



Mayor Webber Declares Public Health Emergency Proclamation XVII to Protect Against Ongoing Coronavirus Pandemic

SANTA FE, April 25, 2022 — Due to the ongoing effects and threats posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Alan Webber today declared that a public health emergency continues to exist in the City. He issued Proclamation of Emergency XVII to replace the one that expired at noon today. On Wednesday, the City Council will consider the Mayor's Resolution to extend the Emergency Proclamation to June 6, 2022.

"We've got to stay vigilant against this insidious virus. It's a moving target, it's highly contagious, and many people in the community remain at risk of infection and disease," said Mayor Webber. "The City takes it seriously and I urge everyone to keep up the COVID-safe practices. Get your boosters and wear masks in crowded indoor settings. People are still hurting from the social, emotional, and economic effects of the pandemic, too. Mental health issues and the looming threat of evictions demand these actions by the City."

Santa Fe County currently has a "low" transmission rate, based on the CDC's classifications, but Omicron BA2 has quickly become the primary variant nationwide; as of last week, it accounted for more than 22% of cases in New Mexico. It is unclear what impact the BA2 variant will have in Santa Fe, but it is understood to be highly contagious.

Credible research by local organizations, personal experiences of local residents, and data and trends from across the country indicate that a large number of Santa Fe renter households are facing eviction in Santa Fe. The New Mexico Supreme Court's Order placing a moratorium on evictions based on non-payment of rent is scheduled to expire on June 1, 2022.

Emergency relief funds are available from a number of sources for tenants who are behind on their rent and utilities payments, but the funds continue to be difficult to access for some residents who remain at risk of eviction due to the financial impacts of the pandemic.

In the Proclamation, the Mayor directs City Manager John Blair to work with the Community Development Department, Office of Affordable Housing and Department of Safety and Emergency Management, and the Community Services Division to plan additional funding assistance clinics with City partner non-profits.

City Manager Blair will also continue to work on a new strategy to replace the existing encampment policy, a strategy designed in furtherance of the Built for Zero initiative to eliminate chronic homelessness, provide for the well-being of those experiencing homelessness and facilitate their access to services, while also addressing the safety and well-being of neighborhoods.

City Manager Blair has determined that, based on the risk of contagion and time and resources needed to reengage on-site meetings, it is difficult or impossible to hold in-person government meetings until at least May 10, 2022.

Residents and visitors to the City are advised to obtain “up-to-date” vaccination against the COVID-19 virus, which includes all recommended booster vaccinations. Available locations for vaccination are posted on <https://cvvaccine.nmhealth.org>.

Residents are advised to seek relief funds for overdue rent and utilities payments from the following sources:

- For renters, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program: <https://www.renthelpnm.org>.
- For homeowners, the State of New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority: <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/NEWMEXICOHOMEOWNERASSISTANCEFUND/Participant>, 505-308-4206, 866-488-0498, or housingassistance@housingnm.org