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For Immediate Release

March 16, 2020

Elbert County Declares a Local Emergency for COVID-19 Response

KIOWA, CO — On March 16, 2020, Elbert County Commissioners approved a resolution declaring a local disaster emergency in Elbert County, Colorado. This follows the State of Colorado's declaration of a state of disaster emergency on March 10, and is due to the need for urgency in responding to the emergence of COVID-19 statewide.

Today, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) state lab identified the first three presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in Elbert County. The presumptive positive cases are:

- Case #1: Male, teens
- Case #2: Female, 30s
- Case #3: Male, 30s

Elbert County Government's mission is to provide essential statutory services and supportive infrastructure to our citizens in a professional, respectful, and cost-effective manner. In light of the emergency, it is critical to protect the health and safety of our employees and our citizens.

Based on recommendations from the state and federal governments, and our analysis of the current local situation, Elbert County's offices may reduce staffing as needed until state and local public health and emergency management personnel advise the Board of County Commissioners that it is prudent to resume normal operations.

Elbert County Commissioner and Board Chair Chris Richardson elaborates, "This declaration allows Elbert County to tap into a broad array of state and federal resources to mitigate, respond, and recover from the potential effects of COVID-19. Commissioners, elected officials, and staff share a single focus - to reduce the opportunities for infection to spread, and to safeguard our citizens and employees while still providing essential services."

Nearly all functions of County government will continue to be conducted using phone, email, fax, U.S. mail, or online tools in order to limit potential for person-to-person transmission. First responders and essential personnel, such as Sheriff's deputies and

Road and Bridge employees, will continue to conduct their regular duties, incorporating practices to limit the possible spread of the virus as necessary. Other employees may be conducting their regular work remotely rather than from their County offices. Please refer to the County's website at elbertcounty-co.gov for details on how to contact County offices.

Commissioner Richardson adds, "I speak for all three Commissioners when I say that our County and its citizens are strong, self-reliant, resilient, and responsible. I have total confidence in our County employees and their leadership to respond to this situation. No matter what the hazard, Elbert County is at its best when we face adversity together. Let's look out for one another and please know that we are working as a team with other local agencies to provide nothing short of excellence in this current situation."

This is a very fluid situation, so please refer to the County's website and official social media pages for current status updates.

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