



***FORT MYERS SHORES FIRE PROTECTION & RESCUE
SERVICE DISTRICT
12345 PALM BEACH BOULEVARD S.E.
FORT MYERS, FL. 33905
(239) 694-2833 Fax (239) 694-3355***

Emergency Declaration in Response to COVID-19

Approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners on March 19, 2020

WHEREAS, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission that presents with symptoms similar to those of influenza; and

WHEREAS, the CDC currently recommends community preparedness and everyday prevention measures be taken by all individuals and families in the United States, including voluntary home isolation when individuals are sick with respiratory symptoms, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue and disposal of the tissue immediately thereafter, washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers with 60%-95% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available and routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects to increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak; and

WHEREAS, Lee County Department of Health has confirmed multiple positive cases of COVID-19 exist within Lee County; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Myers Shores Fire Protection and Rescue Service District provides the Fort Myers Shores, Alva, Buckingham, and surrounding communities, with emergency medical services, fire protection, rescue services, and all hazards mitigation; and

WHEREAS, as Chair of the Fort Myers Shores Fire Protection and Rescue Service District Fire Board of Commissioners, I impose the Fire Chief to be responsible to meet the potential threat presented to our community, its residents, visitors and employees by this emergency; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Nancy Apperson, as Chair of Fort Myers Shores Fire Protection and Rescue Service District Fire Board of Commissioners, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Fort Myers Shores Fire Protection and Rescue Service District's Board of Fire Commissioners, Florida State Statute Chapter 191 and the Lee County Independent Special Fire Control District Act, Chapter 97-340, direct the following Order to take effect immediately:

Section 1. I direct the Administrative Staff and Shift Officers to prepare, respond, recover and mitigate responses as necessary. All Administrative Staff and Shift Officers shall confer with the Fire Chief to the fullest extent possible. The Fire Chief, or his designee, will serve as the inter-agency liaison to share information and operational objectives.

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Section 2. I authorize the suspension of any provision of the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement in compliance with Article 4 Management Rights as needed throughout this declared emergency. This may include, but is not limited to:

1. the cancellation of pre-approved leave and/or available leave slots,
2. the emergency recall of any employee necessary to fulfil the District's Emergency Response Plan or Incident Action Plan,
3. distribution of overtime,
4. set or change of work schedules,
5. to establish and change hiring procedures,
6. to transfer employees from job to job,
7. to create, change, enforce or rescind policies, procedures, rules, practices or directives,
8. any provision that interferes with the District's ability to effectively serve the community during this declared emergency.

Section 3. I authorize the use of Fort Myers Shores Fire Protection and Rescue Service District personnel, equipment and resources as requested by the State of Florida Department of Emergency Management, the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association in compliance with the State Emergency Response Plan (SERP).

Section 4. I invoke all Fort Myers Shores Fire Protection and Rescue Service District personnel to document all preparation, response and recovery actions utilizing ICS 214 forms to include hours worked, mileage, purchases, fuel use, meals, potential exposure cases, and activities. This documentation shall commence on March 20, 2020 at 07:00 hours.

Section 5. I authorize the purchasing of supplies, food, water, materials, equipment, rentals, personal protective equipment and any other expenses for the sole mission of protecting life, property and the community's infrastructure during this emergency. By approval of this declaration the Fort Myers Shores Fire Control and Rescue Service District Fire Board of Commissioners authorize the transfer of funds from the Disaster Fund 522.940 as needed to any relevant operating fund line.

Section 6. I authorize the request of mutual-aid, equipment, emergency apparatus, additional personnel, specialized teams, government contractors and any other assistance afforded by the Florida Department of Emergency Management and Lee County Emergency Management to mitigate this emergency and reduce the chance of personal harm and property loss.

Section 7. I direct all efforts towards providing emergency services to the community and I authorize the cancelation of all public related functions, engagements, educational events, and non-essential services that distract from the primary mission of providing emergency services.

Section 8. I authorize the Fire Chief or his designee to adjust staffing levels and waive qualifications, where necessary, in order to ensure as many emergency service providers and apparatus are readily available to support the community's needs for emergency services.

Section 9. I authorize and allow administrative employees to tele-work as needed due to illness or self-quarantine situations. I direct the Chief, Deputy Chief, and the Administrative Assistant to provide off-site support and assistance for each other while working remotely for the District's benefit. Any employee demonstrating signs and symptoms of illness including cough, shortness of breath, fever, or other flu-like symptoms will be sent home to self-quarantine or be medically cleared by a medical physician.

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Section 10 I direct all media releases, public information and instructions regarding this emergency to be disseminated by the Fire Chief or his designee as a single Point of Contact for the District. All material to be released will be pre-authorized by the Fire Chief prior to release.

This declaration shall expire 90 days from now unless the National State of Emergency, Florida State of Emergency, and the Lee County State of Emergency are lifted or this declaration is extended.

DECLARED BY THE FIRE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, Fort Myers, Florida this 19th day of March 2020.

Attest:

Nancy Apperson, Chair

Witness:

Chris Dowaliby, Fire Chief

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