

## **AUGUST 11, 2020 CITY MANAGER COVID-19 UPDATE**

***Please note that statement delivered during Council Meeting may vary due to frequent changes in COVID-19 information and restrictions.***

We are pleased to announce that another one of Hermosa Beach's traditions is returning. The Friday Farmers Market at 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Valley Drive will resume from noon to 4 p.m. on Friday. The Rotary Club, which hosts the Friday Farmers Market, had closed the market in response to COVID-19 restrictions. The Rotary Club has since brought on a new market manager and has worked with Los Angeles County to reopen safely and in compliance with Los Angeles County's Public Health Order and protocols for operating a Farmers Market. Please see [Friday Farmers Market Facebook](#) page for more information.

In Hermosa Beach, I am sorry to say that we are continuing to see new confirmed cases of COVID-19. Our City continues to have the highest rate of total cases per 100,000 among the Beach Cities.

This Council has recognized the continued spread of the virus in our community with the adoption of an urgency ordinance at its meeting on July 28. The urgency ordinance requires people to wear face coverings at all times in the most crowded parts of the City.

That includes Downtown, Pier Plaza, the Strand, all City Parks and the Beach when out of the water. These are places where it is often impossible to reliably maintain the 6 feet of physical distance from others who aren't members of your household that is required by public health orders. The City's urgency ordinance imposed administrative fines for violations, which are \$100 for the first offense, \$200 for a second offense and \$500 for all subsequent offenses within a 12-month period.

As the Council directed, the City hired Health Enforcement Officers from a private consulting firm who began working on Saturday. They are patrolling the crowded parts of town where the urgency ordinance requires face masks at all times.

In response to questions we have received, please know that the goal of this program is to get more people to wear face coverings -- especially in the parts of town where it is hard for people to reliably maintain the 6 feet of physical distance from people who aren't members of their household. To accomplish this goal, the Health Enforcement Officers are patrolling Downtown, The Strand, Greenbelt and the parks. In these parts of town, they are approaching people who aren't wearing face coverings to remind them that they must wear one. If the person doesn't have a mask, the officer will provide one. People who refuse to wear a mask may be cited.

Over this past weekend, the Health Enforcement Officers were busy. They contacted approximately 600 people and distributed about 150 masks. Most individuals who were contacted had a mask with them and put it on. They issued 8 citations with \$100 fines on Saturday and Sunday. Anecdotally, we had several observers comment that they saw more people wearing face coverings after the enforcement officers began patrolling.

Two Health Enforcement Officers are working on weekdays and four on weekends. We may adjust this staffing in the future. The cost is \$65 per hour. Our contract with the consulting firm is not to exceed \$125,000. Seven days of service, which is what we are currently providing, is \$10,400 per seven-day period. Limiting that service to the weekends would be \$4,150 for Saturday and Sunday staffing.

We don't expect the income from citations to cover the cost of enforcement. Instead, the City is seeking reimbursement from the state government for all expenses related to COVID-19 expenditures, including the cost of hiring additional personnel to enforce face mask requirements.

The City also conducted extensive outreach to educate the public about the new requirements. You may have seen the new signs that went up and the extensive media coverage over the weekend about the urgency ordinance's requirements and the hiring of additional personnel. I thank the Police Department – especially Peter Ahlstrom and Xochitl Tipan – for all of their work to bring the Enforcement Officers on board so quickly to enforce these requirements.

For our residents and visitors, we ask that you please adhere to our City's ordinance and wear your face coverings whenever you are Downtown, in our parks and on Pier Plaza, the Strand, the Greenbelt or the beach.

Also, please follow the Public Health Orders by wearing face coverings anywhere else in public where you cannot maintain that 6 feet of physical distance from non-household members.

As our signs say: Wearing is Caring. So please show that you care for our community and the health of your loved ones by wearing a face covering in public.