDER

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2020, the first case of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was confirmed in a person from Washington, who had traveled from China through King County; and

WHEREAS, in late January and early February 2020, Public Health and Emergency Management officials in King County and from the State of Washington, upon request from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, planned for an influx of persons returning to the United States from China, after SeaTac International Airport was designated as one of eleven airports to receive flights from China; and

WHEREAS, throughout February 2020, the number of cases of COVID-19 increased significantly within King County and its local cities and towns, with the first COVID-19 related death in the United States announced on February 29, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee proclaimed a state of emergency within the State of Washington due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2020, King County Executive Dow Constantine proclaimed a state of emergency within King County due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, local jurisdictions within King County have also issued proclamations of emergency; and

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

WHEREAS on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency due to COVID-19, and on March 22, 2020 a Major Disaster was declared for the State of Washington; and

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; and

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2020, Governor Inslee extended his “Stay Home – Stay Healthy” order until midnight on May 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Revised Code of Washington, Title 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; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Administrative Code, Title 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; and

WHEREAS, the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of King County and its local cities and towns places it at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, symptomatic persons, persons with mild symptoms, and asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk; and

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

WHEREAS, King County and its local cities and towns have a deficit of rental lodging options suitable for quarantine, isolation, or congregate recovery of certain at-risk populations; and

WHEREAS, currently in King County and its local cities and towns there are numerous individuals who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19, have been medically advised to voluntarily quarantine, but cannot quarantine at home due to the presence of a vulnerable individual, or are homeless, or are non-residents, thus lacking a local home where they can safely do so; and

WHEREAS, currently in King County and its local cities and towns there are numerous individuals who have COVID-19, have been medically advised to voluntarily isolate, but cannot isolate at home due to the presence of a vulnerable individual, or are homeless, or are non-residents, thus lacking a local home where they can safely do so; and

WHEREAS, currently in King County and its local cities and towns, there are numerous individuals who have mild cases of COVID-19 that do not require hospitalization, have been medically advised to voluntarily recover in the community but cannot recover at home due to the presence of a vulnerable individual, or are homeless, or are non-residents, thus lacking a local home where they can safely do so; and

WHEREAS, first responders and medical professionals have been and remain particularly at risk of contracting COVID-19 and their work is critical and essential to controlling the spread of COVID-19 in King County.

WHEREAS, this Order will help preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in King County and local cities and towns by reducing the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, since this outbreak started, King County and its local cities and towns have been leading with innovative strategies to provide solutions so that less ill patients can be discharged from the hospital to recover from, and individuals in need of quarantine or isolation can limit, the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the federal and State governments asked King County and local cities and towns to develop non-congregate sheltering capacity for isolation and quarantine of COVID-19 exposed and confirmed individuals at the very onset of the outbreak; and

WHEREAS, King County and local cities and towns proactively chose and continue to explore non-congregate sheltering to address the immediate public health and safety needs of individuals who are at

risk, due to public health guidance for individual living spaces, resource availability, infrastructure requirements, and access needs; and

WHEREAS, King County and local cities and towns determined that the use of non-congregate sheltering for the affected population is ultimately the best way forward to preserve the health and safety of the community; and

WHEREAS, King County and local cities and towns may need to take extraordinary lawful measures to further prevent the spread of COVID-19 among the population, including but not limited to efforts related to the homeless population, first responders, medical professionals, facilities used for and by the public, and behavioral health interventions, among others;

NOW, THEREFORE, based upon the above facts, the Local Health Officer hereby finds that providing facilities suitable for isolation, quarantine, or recovery was and remains reasonable and necessary to address public health needs, specifically to maintain health and to control and prevent the spread of a contagious and infectious disease throughout King County due to COVID-19; and

THEREFORE, as the Local Health Officer for King County, I hereby ORDER that King County, through the Executive or his designee, as well as the local cities and towns, are authorized to use legally available resources, whether owned, leased, rented, gifted, loaned, or otherwise provided, for the purpose of assessment and temporary quarantine of persons suspected of being infected with COVID-19, for the temporary isolation and recovery of persons confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, and for the temporary sheltering of first responders and medical professionals who may come into contact with persons suspected of being infected or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, and for those enumerated purposes only; and

THEREFORE, as the Local Health Officer for King County, I further hereby ORDER that King County, through the Executive or his designee, as well as the local cities and towns, are authorized to use legally available resources to: de-intensify or reduce the density of existing homelessness shelters and encampments, as well as other essential programs such as food services and sobering centers; address hygiene needs of homeless individuals, such as washing, showers, and toilets, and for increased sanitation services such as garbage removal, pumping out of septic containers, and collection of sharps, since normal public and non-profit services are closed or have reduced offerings; disinfecting facilities used for and by the public; and, provide support for services, such as public supportive housing providers and shelter services, who have had enhanced cleaning needs, personal protective equipment (PPE), supplies, and staffing needs since their clients are at a higher risk category and need increased support to understand social distancing, for the purpose of further reducing the spread of COVID-19, and for those enumerated purposes only; and

THEREFORE, as the Local Health Officer for King County, I further hereby ORDER that King County, through the Executive or his designee, as well as the local cities and towns, are authorized to use legally available resources to provide for the behavioral health of the population, as related to the effects of COVID-19, and for that purpose only.

This Order does not authorize use of those resources as a general quarantine, isolation, and congregate recovery facility for treating other infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and hepatitis, or for any other purpose other than to respond to and mitigate the effects of COVID-19. Neither does this Order authorize illegal means or behavior.

This Order shall **EXPIRE** upon determination by the Local Health Officer that there is no longer a need

for assessment and quarantine, and isolation and congregate recovery due to COVID-19.

Signed and ordered this 20th day of May 2020, in Seattle, Washington, by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Duchin', written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Jeff Duchin
Local Health Officer
Public Health – Seattle & King County