Law360: Local Gov'ts Have an Important Role in Fighting Coronavirus

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On Friday, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency to respond to the coronavirus, a declaration that allows the federal government to streamline aid and resources to state and local governments.

Two days prior, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic and the president delivered an Oval Office address outlining the U.S. government's increased efforts to respond to the coronavirus.

Nearly half of all states (including California, New York and Washington) have also declared public health emergencies amid the rise in coronavirus cases. California, for example, declared an emergency earlier this month and has now recommended the cancellation of gatherings of 250 people or more that are scheduled to take place in March.

While much of the current focus is on the responses of the federal and state governments, local governments and public health officials also have important roles to play in the shared goal of mitigating and containing the coronavirus.

In this article, we outline the historical and legal role that local governments and health officials have had in curbing the spread of infectious diseases. We also offer some of the reasons why local partnerships are indispensable to the current efforts of the state and federal governments to address the spread of the coronavirus, as well as any future public health crises.

Excerpted from *Law360*. To read the full article, click here.

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