



Michael J. Driscoll
Town Manager

TOWN OF
WATERTOWN
Office of the Town Manager

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6465
www.watertown-ma.gov
townmgr@watertown-ma.gov

Town Manager's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Statement
March 13, 2020

On March 10th, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency in Massachusetts to support the Commonwealth's response to the outbreak of Coronavirus. The state of emergency allows the Commonwealth to take certain actions that may be necessary to manage the coronavirus outbreak.

As a follow-up and in accordance with guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), 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 taking the following measures at this time. These measures could be extended or shortened as the Town receives additional guidance from the Commonwealth. The Town of Watertown is moving forward with these precautionary measures in an effort to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19.

As you are aware, Dr. Deanne Galdston, Superintendent of Schools sent a communication to our community last night informing Watertown Public Schools will close starting this afternoon and through Friday, March 27th (see link https://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/news/what_s_new/coronavirus_updates).

The Watertown Council on Aging/Senior Center is closed for activities and exercise classes today through the end of March. The Senior Shuttle Bus will continue to operate for grocery shopping, and we will continue to serve seniors with appointments for medical transportation, AARP tax services, SHINE counseling, and case management. Walk-in service for Senior Parking Permits is suspended until further notice, but please call the Senior Center for renewal and purchase information. The Watertown Food Pantry will continue to operate on its regular schedule, Tuesdays from 10:00-11:30 AM and Thursdays from 4:00-6:00 PM at 80 Mount Auburn Street.

The Senior Center staff are available to answer your questions and to help connect you to resources you need. Call the Senior Center between 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, at (617) 972-6490 for updates and further information.

The Watertown Free Public Library will be closed starting tomorrow, Saturday March 14th through Friday March 27th.

All programs offered by the Watertown Recreation Department will be cancelled through Sunday, March 29th. Field and picnic permits scheduled from today through March 29th are also cancelled.

The John A. Ryan Arena will be closed starting tomorrow, Saturday March 14th through Friday March 27th

Town Hall will remain open during normal business hours for residents to access essential services. We ask that residents utilize online services, or utilize telephone or email to contact offices to the extent possible. Boards and Commissions will continue on a as needed basis. We ask that residents who need to visit Town Hall, practice social distancing (6 feet).

As the Town takes these measures, there may be additional measures forthcoming.

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

- 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.

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>

Within the last hour, President Trump declared the coronavirus pandemic a National Emergency. The President stated the emergency would open up \$50 billion for state and local governments to respond to the outbreak.

This situation continues to evolve rapidly, and we will continue to keep our Community up-to-date with credible, science-based information and guidance. We recommend the following resources which are updated daily:

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>

Watertown Health Department Corona virus webpage: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/965/CORONAVIRUS>

For additional questions contact:

Watertown Health Department at 617-972-6446, your doctor, or clinic.

MDPH Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences at (617) 983-6800.