



**GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

400 BOARDMAN AVENUE, SUITE 305
TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684-2577

ADMINISTRATION 231-922-4780
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS 231-922-4797

PRESS RELEASE

**GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY TAKES ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS TO ENHANCE
SAFETY OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES**

March 25, 2020
For Immediate Release

Media Contact:
Nate Alger, County Administrator
nalger@grandtraverse.org

Traverse City – Effective today at noon, Grand Traverse County Administrator Nate Alger, implemented the next step of his approved Emergency Operations Plan for the step down of county services due to the community spread of COVID-19. On March 20, 2020 the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners approved Alger’s four phase plan that assured continuity of operations during the COVID-19 outbreak while still providing essential services.

“Grand Traverse County provides many essential services to our community” Alger said. “Services such as those provided by the Sheriff, the Courts, and 911 are always in people’s minds, but we have many other essential services as well. During the COVID-19 outbreak our Health Department is providing critical work and leadership to our community.”

Alger stated that most of the direction given in Governor Whitmer’s Executive Order 2020-21, “Temporary requirement to suspend activities that are not necessary to sustain or protect life” had already been implemented when the county closed all county buildings to unscheduled public services and traffic on March 17, 2020. “Virtually all employees of the county can be determined as providing activities necessary to sustain or protect life”, Alger said. “We made the decision to move to the next phase in our plan so we may further protect our employees with the added measures in Phase 2 and still provide the essential services to our citizens”

Among the measures in Phase 2 of the county’s plan is identifying those employees that are able to work from home and requiring them to do so, mandating compliance with social distancing and mitigation measures, and allowing employees to request a leave of absence if they are determined to be allowed to do so.

“This is an unprecedented and rapidly evolving situation. We all need to remain calm and do what we can to protect our entire community”, Alger said.

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