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Town Manager

TOWN OF
WATERTOWN
Office of the Town Manager

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**Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
April 2, 2020**

Essential Services Order:

Governor Charlie Baker's emergency order requiring that all businesses and organizations that do not provide "COVID-19 Essential Services" close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public will be extended until May 4th. Businesses and organizations not on the list of essential services are encouraged to continue operations through remote means that do not require workers, customers, or the public to enter or appear at the brick-and-mortar premises closed by the order. This order also prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people until May 4th.

On March 31st, The Commonwealth updated the "COVID-19 Essential Services" list, which is based on federal guidance that was updated earlier this week. While these businesses are designated as essential, they are urged to follow social distancing protocols for workers in accordance with guidance from the Department of Public Health (DPH).

Click [here](#) for the essential services extension order.

Click [here](#) for the full list of categories of "COVID-19 Essential Services." ([PDF](#))

Click [here](#) for COVID-19 Essential Services FAQs created by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development.

As a follow-up and in an effort to balance the ability to continue to provide important services and to protect the health and safety of the residents of Watertown, the Town is moving forward with additional measures and providing the following updates:

Watertown COVID-19 Informational Call Center and Email

For general COVID-19 questions not specific to the Town of Watertown, all Massachusetts residents are encouraged to call the State's **2-1-1 Hotline** that is staffed by operators 24/7 and with translators available in multiple languages. Residents with questions can dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cell phone or use the live chat option on the **Mass 2-1-1 website (mass211.org)**.

The Town of Watertown has established a COVID-19 informational call center to allow residents and business owners to ask non-medical questions specific to COVID-19 in Watertown. The call center will be staffed Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm and the number for the call center is **# 617-972-6565**. Questions can also be emailed to **COVID19@police.watertown-ma.gov**.

Please call 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency.

Calls should not be made to 9-1-1 for questions regarding COVID-19.

Four (4) electronic sign boards have been placed around Town with the message: “Stay safe, stay home”. Further message updates will be provided as needed.

Watertown Housing Authority Phone Call to Residents

On March 30th, the Watertown Housing Authority called all of its residents and their family members with a [recorded message](#) from Fire Chief Robert Quinn.

Ongoing Blood Product Shortage

The Red Cross is facing a critical shortage of blood products due to cancellations of blood drives across the Commonwealth because of implementation of necessary prevention and mitigation actions during COVID-19 outbreak. The Governor has deemed “Blood and plasma donors and the employees of the organizations that operate and manage related activities” as an essential service. **Those who are healthy, feeling well and eligible to give blood or platelets are urged to make an appointment to donate as soon as possible** by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Support for the Business Community

Watertown is committed to supporting our business community during this difficult period of closures and restrictions related to the effort of preventing and slowing the spread of COVID-19. Working with the Watertown Business Coalition, the Town has compiled a list of Watertown Food establishments that are open for pick-up or delivery.

Link to PDF - <https://watertownbusinesscoalition.com/docs/Watertown-Open-Food-Establishments.pdf>.

The list includes contact information and is being constantly updated. Please patronize these businesses as they struggle to remain open and provide an important service to the community at large.

We also would like to share a number of resources available to the broader business community. Following is a link to resources that can provide guidance and assistance related to a variety of programs offered at the State and Federal level. There is information related to unemployment benefits, disaster loans, as well as places to receive further information. www.sba.gov/disaster

Closure of Schools and Non-Emergency Child Care Programs Extended Until May 4th

On March 25th, Governor Charlie Baker issued an emergency order extending the closure of all public and private schools, and all non-emergency childcare programs, **until May 4th** to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth. The Watertown Public Schools continues to provide continuous remote learning for our students during the period of school closure. Due to the extension of the closure until May 4, the District is moving into Phase 2 of its remote learning plan, which will increase interactions between students and teachers and will require students to participate on a weekly basis. Breakfast and lunch are available to any students with distribution taking place on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:00-1:00 in the faculty parking lot at Watertown High School. Anyone who is not able to pick up at these times should send an email to Lunch_Line@watertown.k12.ma.us. Please visit the WPS website for more information on our response to COVID-19 at www.watertown.k12.ma.us.

Watertown Free Public Library

The Watertown Free Public Library will **remain closed until Monday, May 4th**. The library plans to offer online storytimes for children as well as virtual classes and programming for adults. An electronic newsletter will be emailed later this week with the details and all will be available through the website www.watertownlib.org.

Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center/Food Pantry

The Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center will **remain closed for all programs and services** including all activities, exercise classes, AARP tax appointments, SHINE counseling, podiatry and blood pressure clinics, and Senior Parking Permits **until Monday, May 4th**. The Watertown Food Pantry continues to be open Tuesdays, 10 AM until 2 PM at 80 Mt. Auburn Street, rear. Donations may be dropped off at that time too. Senior Center staff is available to answer your questions and to help connect you to resources you need. Call the Senior Center at (617) 972-6490 or send an e-mail to SeniorCenter@watertown-ma.gov.

Watertown Veterans' Services

Watertown Veterans' Services is closed to the public but is still available to assist with administering and applying for benefits. Families and Veterans may reach out to inquire about applying for benefits. Additionally, there is a link with information related to food assistance at Gillette Stadium. Veterans may pick up 2 weeks worth of food for 2 people from 10am-2pm between now and April 10th. Additionally, Watertown Veterans' Services, in partnership with the Greater Boston Veterans' Collaborative has a detailed spreadsheet with benefits and services—including but not limited to: financial, mental health, transportation, and food resources—available to Veterans and others during this pandemic. The list is constantly being updated and interested Veterans and families should contact Patrick George, Veterans' Services Officer (VSO) for the most up to date list. Please contact the VSO at: PGeorge@watertownma.gov or (617) 972-6416 (Office) and (781) 645-9127 (Cell)

COVID-19 Resource Guide

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1gbtfkWLqeGdYRsgpLA8gV9JB2OXseLQcKrWkFCkil7s/edit?usp=drive_web&ouid=106056058897568197449

Mass Military Support Foundation

<https://www.patriots.com/news/patriots-and-revolution-team-with-massachusetts-military-support-foundation-to-p>

Parks and Recreation

All programs offered by the Watertown Recreation Department will **remain cancelled until Monday, May 4th**. **All fields, courts, track, tot lots and dog parks in Watertown will remain closed until May 4th**. Please adhere to this request and follow all guidelines by the Watertown Health Department and all governmental agencies.

The John A. Ryan Arena is **closed for the season**.

Town Hall will remain closed to the public until Monday, May 4th. **Town Hall and the Department of Public Works Administrative Offices remain available only by phone or online**. All calls and emails will be responded to Monday through Friday 8:30am-5:00pm.

[Visit the Department directory for phone numbers.](#)

This includes the following Town Offices:

- Town Manager, TownMgr@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6465
- Health Department, Health@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6446
- Senior Center, SeniorCenter@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6490
- Recreation Office, Recreation@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6494
- DPW Administrative, DPW1@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 617-972-6420
- Inspectional Services, buildinginspector@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6480
- Treasurer/Collector, Treas&Collectors@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6450

- Assessor, Assessor@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6410
- Town Clerk/Vital Records, TownClerks@watertown-ma.gov, (617) 972-6486

Recycling Center Closure April 3rd – May 3rd

The Department of Public Works and Watertown Recycling Center Operator, Republic Services will close the Watertown Recycling Center beginning tomorrow through Sunday, May 3, 2020 in an effort to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19.

Emergency Management Team

The Town of Watertown Emergency Management Team is meeting daily to monitor the developments in the outbreak of the coronavirus. We have used these meetings to keep an organized flow of information and to develop strategies to best respond to the needs of our community. We will continue to update the community through the Watertown Health Department's web page.

<https://www.watertown-ma.gov/965/CORONAVIRUS>.

Please continue to take the following actions to limit the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay safe, stay home
- Practice social distancing – when in public spaces try to remain at least 6-feet away from others.
- Stay home if you are sick – and avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth – when you cough or sneeze use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands – with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based sanitizing gel.

We also recommend the following resources:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Resource Page:

<https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus>

Center for Disease Control COVID-19 information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) (4) [Statements/Update](#)

We are in this together

We are living in an unprecedented time where our world, our nation and our community, is faced with the threat of an international pandemic known as COVID-19.

All of our Town employees are incredibly committed to ensuring the Town can safely meet the needs of our community while we are also protecting our employees' safety. All departments have implemented vigorous social distancing and hygiene protocols. I am so grateful for all of our employees' efforts under difficult circumstances.

The members of the Honorable Town Council continue to be available to help all residents and to provide updates/information to protect the health and safety of all the residents of Watertown.

I want to thank all of the members of our community for your cooperation and efforts to date; and for your continued actions to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Watertown is a resilient community and we are all in this together. We will continue to support each other and stay strong, Watertown Strong!