

Town Council

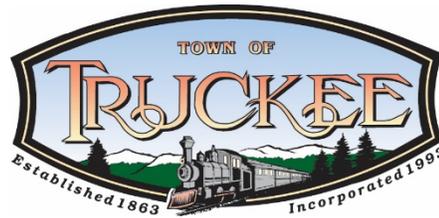
David Polivy, Mayor

Anna Klövstad, Vice Mayor

Jessica Abrams, Council Member

David Tirman, Council Member

Tony Commendatore, Council Member



Department Heads

Jeff Loux, Town Manager

Andy Morris, Town Attorney

Robert Leftwich, Chief of Police

Kim Szczurek, Administrative Services Director

Judy Price, Communications Director/Town Clerk

Daniel Wilkins, Public Works Director/Town Engineer

Denyelle Nishimori, Community Development Director

April 9, 2020

To our Truckee community,

Along with the rest of the nation and the world, we have been reeling under the tsunami of events caused by COVID-19. On March 10<sup>th</sup>, Truckee declared an *Emergency* and immediately opened our Emergency Operations Center. On March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Order came from Governor Newsom--California was ordered to stay at home, non-essential businesses shut, schools closed and the new world of operating a Town in a time of global pandemic went into high gear. It has been three weeks since Executive Order began, and I thought I would reach out, check-in, and share how the Town has responded to the evolving community needs brought on by this crisis.

**First off, thank you.** Thank you for staying home, stepping in to teach your kids, moving your business to delivery-only, shifting workers to remote stations, and respecting the orders in place. While these measures are challenging to all of us, our community's efforts will pay dividends in terms of "flattening the curve" and relieving pressure on our health care systems, first responders and hospital. That has been and continues to be our primary objective. Thank you to our essential workers who are selling us food, medications and gas for our cars. Thank you to our first responders and health workers keeping us safe. Thank you to our police, Public Works staff, inspectors, and other Town staff, leaders and dedicated Town Council keeping the critical services of the Town running in turbulent times.

**Secondly, know that we are here to serve, and we care.** COVID-19 is a public health crisis. The Town of Truckee is not a public health provider, and is not in charge of public health orders. But, because of the seriousness of this crisis, we have taken on a host of new roles. There is still very much to do and it is never enough, but the Town has rapidly expanded or modified its core functions beyond police, roads, planning, building, solid waste, and transit to include COVID-19 coordination, communication and response.

**Here is a snapshot of a few things the Town has done and continues to do:**

- March 11: Town activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and has coordinated daily with regional counterparts, especially the Tahoe Forest Hospital and health system and Nevada County (and Placer County) Public Health and Emergency Services.
- March 13: County-wide (and multi-county) Coordination—weekly calls with leadership and daily emergency services calls with Nevada and Placer County partners, hospitals, public health, OES, fire, police, and other agencies. Who has needs; who has resources; what does the next few days or next week bring? What are you messaging; how can we be consistent?
- March 17: Majority of "non-essential" Town employees shifted to remote working (requiring not just obvious digital upgrades, but revamping personnel rules). Closed

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all Town buildings to public use and access. Changed all public meetings like Town Council to virtual format.

- Mid-March: Town-contracted transit drivers asked to follow strict rules such as wiping down buses and offering masks to customers; more recently wearing masks/gloves, and leaving first rows open.
- Mid-March: Building and planning services went entirely remote (except inspections with great precautions) to ensure that any construction still going on was done safely and properly.
- March 24: Town implemented the Nevada County “ban” on Non-Essential Lodging and Short-Term Rentals (STR); this has been messaged significantly by the Town including calling, sending emails and letters to all hotels and over 900 STR owners.
- March 25: Town Council adopted 60-day moratorium on residential eviction. State followed suit.
- March 25: Town Council approved \$75K in funding for Sierra Community House to expand food delivery, \$10K to Sierra Senior Services to expand Meals on Wheels Program, \$5K to Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe Pet Pantry. More “recovery” style assistance is in the works.
- April 1: Worked with Placer and Nevada counties to house homeless residents with COVID symptoms in a safe location near Tahoe.
- April 2: Town partnered with Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe to provide \$15K funding to support “Grab n Go” family meals program in Truckee; 400 meals served in first few days.
- April 4: Town partnered with Nevada County Human Services, and Truckee Rec & Parks to open a Day Warming/Respite Center to provide a safe location for local Truckee homeless residents, since public buildings were all closed.
- Overhauled [www.townoftruckee.com](http://www.townoftruckee.com) homepage and all Town social media channels and communications to push out key COVID-related updates. The Mayor took the lead on our community facing messaging like radio, while Bronwyn Roberts of the Police Department stepped into a new role and took the lead with the Chief and his amazing team over all Town COVID messaging. Council members instantly became COVID communicators across multiple venues.
- We continue to work with local hotels and property managers to house first responders, health workers, and other emergency workers in need.
- We continue to work with the County and hospital to help them secure needed equipment, personnel, medications, and space for a possible “surge” that we know is likely.
- We continue to interpret COVID-related legal developments like executive orders, health officer orders, regulatory changes, and efforts of destination communities regarding visitors; working on tax issues related to coronavirus; all to keep the Town from legal risk, and to be ready to assist with recovery.
- Completely revised the Town’s budget (overnight) to be a 3-month emergency tool reflecting a new revenue and cost reality. Two of three primary sources of operating revenue (sales and transient occupancy tax) will be dramatically reduced and long term required expenditures significantly increased. Yet, essential Town services must continue for months (and after that, years) to come.

This long list may seem entirely bureaucratic to some or inadequate in the face of family health crises, businesses struggling, lay-offs, rents due, and activities curtailed. People have

asked the Town to do everything from shut down all road entries; to provide cash to all closed businesses; or to force people who own second homes to leave. We acknowledge these are incredibly difficult and uncertain times for all of us – and sometimes tensions and passions may rise. I am confident in the Town's ability to weather these challenging times, but doing so will require sacrifice and accepting personal responsibility – we can only control what we can.

The next several weeks are going to be particularly challenging – as the sun shines, hopeful stories emerge about an end in sight in places around the globe, and nerves get ever more frayed, we are all going to want to return to business as usual. Don't. This may be the most critical time of all to be vigilant and thoughtful.

In closing, I want to personally wish you and your families, friends and colleagues the very best. I know this is an unsettled and stressful time. I encourage all of us to come together as one; not divide or blame. Not finger point or accuse. It does not help. We will get through this. Know that your efforts of kindness, creativity, tenacity, perseverance and intelligence will pay off, and are not going unnoticed. Keep it up Truckee, together we will make it through this epic, epic storm.

Stay safe. Stay home. Wash your hands. Keep six feet apart. If you venture out, wear your mask and gloves.

Jeff Loux

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff Loux". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Truckee Town Manager