

TOWN OF SUFFIELD

83 Mountain Road, Suffield, Connecticut 06078
www.SuffieldCT.gov



Melissa M. Mack
First Selectman
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860-668-3838

March 25, 2020

Dear Suffield Community & Town Employees,

Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, the Governor required businesses to suspend in-person operations for all non-essential functions via [Executive Order #7J](#). In a statewide call on Friday, the Governor clarified that the order does not apply to municipalities and municipal CEOs should decide who are essential and non-essential town employees. I want to assure residents that we are making every effort to keep our community moving forward while balancing risk to the public and our Town employees. With that being said, the Town of Suffield is indeed still open for business. However, as previously noted, public access to Town buildings is restricted except for emergency matters.

In coordination with Human Resources, we have put in place an accountable structure for all employees including those working remotely – essential and non-essential alike – which ensures:

- Appropriate technology
- Continuance of work/projects
- Supervisor and department head oversight

Additionally, we are implementing modifications to some essential services relative to employee and public safety.

Building Department – Modifications to Permit Process Effective Immediately

Recognizing that many people will be adversely affected if our construction industry closes overnight, the Building Department permit process will be adapted immediately as follows:

- All interior inspections of **occupied** buildings postponed until further notice
 - Contact office at (860) 668-3878 with specific concerns
- Exterior or **new** construction inspections conducted **only if site is vacant**
 - Contact office to schedule inspection
 - If possible, inspector will leave written report of findings
 - If no report is provided, either inspector will contact you or call (860) 668-3878
- Permit applications to include:

Note: Applications are unable to be accepted via email due to large size

- Completed [permit application](#)
- Copy of workmen's compensation insurance
- License, if applicable
- Contact phone number in case of incomplete submission
- Check for fee
 - Basic rate = \$30 for first \$1,000 of construction value + \$15 for each additional \$1,000 of construction

- If construction value exceeds \$20,000, call office for amount
- Mail all materials to:
 - Building Department
 - 230C Mountain Road
 - Suffield, CT 06078
- Applications processed and returned to applicant via mail
- Phones will be checked frequently for messages to closely monitor new process

Since strengthening our Information Technology Department by consolidating with the schools, we have worked diligently to implement online permitting. While the complete rollout is still underway, our consultant's goal is to make a number of the most popular building permits available by the end of next week. These permits include:

- General Permits: electrical, heating/AC, plumbing, storage tanks
- Building Permits: roof, siding, replacement window/door

Stay tuned for these updates through the [Building Department](#) website page.

Planning & Zoning – 90 Day Extensions Currently Not Needed

The Planning & Zoning (P&Z) office, including the Zoning Enforcement Officer, is currently staffed and available to residents and businesses via phone or email. As noted above, outdoor site inspections continue with P&Z working with the Building Department to review applications for zoning compliance.

Given our ability to hold virtual meetings, we do not anticipate the need for extending statutory timeframes as allowed by the Governor's executive order. Currently, P&Z has three applications in the public hearing process. All applicants have been contacted to obtain consent to extend the time frame associated with applications so we are not violating State Statutes. Given that, there should be plenty of time to move these applications to a decision within the 165-day statutory timeframe without the need for the additional 90 days of extension granted by the Governor. Again, our goal is to continue to move business forward.

Police Department – Enhancements for Improved Safety

Police Chief Brown provided the following update on measures taken within the Police Department. These measures are in addition to the changes, suspensions and postponements noted below.

- All cruisers outfitted with N95 masks
- Officers encouraged to use masks and existing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) as warranted
- Sanitary wipes available for routine cleaning of patrol vehicles, equipment and station
- Inventory completed for Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to aid in obtaining additional supplies
- Electrostatic sprayers provided by schools allow for further decontamination of building, equipment and cruisers
- Limit sharing of patrol vehicles to prevent potential cross exposure
- Modified roll call to limit cross exposure
- Modified protocols for response to suspected COVID-19 cases absent other life threatening emergencies for next sixty days – dispatch assessing calls to determine response
 - Police ONLY assigned to following medical calls:

- Chest Pain in Anyone Over 35 Years of Age
- Difficulty Breathing is Chief Complaint
- Altered Level of Consciousness is the Chief Complaint
- Severe Hemorrhage reported at any time
- Obvious Signs of Stroke
- Active labor with imminent birth

Landfill – Why are services limited?

The landfill temporarily suspended a few regularly collected waste items to minimize handling and personal interaction for Town employees. This is due to the threat of the Covid-19 virus living on surfaces for extended amounts of time.

When items like cardboard are discarded into dumpsters, they routinely need to be physically adjusted, moved, crushed or restacked by attendants in order to be accepted by recycle vendors. Public Works will re-evaluate the policy changes in a few weeks. The landfill is still open for disposal of household waste and co-mingled recyclables (metal, glass and plastic), leaves and yard waste during its regular hours (Tues/Thurs/Sat 8am-4pm).

How Can I Help?

Handmade Surgical Masks

There is an increasing need for surgical masks including in Suffield to protect our first responders (Ambulance, Police & Fire). Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association (SVAA) will accept handmade masks at this time at their facility at 205 Bridge Street. There are many resources available online detailing "How to Make a Surgical Mask" that are consistent with [Centers for Disease Control](#) protocols including this [one](#). Excess masks will be donated to other healthcare systems in need.

Personal Protective Equipment

The State is coordinating donations of PPE through the United Way to address current shortages. Donations are being accepted from the general public, businesses, and philanthropic organizations. The specific items requested by the State include:

- N95 Respirators
- Face Masks/Surgical Masks
- Face Shields
- Surgical Gowns
- Gloves (nitrile, or non-latex)
- Thermometers
- Thermometer Covers (if applicable to type of thermometer)
- Hand Sanitizer

If you have items that you would like to donate, please fill out the online form located at www.211ct.org/DonationsCOVID19

Mental Health & Being Outside

I recognize that this an emotionally challenging time for many - please know that resources are available including [211](#), [Suffield Social Services](#) and through the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#). As noted

below, our parks are still open for hiking and fishing. Take advantage of these opportunities to get outdoors as another means to lift your spirits and ease your worries.

Continue to visit the [Emergency Alert](#) page for new information – this is the first place we post followed by other means. Included below are new updates plus some previous ones that bear repeating.

Federal

- [Tax deadline extended to July 15, 2020](#)

State

- [Governor Lamont Provides Update on Connecticut’s Coronavirus Response Efforts](#)
- Presidential Primary delayed until June 2, 2020
- [Governor Lamont Uses CTAlert System to Urge Connecticut Residents to ‘Stay Safe, Stay Home’](#)

Town of Suffield/Municipal Partners:

- **Senior Center**
 - **NOW AVAILABLE:** Pick up and delivery of prescriptions only to seniors who do not have transportation
 - Prescriptions must be pre-paid; Senior Center not responsible for payment
 - Contact 860-668-8830
- **Boards & Commissions**
 - **Annual Town Budget Proceedings**

Governor’s executive orders impact municipal budget approval processes and timelines. The Town of Suffield is reviewing its Fiscal Year 20-21 budget calendar and will be communicating changes to meetings and process within the coming days.
 - **Virtual Meetings**
 - Meetings to be held virtually using Zoom
 - Agendas to include instructions to join meeting (phone number, meeting id, password) for public
 - Meeting must have audio or visual recording made of it posted to Town website within 7 days
 - Documents to be reviewed by board should be posted to Town website 24 hours prior to the meeting
 - Minutes to be posted as usual (per State Statute)
 - Recordings of meetings to be posted to [Agendas & Minutes](#) page
 - Board Chairs should contact [Kris Lambert](#) to set up Zoom meeting and with questions
 - Document to be forwarded to board chairs shortly with details
- **Suffield Public Schools**
 - [Extension of school closure to April 20, 2020](#)

- **Youth Services**
 - Webinar: Kids Teaching Kids About COVID-19
 - March 26, 2020 at 1 p.m.
 - [Flyer](#)
 - [Talking to Your Kids About Coronavirus and Social Distancing](#)
- **Police**
 - Residents discouraged from visiting department for minor matters; call instead
 - Some reports may be taken over phone
 - Police officers will utilize social distancing measures during contact with public
 - **SUSPENDED**
 - Fingerprints in accordance with executive order 7E
 - Car Seat Installation Program
 - Ride a Long Program
 - **POSTPONED:** Training assignments
- **Parks & Playgrounds**
 - **OPEN:** All parks for hiking and fishing (see Governor’s Update above); please maintain 6’ distance from others
 - **CLOSED:** Town-wide fields, courts, playground, skate park, Sunrise Park Pavillion
- **WPCA**
 - Requests residents to throw disinfectant wipes/”flushable wipes”/paper towels in trash – items **SHOULD NOT BE FLUSHED**
 - [Related flyer](#)

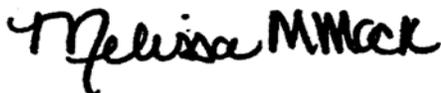
Local Business

- **The Suffield Observer**
 - April edition available [online](#) only
- [List of Restaurants Offering Takeout](#)
- [List of Companies Offering Free Internet Service & Hot Spots, and Waived Late Fees](#)
- **Windsor Federal**
 - Open for drive-up business only

Take a moment, to check out my First Selectman’s column in The Suffield Observer April edition. It’s message – that we will get through this together – is one I want to share with all of you.

Be well.

Sincerely,



Melissa M. Mack
First Selectman

Sincerely,



John Spencer
Director, Emergency Management

cc: Board of Selectmen

