



**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**      **COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY**  
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**NEWS RELEASE** *for Immediate Release*

**No. 2020 – 50**

**March 10, 2020, 1:15 p.m.**

**Commissioners Approve Emergency Funding for St. Mary's County  
Health Department COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Efforts**

*Commissioners decline to issue Countywide State of Emergency*

**Leonardtown, MD** – The Commissioners approved an immediate allocation of \$40,000 from emergency reserves for funding to the St. Mary's County Health Department for a contractual infectious disease nurse and additional supplies for COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts during their regular Tuesday business meeting March 10, 2020,

During a brief presented to the Commissioners by Director of Emergency Services, Stephen Walker and Emergency Manager Gerald Gardiner, St. Mary's County Health Officer, Dr. Meenakshi Brewster stated that "...we are more and more concerned about COVID-19" she went on to say "they would get to work immediately" to use the funds.

The Department of Emergency Service announced they are operating under an Enhanced Level of Operations, which means events require additional monitoring or resources above normal operations. Director Stephen Walker emphasized that there are currently no identified cases of COVID-19 in St. Mary's County. There are active preparation and preventive measures taking place across the community.

Gardiner listed the timeline of preparatory meetings that began February 28, 2020, stating that information and updates on COVID-19 is changing rapidly. Currently, county partners are meeting weekly to share knowledge and preparation efforts.

A copy of the brief to the Commissioners can be viewed by accessing the March 10, 2020 agenda at <https://go.boarddocs.com/md/stmarysco/Board.nsf/Public>.

The Commissioners did not declare a countywide State of Emergency. Following the meeting, Commissioner President Randy Guy said, "We're not there yet. St. Mary's County is leading the way in preparation and public communication. It is important for our residents to feel safe and be informed and right now we need to concentrate our efforts in these areas. I am confident in Dr. Brewster's leadership and if we need to declare a State

of Emergency at any point, we can rapidly do so as I am authorized to make a declaration on behalf of the Commissioners.”

For current and accurate information on COVID-19, links from the Maryland Department of Health and the St. Mary’s County Health Department are our webpage at [www.stmarysmd.com](http://www.stmarysmd.com).

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