



## BEACH CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT ACTIVATES ITS DISTRICT OPERATIONS CENTER IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Media Contacts:

Cristan Higa, BCHD (310) 374-3426, ext. 117 [cristan.higa@bchd.org](mailto:cristan.higa@bchd.org)

Dan Smith, BCHD (310) 374-3426, ext. 156 [dan.smith@bchd.org](mailto:dan.smith@bchd.org)

**REDONDO BEACH, Calif.** (March 16, 2020) – In response to the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) CEO Tom Bakaly has instituted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and activated the District Operations Center (DOC) to better respond to the situation in the Beach Cities.

“As coronavirus has progressed and by resolution of our Board of Directors, I have authorized the use of NIMS to manage our response,” said Bakaly. “Consistent with this, we have activated our District Operations Center (DOC) to provide information and services to Beach Cities residents. We continue to place the highest priority on the health and well-being of our community, volunteers and staff while protecting the continuity of essential functions.”

The emergency response by BCHD is intended to assist the community in numerous ways, including: actively working with partners to create a COVID-19 testing site in the Beach Cities as L.A. County increases its capacity for testing; identifying and assisting at-risk older adults in the community; providing assistance to the community; offering health and well-being tools and tips; and disseminating accurate and timely information to the community throughout the outbreak.

Last week, BCHD announced it is temporarily closing its AdventurePlex facility in Manhattan Beach and its Center for Health & Fitness in Redondo Beach until April 30, as part of its efforts to slow the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus. BCHD also postponed or cancelled all events through April 30.

BCHD’s 170 employees (including AdventurePlex and the Center for Health & Fitness) are being utilized as part of the DOC and public outreach operation, staying in contact with members, assisting BCHD’s Community Services with checking in on older adult residents or helping clients with errand assistance. Program staff and trainers are creating online learning and fitness programming that will be to members of the Center for Health & Fitness and Beach Cities residents.

As of March 16, there have been three COVID-19 cases reported by the City of Manhattan Beach, according to LACDPH.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health recommends that residents avoid all nonessential travel and practice social distancing. The following groups are at higher risk for experiencing severe illness from COVID-19 and should practice social distancing immediately and avoid being in close contact with others who are ill:

- **Older adults** (65 years and older)
  - Early data suggest older adults are twice as likely to have serious COVID-19 illness. This may be because immune systems change with age, making it harder to fight off diseases

and infection. Older adults also are more likely to have underlying health conditions that make it harder to cope with and recover from illness.

- **Pregnant women**
- **Individuals with underlying health conditions** such as heart, lung or kidney disease, diabetes, cancer or compromised immune systems

Sunday, Governor Gavin Newsom urged older adults (ages 65+) to isolate themselves from others.

“We are closely monitoring the developments as they evolve alongside our three cities, school districts and chambers of commerce,” said Tom Bakaly, CEO of Beach Cities Health District. “As the local health resource in the community, we are taking a preventive approach in line with recommendations from public health officials to slow the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the impact to residents. We all have a role in the health of our community—everybody can be a leader and practice social distancing and good public health hygiene. Now is the time to support our community and support one another.”

BCHD will continue to provide services to older adults and adults with disabilities in the community while taking precautions to ensure staff and volunteers follow LACDPH recommendations to protect themselves and others from respiratory infections like COVID-19 or the flu.

“It’s a natural response for people to worry when confronted with something beyond our control,” said Dr. William Kim, BCHD’s Chief Medical Officer. “We urge people to follow the recommendation of social distancing and take care of your social-emotional health and well-being by being kind to your body, mind and community. Now more than ever is the time to support our community and support one another.”

Among the ways a community can stay connected are: Call your neighbors, send a text message to your loved ones – make a commitment to each other to check in and keep a positive attitude as much as possible.

#### **Assistance, Health-related information and referrals for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities:**

During this time of heightened health concern, BCHD is available to offer help and support. If you are an older adult resident or an adult with disabilities (or if you know one) in the Beach Cities in need of assistance, or if you have resident questions or concerns, please reach out to our information and referral line at 310-374-3426, ext. 256 (Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.) or make an online request at [bchd.org/coronavirus](http://bchd.org/coronavirus).

#### **Resources:**

Visit [bchd.org/coronavirus](http://bchd.org/coronavirus) for information about COVID-19 or to sign up for BCHD email updates, and [bchd.org/resources](http://bchd.org/resources) offers information related to mental health and social-emotional health for youth and adults, support groups and emergency services.

#### **For more information about COVID-19 visit:**

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/)  
World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

#### **About Beach Cities Health District**

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) is among the leading preventive health agencies in the nation and has served the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach since 1955. As a public

agency, it offers an extensive range of dynamic health and wellness programs, with innovative services and facilities to promote health and prevent diseases in every lifespan. BCHD also operates AdventurePlex, a health and fitness facility where kids play their way to good health, and the Center for Health & Fitness, a comprehensive fitness center that is the only Medical Fitness Association-certified facility in California. Visit [www.bchd.org](http://www.bchd.org) or call (310) 374-3426 for more information.

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