Good evening fellow Albuquerque residents,

As you may have heard, the first presumptive positive cases of coronavirus have been identified in New Mexico. I know for many of you, the ongoing national and international concerns with this virus have caused great anxiety and concern, and for others of you frustration with some of the myths out there. Know that the City has been preparing for coronavirus over the past several weeks—working with hospitals and other government agencies to be ready. In local government we are on the front line of civic life. It is our responsibility to answer this call to action by continuing our operations that the public relies on every day. So many of our City workers are the public’s safety net, from police and paramedics, to sanitation and 9-1-1 operators. Our City leaders and workers are mobilized to support the most vulnerable in our community.

At this time, all City offices, programs, and services are operating as normal. The City will continually update the public on operations across its various departments as the situation evolves. The City is also taking the following actions:

Citywide

- Activating City Emergency Operations Center and Joint Information Center to coordinate response
- Banning non-essential out-of-state travel for all employees
- Encouraging employees to use teleconferencing and email to replace face-to-face meetings

Public Safety

- Prioritizing continuity of critical public safety services, and City first responders are ready and prepared to serve and lead the local response
- Participating in national networks of emergency medical providers through Albuquerque Police and Fire to share information, expertise, and knowledge
- Initiating continuity plans so 311 Call Center operations are not interrupted, including having agents take calls remotely if needed and address questions
Facilities

- All City facilities, including the Sunport; Westside Emergency Housing Center; Senior, Community, and Multi-Generation Centers; and all Public Transit vehicles and facilities will be periodically slated for additional cleaning
- Following all federal guidelines and policies related to airport operations

Public Events

- Following NCAA guidelines on national championship events that limit participation to athletes, essential staff, and their families
- Reviewing other upcoming public events and events at City facilities for potential postponement or cancellation

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to the flu with fever, coughing, and trouble breathing. The virus is spread person to person through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. We urge those who believe they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to call the New Mexico Department of Health at 855-600-3453. This is also the number to call for inquiries. 911 should be used for medical emergencies only. Trained experts at this hotline will determine whether medical attention is needed, and provide direction. It is critical that anyone experiencing symptoms not go straight to doctors or hospitals, potentially compromising medical resources.

We're also reminding all Albuquerque residents that discrimination is against the law and should be reported to the City of Albuquerque Office of Civil Rights. Stigma and xenophobia will drive suspected cases underground and aid the further spread of the virus. Avoid spreading misinformation. Coronavirus does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, or any other demographic factors, and neither should we. Speak up if you hear, see or read misinformation or harassment. Show compassion and support for those impacted by stigma.

The hoarding of cleaning supplies, soap, food and water or other basic goods is also inappropriate and detrimental to the community’s ability to respond as needed to this crisis.

Stay up to date with current Coronavirus FAQs and any future changes to City scheduling at: https://www.cabq.gov/environmentalhealth/news/city-of-albuquerque-coronavirus-faqs.

We are urging the public to take personal precautions, stay home if you are sick, avoid unnecessary social interaction and large events, and wash your hands. And don’t forget to call your neighbors and family to check up on and support each other as much as possible. This is the time for thoughtful preparation and community spirit.

Thank you for being part of One Albuquerque,

Mayor Tim Keller