



PATHFINDER

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."
-Harry S. Truman

Teamwork Matters

A message from
the City Manager



Jason Stilwell

As you know, one of our employees is recovering at home after testing positive for COVID-19, and two other employees who may have come into contact with him also were sent home to isolate. Both were tested and the results were negative. We are here to support all of our employees.

We immediately followed up. Once we spoke with both the employee who said he was symptomatic (we directed him to a doctor for testing), and his close contacts (we sent them home for self-isolation and testing), we alerted our workforce.

Let me acknowledge that many employees, understandably, are feeling anxious, even upset. The fact that one of our own employees tested positive only adds to a challenging situation. This is one of those times when all of us are called upon to depend on our sense of community and rely on each other.

This news, while difficult to hear, is not unexpected. There are at least 526 confirmed cases in Santa Barbara County including more than 160 in Santa Maria. Across the country, at least 1.2 million cases are confirmed and at least 75,000 have died (including 2,289 in California).

The number of patients diagnosed with COVID-19 grows every day. Experts expect the number of U.S. cases to continue to rise in the coming weeks as more testing detects new infections.

We are living through extraordinary times. Our City, County, State, nation, and virtually every country around the world is being challenged by this pandemic. With the stay at home order and numerous businesses closed, the familiar social order is disrupted. Each of us feels the effects personally.

Please be assured that we are putting your health and safety first. We are leading by example. The City closed all public counters to help ensure social distancing and to limit the spread to flatten the curve. We invested in more licenses to vastly expand the number of remote computers from 25 to more than 170. We purchased and assigned more work cell phones to assign to specific employees.

The City cares very much about its employees. We continue to provide updated information for you via our Intranet's Coronavirus folder, through special COVID newsletters (three so far), our updated COVID-19 Action Plan and related policies for available paid time-off, enhanced sick-leave, provide thousands of PPE masks, gloves, gowns, wipes, refill sanitizers, disinfect work areas, and are deep cleaning facilities.

Please be assured that your health and safety, and that of all members of our community, will always be a high priority, and we will continue to do everything in our power to slow the spread of this coronavirus.

We are drafting a strategic approach to gradually reopening the City and the local economy, in phases. There is no exact reopening date –yet. The plan will be flexible and responsive to changes in the situation. It will be based on health science, and fit within the Governor's framework, and the concurrence of the County's Public Health Officer. I encourage all employees to inform Human Resources or our Public Information Manager of questions or concerns they may have. We are in this together.

Jason