



# NEWS

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March 20, 2020

**For Immediate Release**

## **Relief for Renters, Emergency Aid Fund Board of Supervisors Set to Relieve Financial Stress from Covid-19**

**Redwood City, Calif.** – The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors will consider on Tuesday two significant actions to relieve the financial stress caused by COVID-19:

1. An emergency regulation that applies countywide to ban evicting renters impacted by the outbreak for non-payment of rent, and
2. Provide \$3 million in seed money to launch an emergency “San Mateo County Strong” fund to help residents, nonprofit organizations and small businesses.

“Our county’s most vulnerable residents and small businesses have been hit the hardest by this crisis,” said County Manager Mike Callagy. “The impacts from COVID-19 have been swift and far-reaching.”

Board of Supervisors President Warren Slocum said, “So many people have been hurt by this outbreak. Our hearts go out to anyone impacted by the disease itself as well as the families and individuals who have experienced layoffs and cutbacks to their hours.”

“We have a duty as elected leaders here in San Mateo County to do everything within our power to help our residents, our small businesses and our nonprofits that form the social safety net,” Slocum said.

As residents worry about their paychecks and their health, the emergency regulation would prevent the eviction of renters impacted by COVID-19 countywide. State law vests the County with the authority to adopt this countywide protection (which will also apply in incorporated cities within the County) due to the local state of emergency resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak.

Job loss, cutbacks in work hours, staying home with school-age children, caring for a stricken loved one, or becoming ill with the disease would qualify under the emergency protections. The San Mateo County Counsel’s Office is working with the Department of Housing to develop a process where renters can petition landlords for rent relief.

Under the emergency regulation, renters would be liable for back rent 180 days following the termination of the emergency, the continuing need for which the Board and County Manager will be reviewing as the COVID-19 crisis evolves.

The Board's action would protect hundreds of thousands of residents who live in more than 105,000 rental units countywide.

### **San Mateo County Strong Fund**

The Board will vote on a plan to provide \$3 million to provide emergency aid to: 1) prescreened individuals and families; 2) small businesses; and 3) nonprofit organizations serving our most vulnerable residents. Funds would come from Measure K, a half-cent, voter-approved sales tax extension.

The fund would be administered by the [Silicon Valley Community Foundation](#), which would seek additional donors. All donations, including the County's seed funding, would be available solely to San Mateo County residents, nonprofits and businesses.

The County and Silicon Valley Community Foundation are working jointly with the [San Mateo County Economic Development Association](#) to create a website where those impacted can learn about and apply for emergency aid and donors can add to the fund. Further details will follow the Board's expected approval of the fund.

"San Mateo County's residents and businesses, and especially our small businesses and sole proprietors who do not qualify for unemployment benefits, are reeling from this crisis," said Rosanne Foust, SAMCEDA president and CEO.

"SAMCEDA is proud to partner with San Mateo County and we applaud the Board of Supervisor's swift action in allocating this \$3 million in seed funding to help those most impacted across our County and its 20 cities and towns," Foust said.

The Board of Supervisors will meet at 9 a.m. Tuesday, March 24, in the Board Chambers in the Hall of Justice, Redwood City. The agenda can be found at <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Members of the public will not be permitted to attend the meeting in accordance with the Health Officer's order to shelter in place. Members of the Board and required County staff will be spread out in the room in accordance with appropriate social distancing practices.

Members of the public may view a video broadcast of the meeting at <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/>, and may provide written comments by email to [boardfeedback@smcgov.org](mailto:boardfeedback@smcgov.org).

Further details about public participation can be found on the agenda.