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Riverside County  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Former Sears store to be second federal medical station site**

A closed department store building in Riverside has been selected as the second Riverside County site for a federal medical station (FMS).

The 90,000-square-foot building that housed the Sears department on Arlington Avenue will be used for a 125-bed hospital using materials from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The California National Guard this week will be at the Magnolia Avenue site to set up a portion of the FMS. The California National Guard will not perform any law enforcement activities. The station will provide an additional 125 beds to the county's overall hospital system, which will ease the burden from an expected surge in COVID-19 cases.

"Moving out the medically fragile folks from Magnolia Rehab was just the beginning," said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County public health officer. "There will be many folks who'll need care when our hospitals start taking hits, and this second station means we'll have the same added capacity in our western county as we do in the east."

The FMS includes all the equipment to run a basic hospital. This includes beds, bed sheets, portable sinks, medication and complete units of personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 masks, surgical masks, gloves, gowns and face shields. These materials will be set up on the second floor of the former department store to create two stations that will care for less acute patients.

“This facility will ease the burden on our local hospitals during the pandemic, which will allow them to perform more effectively for everyone,” said Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey. “On behalf of our local medical community, I appreciate the county’s efforts to increase capacity in our area.”

Riverside County hospitals will move stable, less severe patients to this location, as well as an identical federal medical station already in operation at the fairgrounds in Indio. This will allow greater capacity in the county’s existing hospitals to respond to the needs of more critical patients.

“We will very soon need every single hospital bed in Riverside County,” said Vice Chair Karen Spiegel, Second District Supervisor. “This medical station will give us sorely needed bed space, so that medical teams can continue their heroic efforts to treat more patients in need.”

The county continues to plan for the operation of the western county FMS, including meeting site requirements for the equipment and locating approximately 30-40 personnel to work at the Riverside location.

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