

Harper, Heather

From: Dunham, George <gdunham@sandwichmass.org>
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 12:08 PM
To: George, Robert; Bob George - Home; Holden, Charles; Sampson, David; Harper, Heather; Miller, Michael; Hoctor, Shane
Subject: {EXTERNAL} FW: COVID-19 Update - Partial Building Reopening 5/26/20

F.Y.I. in advance of next Tuesday's public reopening in several buildings. Thanks!

From: Dunham, George
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 12:07 PM
To: All Town Employees
Subject: COVID-19 Update - Partial Building Reopening 5/26/20

Hi Everyone,

I wanted to reach out to you again to share our approach to the phased reopening of Town departments and our preparations to return to as normal operations as safely as possible. The State issued a new Executive Order this week along with significant guidance about opening office spaces and many other operational services and issues. General office uses are allowed to open to the public on Memorial Day, May 25. Our management team and COVID-19 Command Team have reviewed the guidance and reflected on the plans for reopening and we feel that we can safely open four Town buildings on Tuesday, May 26.

We will open Town Hall, the Town Hall Annex, 16 Jan Sebastian Drive, and the Public Works administrative offices on Tuesday, May 26, 2020. The Police and Fire Departments will resume administrative services on site as well. The Public Works and Facilities Departments will continue to work as they have been for many weeks. All other buildings and programs will continue to operate remotely as much as possible until later stages of the reopening process. We will stagger staffing levels in Town Hall, the Annex, Jan Sebastian Drive, and the Public Works Department and allow for continued remote work, where possible. Your department head will have already discussed with you your office's work plan.

We want to reassure you that while we believe we are prepared to open and serve the public next Tuesday, if we find there are serious concerns or that we are unable to operate safely, we will close to the public and resume remote and essential operations immediately.

This morning, a team including the Director of Public Facilities, Human Resources Director, Assistant Town Manager, and Director of Public Health toured all of the buildings scheduled for opening next Tuesday. All of the facilities have appropriate separation to sustain a 6' distance from each other and physical barriers to safely conduct public interactions. There will be signs and markings directing the public and reinforcing separation, the wearing of facial coverings, and to stop patrons from entering work areas. In all cases we will actively encourage the public to use our remote capabilities, either through the mail, relevant drop boxes, or through the many online services already provided by our departments. We will reinforce these options with the community and encourage everyone to promote alternatives to in-person service.

As part of our employee health screenings, all of the staff returning to these buildings have voluntarily participated in COVID-19 serology testing administered through Public Health Nurse Joanne Geake. Also, in addition to your own COVID-19 self-surveillance, we will have no-touch thermometers for self-assessment in

each building. Every building has a supply of masks, hand sanitizer, and disinfecting wipes. This weekend, Facilities Director Brian Schlegel will be sanitizing and fogging all of the facilities with decontaminant in preparation for next Tuesday.

When you arrive on Tuesday, we will provide each of you with a procedure mask and we will all wear facial coverings when we cannot sustain a 6' distance from our colleagues or the public. We will ask the public to wear a facial covering if they wish to use town services and will have signage highlighting this directive. Fire Chief John Burke and Health Director Dave Mason will come to each building in the afternoon to conduct a brief safety training for all of us. In addition, if you have not already done so, we encourage you to watch the series of videos from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health related to continued COVID-19 prevention efforts and practices: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-prevention-and-treatment>.

Again, we are all excited to see you, but understand you may have concerns. Please contact your supervisor or Human Resources Director Marie Buckner if you would like to discuss your return to work. I know I can speak for the entire management team and say that we are all completely humbled by the support and patience you all have exhibited. We certainly expect that as we move forward in a COVID-19 work environment we will need to adapt to issues as they arise and we are committed to making work productive and safe.

Have great holiday weekends and thank you again for your public service to Sandwich.

Sincerely,

Bud Dunham

From: Dunham, George
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 12:37 PM
To: All Town Employees
Subject: COVID-19 Update - Building & Office Closure Until 5/26/20
Importance: High

Hi Everyone,

I wanted to provide you another update on the on-going COVID-19 issues and the Town's preparations to return to as normal operations as we safely can over the next few weeks. We had hoped that the State would be issuing new directives to communities in advance of the Governor's most recent deadline of May 18. It's clear that next Monday the State will issue guidance on many operational areas, both public and private, which we will need to interpret on how they impact our operations and our return to work plans. It's also clear from a meeting I participated in earlier this week that the State will not be issuing orders that everything is back to normal next Monday. Instead, they plan on a prudent, measured increase in public operations as the regional and local public health data warrants.

I know this is confusing, but I can assure you both the state and town are doing everything we can to safely return to work as soon as we can. My personal guess is the earliest we will begin to reopen all or some departmental operations to the public will be Tuesday, May 26. It's important to note, as you all know, that the vast majority of our services have continued uninterrupted since the COVID-19 public health emergency caused the closure of Town offices two months ago. All staff have done an incredible job working as best they can remotely and coming in to offices when needed to complete critical work.

It's also important to note that Assistant Town Manager Heather Harper has been leading the preparation of a Return to Operations Plan for each department, working in conjunction with all department heads over the last month. This plan is getting refined every day and many of the recommendations have already been implemented. In particular, our Facilities Department has been retrofitting office areas where public interactions occur, installing Plexiglas barriers and other safety measures to provide the safest working environment we can. We have secured face masks for all Town staff, have sufficient antibacterial products for our return, and are having each Town building decontaminated prior to reopening to the public. In addition, we will have a no-touch thermal thermometer in each building if you would like to take your temperature for self-screening.

Perhaps most importantly, through the efforts of Fire Chief JJ Burke, Sandwich was successful in being selected as a beta site for rapid response testing which shows through a confidential, finger prick test in 20 minutes if someone is positive for COVID-19, negative, or has developed antibodies to the illness. This test is being offered voluntarily to any year-round Town employee who would like the test. Most staff have been contacted this week for individual testing times at the Human Services Building under the oversight of Public Health Nurse Joanne Geake through the end of next week. If you have not been contacted and would like a test, please notify your department head immediately.

Once we return to our offices, Chief Burke and Public Health Director Dave Mason will meet with each office to present their public health and safety advice and answer any questions you may have. I can assure you that significant time and thought has been, and is being, spent by our COVID-19 Command Team to be as responsive and as safe as we can in our plans to return to work. The specifics of this planning is different for each department based on the physical set up of offices, the level and type of interaction with the public, and staffing levels. If you have any questions about the current plans for your specific office, please reach out to your department head.

Lastly, and this may sound trivial after dealing with the public health emergency for several months, I cannot stress enough how important it is to remain diligent on the basic personal hygiene and social distancing advice we have all been hearing for months. This a link to excellent information and videos from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health related to these continued COVID-19 prevention efforts and practices: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-prevention-and-treatment>.

I wish I had more concrete information to provide you, but this is the extent of what we know right now. Undoubtedly, after the State reveals its latest guidelines and orders next Monday, we will be spending a lot of time interpreting them on how they impact Sandwich and what it means for our return to operations. I will keep you updated as best I can, but it's likely the next direct communication will come from your department head as we work toward reopening when it is prudent to do so.

Thank you, yet again, for your patience and diligence in serving our community. During the Board of Selectmen meeting last night, members mentioned several times how impressed they are about how much work is being accomplished remotely and how our departments are still able to serve the public under challenging circumstances. From what they are hearing from other communities, we are far ahead of most municipalities which is purely a testament to our collective team, of which you are a critical part.

Take care and thank you again for your patience, productivity, and dedication!

Sincerely,

Bud Dunham

From: Dunham, George
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 12:34 PM
To: All Town Employees
Subject: COVID-19 Issues & Impacts - Building & Office Closure Until 5/18/20
Importance: High

Hi Everyone,

Thank you yet again for all your continued patience and dedication as we collectively cope with the ongoing COVID-19 issues and try to address them in the best interests of our community's public health and safety. You may have heard that yesterday afternoon Governor Baker issued an extension of his prior order, closing all non-essential services to the public until Monday, May 18, 2020 and continuing to limit any gathering of individuals to 10 people or less. In light of this, all Town buildings and offices will remain closed until May 18, 2020. Here is a direct link to the Governor's Order: <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-extends-non-essential-business-closures-to-may-18th-announces>.

Even though our offices remain closed, I want to stress again how thankful and proud I am that so many of our services have been able to continue uninterrupted through this public health emergency. In addition, most critical municipal operations have continued with our COVID-19 Command Team constantly trying to find ways for us to remain operationally viable while increasing our social distancing and public health protocols. As this public health emergency progresses, I am sure we will need to continue to modify our operations and find new ways to complete tasks we need to conduct.

Toward that end, all department heads have been working on an operational return plan once we are given the green light to reopen to the public. This plan will identify ways each of our departments can reopen safely following whatever health protocols will be in effect at that time. We are all thinking of ways to safely reopen our buildings and have purchased personal protective equipment to help open offices. All buildings will be fully disinfected before reopening and, as of last week, we have been one of the few communities in the Commonwealth to secure rapid testing kits that we plan to offer to all Town staff prior to returning to work. These confidential tests show if someone is positive or negative with COVID-19 and has the added benefit of identifying COVID-19 antibodies. As part of being selected as a beta testing site for this product, we are currently trying the test on a voluntary basis for first responders and other essential, front line personnel.

I also want to reiterate that all year-round staff in every department will continue to receive their regular pay and are not in jeopardy of losing their paychecks or benefits. This is important to remember as we all know people who have lost their jobs or had their pay significantly reduced. In terms of our upcoming fiscal year's budget, we have not received any directives from the State, but have responsibly altered some of our revenue assumptions to make the FY'21 Budget we will present to the Annual Town Meeting as safe as we can based on what we know today. If this guidance changes, we will be able to go back to a Special Town Meeting in the fall to address any problem areas.

As many of you may know, the annual town election has been moved to the same date as the special state election for the vacant State Senate position, Tuesday, May 19. I strongly encourage you if you are a Sandwich resident who plans to vote in the election to PLEASE follow the proper procedures so you can vote by mail, rather than in person. This information can be found on the Town Clerk's website: <http://www.sandwichmass.org/160/Town-Clerk>.

The Annual Town Meeting has been rescheduled to Monday, June 15. If this date stays viable, we will work on ways to safely hold the meeting. If it is not possible to hold the Town Meeting in mid-June, we will have to reschedule the meeting to a later date. In the event the meeting cannot be held by July 1, the State has approved special measures the Board of Selectmen can implement to approve a partial budget for FY'21 to allow us to operate past July 1.

I want to remind everyone again of the excellent resources we have for free through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) administered by our health and liability insurance provider, the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA). The MIIA EAP program can be reached by calling 800-451-1834. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, is completely confidential, and is available to all members of your household.

Lastly, I want to highlight that our Command Team has been issuing regular public information releases and videotaping public service announcements (PSAs). These can be found through the following link: <http://www.sandwichmass.org/1507/8584/Town-COVID-19-Status-Updates>.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding as we address this unique public health emergency. Please continue to follow all the personal hygiene, social distancing, and stay-at-home protocols to allow us all to return to more normal operations as soon as we can.

If anything significant changes related to our reopening, I will be sure to update all department heads so they can communication with personnel directly. Please continue to take care and stay safe.

Sincerely,

Bud Dunham

From: Dunham, George
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 12:23 PM
To: All Town Employees
Subject: COVID-19 Issues & Impacts - Building & Office Closure Until 5/4/20
Importance: High

Hi Everyone,

Thank you again for all your patience and dedication as we collectively cope with the ongoing COVID-19 issues and try to address them in the best interests of our community's public health and safety. You may have heard that yesterday afternoon Governor Baker issued an extension of his prior order, closing all non-essential services to the public until Monday, May 4, 2020. In light of this, all Town buildings and offices will remain closed until May 4, 2020. Let's hope that as this date approaches, there will not be another extension of this closure and we can all return to more normal operations.

Even though our offices remain closed, I cannot stress enough how thankful and proud I am that so many of our services have been able to continue uninterrupted through this public health emergency, largely due to the remote participation capabilities our Information Technology Department and others have provided us. In addition, most critical municipal operations have continued with our COVID-19 Command Team constantly trying to find ways for us to remain operationally viable while increasing our social distancing and public health protocols. As this public health emergency progresses, I am sure we will need to continue to modify our operations and find new ways to complete tasks we need to conduct.

I want to reiterate that all year-round staff in every department will continue to receive their regular pay and are not in jeopardy of losing their paychecks or benefits. This is a commitment and obligation we all have to each other.

If you know of a senior or someone in need, please reach out to them to see how you might be able to help. Our Senior & Community Services Department and the School Department are working together to help address these needs, regardless of age or income. In most instances, we can provide assistance for food and supplies immediately and can continue this moving forward.

I know the stay-at-home and social distancing protocols can create stress and uncertainty, so I want to remind everyone of the excellent resources we have for free through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) administered by our health and liability insurance provider, the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA). The MIIA EAP program can be reached by calling 800-451-1834. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, is completely confidential, and is available to all members of your household.

Lastly, I want to highlight that our Command Team has been issuing regular public information releases and videotaping public service announcements (PSAs). These have been very well received and they can be found through the following link: <http://www.sandwichmass.org/1507/8584/Town-COVID-19-Status-Updates>. When these releases are issued and the PSAs are finalized, they appear on our website immediately. In addition to overall updates on our response to COVID-19 issues, there are some great overviews of the various social and emotional resources being provided to the public.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding as we address this unique public health emergency. Please continue to follow all the personal hygiene, social distancing, and stay-at-home protocols to allow us all to return to more normal operations as soon as we can.

Take care and stay safe.

Sincerely,

Bud Dunham
Town Manager

From: Dunham, George
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 3:12 PM
To: All Town Employees
Subject: COVID-19 Issues & Impacts - 3/19/20 Building & Office Closure
Importance: High

Hi Everyone,

Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation as we collectively address COVID-19 and related issues. It's fair to say that at least for the next several weeks, our home and work lives will be much different than normal.

There are some important items I want to update you on to provide reassurance that we're doing everything we can to be responsible to the on-going public health concerns while still continuing to provide services and leadership to the public. As a local government, our roles are vastly different than private sector

businesses. That being said, we need to continue to look out for the health and welfare of our colleagues and co-workers.

Toward that end, Town buildings are now closed to the public with employees expected to work in their offices if they are healthy. Our hope is to be able to reopen offices to the public on Monday, April 6. Starting Thursday, March 19, we will close offices completely with staff staying home and working remotely, where possible. Only department heads whose duties are critical to on-going, limited Town operations will be working from Town buildings. Other staff should only work from Town buildings when required by your department head, as some essential services will need to continue.

I want to clarify how leave will be handled while we are dealing with COVID-19. I stress that these policies may change as the public health situation changes and additional directives are received from the federal and state governments. Town Counsel has been providing excellent summaries of the new regulations and procedures that have been issued during this public health emergency. Our goal is to make sure no year-round employee, full or part-time, loses any regular pay during this period. We often forget that the Town is far and away the largest employer in Sandwich and one of the largest on Cape Cod. We are critical to the economy of our community and region.

Here is a brief summary of our leave policies during COVID-19 operations. If you have any questions about these policies, please contact your department head or the Human Resources Department. As always, if you are going to be absent from work, please notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

- Similar to storm events, if you personally choose to stay home when offices are open, use your accrued leave time.
- If you are out because you are sick, use your sick leave.
- If you need to stay home to care for a family member who is ill or frail, or if you need to stay home to care for a child whose school or care provider has been closed, you are eligible to use accrued leave in accordance with the relevant policy in the Town's Personnel Policies & Procedures.
- If you are following public health protocols from a health exposure known by the Town, you will continue to be paid without impacting your accrued leave.
- If offices are fully closed by the Town Manager and not open to the public or to the staff, as they will be starting March 19, you will be paid without impacting your accrued leave. This includes year-round, part-time staff.

More than anything, I want to stress the following:

- If you are not feeling well, please inform your supervisor and stay home from work.
- If you are under any public health quarantine protocols, please inform your supervisor, stay home from work, and do not leave your house. If your exposure is related to any individual who works for or is related to Town operations, please let your supervisor know.
- Please continue to follow all the personal hygiene recommendations we have been hearing for several weeks: wash your hands thoroughly and often, respect social distancing, avoid large crowds, and stay

at home as much as possible. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has excellent COVID-19 information on its website: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/stop-the-spread-of-germs-respiratory-diseases-like-flu-and-covid-19/download> and <https://www.mass.gov/doc/english-2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-0/download>.

- If you know of any elderly individuals or others in need, please contact them to see if they need any supplies or assistance. Our Senior & Community Services Department will be organizing outreach where possible and may be seeking Town staff assistance in the future. If you're interested in helping out if we are not able to be in our offices, please contact the Senior & Community Services Department.

Sandwich has always set itself apart from other communities in our collective spirit of working together for the greater public good of our town. This is no more evident than in difficult times. There is no other group of people I'd rather work with, especially in times where public service and leadership are most needed.

Thank you for all you do and please be safe!

Sincerely,

Bud Dunham
Town Manager

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