

TOWN OF SUFFIELD

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July 30, 2020

Dear Suffield Community & Town Employees,

Since our last update, community-oriented and conscientious residents across the State enabled Connecticut to be one of the few states nationwide making steady progress against COVID-19. In the Town of Suffield, we especially celebrate the good news that yesterday marked the second full week with no active cases in Suffield House. We should all be very proud and appreciative of these efforts and progress.

Unfortunately, the battle is not yet over as evidenced elsewhere. A quick review of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) website reveals that as of today, over 4.4 million Americans have contracted COVID-19, with more than 150,000 succumbing to it. Since yesterday alone, nearly 66,000 new cases were identified. Perhaps most concerning to us - the increase in Connecticut's teen/young adult population (see related [article](#)). This group plays a crucial role in mitigating spread. While it is easy to become complacent given our current environment, we urge all residents to continue practicing mask-wearing, social distancing and hand-washing. **Failing to adhere to these measures poses a great risk to getting students back to school this fall, parents back to work, and the economy back in action. We truly are all in this together.**

Many have reached out looking for more context to the available COVID-19 data. [Connecticut COVID-19 Data Tracker](#) contains extensive information, regularly updated. However, given the virus' behavior and delays in reporting, this should be viewed retrospectively. Days and more often weeks pass from disease transmission, symptom onset, testing, reporting and potential hospitalization. The result: current data is more accurately a snapshot of disease progression from at least two weeks prior and should be analyzed within that framework.

Please note the following as you review the current COVID-19 data below:

- Confirmed cases reflect cumulative totals
- Figures are inclusive of recovered cases (including nursing homes)
- Active cases may not be included (see paragraph above)

State of Connecticut ([CT data as of 7/29/20](#))

- 49,540 confirmed cases
- 4,425 associated deaths
- 53 current hospitalizations

Hartford County

- 11,905 confirmed cases
- 637 probable cases
- 1,092 confirmed deaths
- 319 probable deaths
- 14 current hospitalizations

Town of Suffield

- 148 confirmed cases
- 15 probable cases
- 20 deaths (per NCDHD)

Suffield House ([Nursing Homes as of 7/23/20](#))

- 102 current census
- 75 confirmed cases
- 20 confirmed deaths

Suffield by the River ([Assisted Living Homes as of 7/23/20](#))

- 64 current census
- 13 confirmed cases
- 0 deaths

Eagle Pointe Assisted Living

- 9 current census
- 1 confirmed case
- 0 deaths

Neighboring Communities Confirmed Cases ([MA data as of 7/29/20](#))

- Agawam: 493
- Enfield: 607 + 14 probable
- East Granby: 11
- Granby: 29
- Southwick: 56
- Springfield: 3033
- **Suffield: 148 + 15 probable**
- West Springfield: 404
- Westfield: 483
- Windsor Locks: 129 + 6 probable
- Windsor: 553 + 44 probable

New Executive Order

- [Executive Order No. 7III](#)
 - Mandatory self-quarantine of travelers arriving from states with high COVID-19 infection rates
 - Extension of certain deadlines applicable to Department of Motor Vehicles

Basketball Courts

Basketball courts at McAlister/Suffield Middle School were closed recently due to COVID-19 related issues around social-distancing and trash. Though trash bins are available, water bottles, etc. were consistently left on the court requiring Town employees to handle the potentially contaminated items. Starting Monday, the court will open with the following restrictions subject to police enforcement:

- No Littering
- No Gambling
- Spectators Must Remain 6' Apart or Wear Masks
- Courts Close at Sunset

Court will be closed again if the above rules are not followed. Please do your part, remind your children as well, help keep our community safe and respect town property.

Sunrise Park

Over the past few weeks, residents expressed concern about the potential spread of COVID-19 in our community due to the number of out-of-state users at Sunrise Park. To be clear, it is illegal to bar entrance to a public park. Gate attendants are on duty weekends from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. to help with social distancing and compliance with park rules. Additionally, new Sunrise Park Superintendent Tom O'Brien officially assumed his responsibilities and moved into the park's on-site home late last week. We anticipate his presence will benefit the park greatly.

Municipal Day Care Options

To support parents returning to work, we have asked Town departments to explore municipal child care as a potential option (for school-age children only). Necessary restrictions to ensure safety greatly reduced capacity at existing day care facilities. First steps include reaching out to these facilities to determine need and to assure them that there is no intent to infringe upon their business. Next steps involve exploring the municipal option as encouraged by the State of CT Office of Early Childhood. A parent survey facilitated by Suffield Public Schools Superintendent Van Tassel was recently completed and in part assesses the need and comfort level in utilizing this service should it be offered.

Possible locations under consideration include the schools themselves based on decided utilization and the Suffield Senior Center, given its likely closure to seniors until the availability of a vaccine. Rest assured, if the program locates to the Senior Center, it will be temporary only and popular Grab & Go Meals will continue to be provided.

At this point, there are more questions than answers, but we'll keep everyone informed as plans develop.

New CDC Guidelines for COVID-19 Confirmed Employees Returning to Work

David Lehman, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, relayed the following:

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated its recommendations regarding when employees can return to work after contracting COVID-19. The CDC continues to update its guidance as scientific knowledge of COVID-19 becomes more clear.

Previously, the CDC outlined two potential strategies for allowing individuals to discontinue quarantine and return to normal activities after contracting COVID-19. One strategy was based on testing (i.e. a series of negative tests over a certain amount of time) and the other was based on adequate time passing since an individual's symptoms had resolved.

The CDC no longer recommends the test-based strategy. The CDC now advises that individuals can return to work and resume other routine activities if they meet ALL of the following three criteria:

1. At least 10 days have passed since the onset of COVID-19 symptoms (or 10 days have passed since their initial positive test date if they never experienced any symptoms).
2. They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication (acetaminophen, ibuprofen, etc.).
3. All other symptoms related to COVID-19 continue to improve.

While these guidelines apply to most individuals, those who have more severe to critical illness may remain infectious for as many as 20 days after symptom onset. Additional guidance and more specific information from the CDC can be found [here](#).”

Town of Suffield

- **All Town offices remain closed to public**
 - Services continue to be provided online and via email, phone and mail
- **Landfill**
 - E-waste now accepted
 - [Revised Landfill Policy as of 7-28-2020](#)
- **Building Department**
 - Following added to list of building permits available online
 - [Plumbing](#)
 - [Sheds, Fences & Tents](#)
- **Town Clerk**
 - Official Absentee Ballot Drop Box for August 11th voting installed at 61 Ff Tyler Place
- **Basketball Courts** see above

- **Sunrise Park** see above
- **Playgrounds** now open
- **Portable toilets** now available

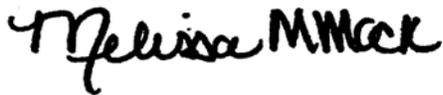
State of Connecticut

- [HB6002 - An Act Concerning Absentee Ballots](#)
 - Awaiting Governor's signature
 - Makes changes to absentee voting for 2020 election as result of COVID-19
- [Connecticut Temporary Housing Assistance Initiatives](#)
 - [Temporary Mortgage Assistance Program \(T-MAP\)](#)
 - [Temporary Rental Housing Assistance Program \(TRHAP\)](#)

The [COVID-19](#) page (look for the button on the home page of the [website](#)) continues to be the source for updates in addition to [Facebook](#). Email suffieldreopens@suffieldct.gov to notify the town about any concerns.

Please continue your diligence to remain safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



Melissa M. Mack
First Selectwoman

Sincerely,



John Spencer
Director, Emergency Management

cc: Board of Selectmen