COVID-19 Update – March 19, 2020

Daily news about the COVID-19 pandemic is concerning to everyone. The Town continues to monitor the situation while at the same time taking steps to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents and our employees who provide important public services. To that end we continue to take steps to prepare, as well as support our community. Those include:

- We are making arrangements for various board and committee meetings to be held remotely using the Zoom platform. The Select Board will have its first fully remote meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 for which the agenda can be found here. Some non-essential meetings have been canceled, and many meetings going forward will be held remotely. Please check the relevant agenda for the remote access information.
- The Select Board will act on an emergency declaration at their March 24th meeting to maintain continuity of government and ensure the Town can meet the needs of the public.
- Our buildings are closed to the public, but all of our staff is in place either at their office or remotely to answer questions and maintain services. The hours of some departments have changed slightly, please check the department’s webpage for details. Many of our services can be accessed on line including bill payments.
- The Transfer Station remains open on its regular schedule for the collection of trash and recycling. There are some limitations on accepting bulk items, the details of which can be found here. They are also monitoring the flow of cars into the station to ensure social distancing for both residents and staff, for everyone’s protection. We ask your patience while we are in this pandemic situation.
- The Pond Street Recreation complex is open. While the fields aren’t scheduled at this time of year, there is a ¾ mile walking loop that residents might enjoy using. While we don’t encourage field use at this time of year due, we recommend exercising social distancing if you are there. The Recreation Department’s Facebook page lists a number of area locations to go hiking.
- Various types of inspections are still being conducted. Please understand that in order to ensure your safety and that of our staff, you will be asked some questions regarding infectious diseases so that we can ascertain whether it is safe to enter your home. In order to continue to perform these services, we need to ensure that our employees are safe, and not subject to quarantine.
- In difficult times such as this, it is important to remain vigilant from people who prey on a vulnerable population. Coronavirus-related scams targeting the elderly have been reported, some claiming to be from medical organizations offering vaccines that
require an over the phone payment to reserve a dose. There is currently no vaccine. Please also take care not to click on email links or pop ups from sources you don’t recognize, and avoid charity scams and other such schemes.

Please see the telephone contact numbers below for frequently visited departments:

Assessors  508-528-1120
Conservation  508-541-8455
Council on Aging  508-528-4430
Public Works  508-528-4990
Fire Dept (business line)  508-528-3207
Board of Health  508-528-7747
Library  508-528-3380
Police Dept (business line)  508-528-3206
Recreation Department  508-520-1315
Town Administrator/Select Board  508-440-2855
Town Clerk  508-528-1400
Treasurer/Tax Collector  508-520-0058
Veterans Services  508-528-8485

**Miscellaneous**

- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health issued guidance on March 15, 2020 that authorizes licensed pharmacies to create and sell hand sanitizer over the counter. Please contact your local pharmacy to inquire if they have availability.
- A website is being established to provide information on community efforts to provide assistance to people in need for food and various services. Check the website: [www.Feedourvillage.com](http://www.Feedourvillage.com)
- The MBTA and Keolis announced a Reduced Service Schedule effective Tuesday, March 17. For more information, please visit [www.MBTA.com/coronavirus](http://www.MBTA.com/coronavirus)

**As a Reminder:**

- Take every day precautionary actions to avoid the spread of respiratory viruses like the flu and COVID-19, such as washing your hands frequently for 20 seconds with soap and warm water (or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available), avoiding people who are sick, avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth, and covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue. People who are sick should stay home and not go into crowded public places or visit people in hospitals.
- Anyone who is experiencing a fever and/or respiratory illness and is concerned they have either come into contact with the virus or traveled to an affected country within the last 14 days is advised to contact their primary health care provider.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Get the flu vaccine.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Think about your own personal preparedness for you and your family ([https://www.mass.gov/know-plan-prepare](https://www.mass.gov/know-plan-prepare)).
For the most up-to-date public health information, please visit these websites:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health – http://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus
Massachusetts 2-1-1 – https://www.211info.org/coronavirus

The Town continues to monitor this situation very closely and will provide further updates on the town’s website and its Facebook page as new information becomes available:

Town Website – https://www.norfolk.ma.us
Town Facebook – https://www.facebook.com/norfolkma

For school news and updates:
Norfolk Public Schools Website – https://district.norfolk.k12.ma.us
King Philip Regional Schools – www.kingphilip.org

Thank you for your patience and efforts as we navigate this ever-changing situation. We appreciate your patience as we continue to monitor the situation. During this time, we recommend taking a few moments to review your notification options for Citizen Alerts at https://townofnorfolk.bbcportal.com/ the Town’s official emergency notification system.