

M E M O



TO: County Commissioners
FROM: Robert W. Wilson
DATE: October 14, 2020
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Update

**County
Administrator**

Robert W. Wilson
701-241-5770
wilsonro@casscountynynd.gov

The number of active COVID cases in Cass County is growing by the day – and is significantly larger than in March when we began implementing changes to facility access, mask requirements and working remotely. Based on case numbers – and no reason to expect a significant decrease in the near future – I am proposing the following changes related to masks and remote working. I have reviewed these potential changes with department heads and received positive feedback.

Use of Masks:

I think it is wise to require employees to wear masks whenever they're not by themselves in their office or workspace – even if social distancing can be achieved. We still need a caveat for employees who indicate they cannot tolerate masks. Visitors entering County facilities will still be asked to wear it. As it is now, refusal by visitors will be considered an indication they are unable to wear a mask. My hope is that without going to a mandate and questions of enforcement, most people will be wearing masks in county facilities.

Remote Working:

I will also encourage departments to again transition as many employees as possible to remote working. When we did this in March, IT provided tremendous support as we had to develop remote working connectivity. Currently IT is almost singularly focused on assisting the Finance Office with election-related tasks. IT does not have staff available to trouble-shoot remote workstations and connections. Therefore, any transition of employees to remote working should be limited to those who have done it before and can, as nearly as possible, self-direct needed set-up and connectivity work. Departments considering transitioning employees back to remote status should clear it with Information Technology before doing so.

Sub-Allocation of CARES Act Funds:

The City of Horace has formally requested a share of CARES Act funds Cass County received from the State of North Dakota.

CARES Act funds were authorized by the United States Government – and distributed to states in recognition of COVID-19-related expenses incurred. As a method of distribution to counties, the State of North Dakota used a calculation of five months (March - September, 2020) licensed peace officer payroll expenses.

The City of Horace request is based on the value of the monthly contract (\$13,964.59) with Cass County to provide police services within the City. The city requests the equivalent of five (5) months at the contracted price, totaling \$97,752.13.

PO Box 2806
211 Ninth Street South
Fargo, North Dakota 58108

www.casscountynynd.gov

Cass County Policy for Facemasks in Courthouse and Annex Buildings
Effective October 14, 2020

(Building/Department specific policies are already in effect for Highway/Law Enforcement Center/Jail)

Facemasks:

1. Cloth and disposable paper masks are acceptable for limiting the spread of COVID-19.
2. Types of cloth masks: Cass County will provide cloth masks to employees (available through the Administration Office). Employees may also wear their own purchased or home-made cloth mask. As per the CDC, cloth masks should: fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face; be secured with ties or ear loops; include multiple layers of fabric; allow for breathing without restriction; be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.
3. Disposable masks will be provided to all County visitors at the Security Desks at the entrances to the Courthouse and Annex Building.
4. Visitors shall wear the masks provided throughout their stay in County Buildings (unless they indicate they are unable to wear a mask).
5. Employees shall wear masks in County Buildings anytime they are not by themselves in their office or workspace (unless they are unable to wear a mask).
6. This policy will remain in place until rescinded or amended.



October 13th, 2020

Robert. A. Wilson/County Administrator
Cass County Government
211 9th St S
Fargo, ND 58103

Dear Mr. Wilson,

Like many other cities, the City of Horace has a great relationship with the Cass County Sheriff's Department with regard to contracting for increased law enforcement services. Over the years, our understanding of the service contract is that Horace covers the costs of salary and benefits for each deputy dedicated to our community.

With the passage of the CARES Act, entities were given funding from the NDDOT through the Coronavirus Relief Fund Allocations for affected cities and counties. This funding is a two-part approach (one for a five-month period and another for a two-month period) and is a payroll reimbursement for law enforcement expenses (i.e. salaries and benefits).

The City of Horace has received guidance from the ND League of Cities that they have been working with ND Association of Counties and the State Emergency Commission and Budget Section on the reimbursement details for cities and counties. The parties agreed that the counties would review the sheriff's budget to determine the amount of POST certified personnel costs and allocate a portion of that amount back to the City. The City of Horace is requesting consideration for a reimbursement of \$97,752.13 from Cass County in line with the above-mentioned reimbursement program.

Our cost breakdown:

The City of Horace pays Cass County \$13,964.59 per month for the Sheriff Contract. We paid \$69,822.95 for five months of law enforcement service and \$27,929.18 for two months of law enforcement service totaling \$97,752.13.

We welcome a meeting to discuss this request further if the County has a desire to do so. We value the ongoing partnership with Cass County and look forward to continuing it in the future.

Sincerely,

Brenton Holper
City Administrator

Cass County CARES Act Funds

Total Amount Expected: (March - July Received)	\$	4,313,420.08
Total Amount Estimated: (August - Sept.)	\$	1,680,000.00
Total Estimated Funds Received:	\$	5,993,420.08

Expenses Incurred to Date:	\$	335,656.06
Estimated Total Funds Remaining:	\$	5,657,764.02

<u>Proposed Projects:</u>	<u>Estimated Cost:</u>
Jail Intake Expansion Project	\$ 6,338,671.00
IT Equipment & Infrastructure	\$ 150,000.00
Negative Airflow Cells	\$ 54,100.00
Courtroom Social Distancing	\$ 25,000.00
ITV Courtroom 201	\$ 32,753.93
Courtroom 202/Jury Room Combo	\$ 341,000.00
Courtroom 303/304 Combo	\$ 339,000.00
ITV Equipment @ Jail	\$ 6,292.54
Current Estimated Total:	\$ 6,913,063.54

Net Total Remaining: \$ (1,255,299.52)

Expenditures Approved 09-08-20 \$ 549,392.54