



Town of Bedford
Departmental Emergency Plan
Coronavirus Response & Preparedness

V3.13.2020

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY**



The purpose of this Emergency Plan – Coronavirus Response and Preparedness – is to place the Town of Bedford in a position to respond effectively to the impacts of the COVID-19 on the community and on the operations of the municipal government.

1. The goal is to ensure that essential government operations continue, such as police, highway and finances, and that community is protected from the outbreak of this unprecedented magnitude. We recognize that we are in uncharted territory, and we are taking guidance from New York State and County health authorities and any directives or emergency orders of the Governor or the Westchester County Executive.
2. Provision is made where applicable and feasible for employees to work at home.
3. Special provision is made for no loss of sick time accrual, in certain limited situation, as described in the plan.
4. The Town is working closely with the Bedford Fire Department, the Bedford Hills Fire Department, the Katonah Fire Department and the Katonah-Bedford Hills Volunteer Ambulance Corps. to support their operation to the greatest degree practicable.
5. At the time of this writing, the Supervisor has not issued a Declaration of Emergency, but will do so should conditions warrant.
6. The Town is working closely with its counsel to ensure that all actions are in compliance with applicable law.

We ask the community for its cooperation and patience in responding to this extraordinary public health emergency.

Chris Burdick
Town Supervisor
March 16, 2020



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Departmental Emergency Responses and Protocols

Building Department: The Building Inspector, Assistant Building Inspector, Senior Office Assistant (Office Manager), and Senior Office Assistant have the ability to work from home. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly. Some functions of the office require an in-person review of building plans and other materials related to the issuance of permits. In the event of a quarantine or shutdown, the reviews would be suspended.

Court Offices: In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly. Besides issuing health and safety instructions, the Office of Court Administration has not yet advised the Court Offices on how to handle potential closures or quarantines related to the virus.

DPW/Highway/Water: The Commissioner of Public Works, two Senior Office Assistants (Office Manager), and water maintenance staff have the ability to work from home. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly. Specifically, if an employee of the water treatment plant is quarantined, coverage can be provided. However, if the entire staff is quarantined then other measures will need to be considered in order to have the appropriate amount of staff to oversee the water plant. The department may need to collaborate with Westchester County Department of Health.

Finance: The Comptroller, Senior Bookkeeper, 2 Senior Office Assistants (Comptroller), and Senior Office Sr. Account Clerk have the ability to work from home in the event of a quarantine or shutdown. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly.

Personnel: The Director of Personnel has the ability work from home in the event of a quarantine or shutdown.

Planning Department: The Director of Planning has the ability to work from home, however, some duties of the position require him to conduct an in-person review of plans. In the event of a quarantine, the reviews would have to wait and Planning Board meetings would be suspended. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly.

Police Department: The Department will follow the protocols that are already in place to respond to instances of unexpected injuries or illnesses. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of staff will be handled accordingly.



Recreation and Parks: The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Recreation and Parks have the ability to work from home. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly. The Superintendent will make the decision to suspend and/or cancel programs and events at Town's Recreation and Park facilities, using guidance from the Department of Health.

Tax Assessor's Office: The Tax Assessor has the ability to work from home. Depending on the duration and timing of a possible employee quarantine or emergency closure of town offices, the ability to hand receive exemption applications or renewals by the May 1st statutory deadline could be greatly impaired or eliminated. All residents should be informed and strongly urged to submit their exemption applications either by mail or email on or before May 1st. Also, local authorization to extend the May 1st exemption filing deadline contingent upon certain given conditions should be considered. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly.

Tax Receiver's Office: In accordance with the law, if Town offices are open, the Tax Receiver's office must remain open. There is no ability to work from home, as staff must be on hand to receive payments. Residents can be strongly urged to submit payments online or mail in payments. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly.

Town Clerk: The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk have the ability to work from home. In the event of an employee quarantine, coverage of office staff will be handled accordingly. In the event of a wider spread, registrar items would have to wait until the return of applicable staff.



Departmental Essential Functions

Department	Essential Functions
<i>Building</i>	<p>1. The Building Department inspectors would need to respond to call outs from the Police and Fire departments regarding structural damage caused to property owner buildings due to fires or other causes. If necessary, the Building Department staff may handle some consultations over the phone.</p> <p>2. Some of the day-to-day operations of the Building Department can be done from home. As previously noted, some files may require an in-person review.</p>
<i>Court Offices</i>	There are no essential functions, unless felonies need to be processed.
<i>DPW/Highway/Water</i>	<p>1. Water operations are essential from a public health and fire protection standpoint. The Commissioner has contacted a contract operations company that the Department worked with on the water plants start up in 2013. They will be able to provide backup resources if their staff and health situation allows. If all water employees are too ill to work, a switch supply would be implemented from the water filtration plant to groundwater supplies, which require much less skilled operation, and can be operated by Highway employees. Tasks involve a general plant check and filling chlorine tanks. These duties may require staggered work shifts and partial staffing.</p> <p>2. Highway operations are essential for repairing major road defects, storm response for winter conditions and tree clearing, and for road closures for emergencies. These duties may require staggered work shifts and partial staffing.</p>
<i>Finance (Town Comptroller)</i>	<p>1. All functions handled by the Finance Department are essential to keeping town government operating, since without funding, the acquisition of necessary supplies and equipment would not be possible. In addition, the processing of payroll is a major component of maintaining operations for the benefit of residents and taxpayers. The most essentials functions are depositing and recording cash receipts, paying bills, debt service, and most importantly; the workforce.</p>



Department	Essential Functions
	<p>2. Department staff have been assigned laptops that can be used from their homes and access their office desktops in order for them to be able to perform their duties without exposing others in the office. Members of the staff are cross-trained and are prepared to be able to continue government operations if one of more members of the staff need self-quarantine, be isolated or hospitalized for necessary medical treatment.</p> <p>3. As it relates to paying bills, departments will have to coordinate the processing and approval of bills for payment. As it relates to payroll, time reporting will have to be done via email if there is overtime, otherwise, full time employees will be paid regular wages based on the individual department's standard workweek. Provisions will need to be made to pay overtime or out of title pay in subsequent payrolls if need be.</p>
<i>Personnel</i>	<p>The primary functions of the Personnel Office can be handled from home with the exception of random drug testing, or requests that require access to personnel files. These requests would have to wait until the Director can regain access to physical files and the applicable Town location for the administration of random drug testing.</p>
<i>Police</i>	<p>Include and not limited to:</p> <p>A. Continue to protect life and property and prevent crime in an environment that is threatened, diminished or incapacitated.</p> <p>B. Maintain telephone communication lines for the public to reach the department for emergency calls.</p> <p>C. Respond to the scene of any disaster or unusual occurrence pursuant to section 119-1 of the Bedford Police Department General Orders Manual.</p> <p>D. When necessary, initiate emergency personnel activation pursuant to section 119-11 of the Bedford Police Department General Orders Manual.</p> <p>The Police Department operations do not require the entire staff to be here at any one time to perform essential functions. Staffing is staggered to be able to provide service 24/7. This will mitigate the impact any one or</p>



Department	Essential Functions
	<p>group of employees may have on the rest of the department should one contract the Covid-19 virus. If one or more employees should need to be quarantined for a prescribed period, the Department would use existing policy to cover the staffing shortage until the employee(s) are able to return to full duty.</p> <p>Executive management personnel (Lieutenants and Chief) having remote log in capability to perform administrative functions from their residence if necessary and the Department has an agreement in place to utilize the Westchester County Police Mobile Command center if we need to move dispatch and 911 outside of this actual facility for sanitation purposes if necessary.</p>
<i>Recreation & Parks</i>	<p>Meals on Wheels – Assuming volunteers were unavailable, Department staff would need to deliver meals. If the nutrition center providing the meals were to shutdown, the Town would need to consider purchasing meals from other locations in order to continue the delivery service of food.</p>
<i>Tax Assessor</i>	<p>In preparation of publishing the June 1st Tentative Assessment Roll which is required by County Charter, the following are essential functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deadline for all applications is May 1, 2020 • All assessment revisions including all permits, incorrect inventory, demos etc. will have to be valued and entered into our RPS system • Processing weekly sales from Westchester County to maintain current ownership information • Exemption processing for all renewal applications or for any new exemption applications received by walk-in, mail or email. • Apportionment of special franchise assessments • Change notices to owners • Correspondence to owners/public to inform them of any exemption denials or requested data



Department	Essential Functions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate communication capabilities by phone and email to owners, customers and public • Providing public access to our property record cards to appraisers, brokers, real estate agents who need access to our assessment inventory data • Legal notices and the printing/posting of our assessment roll to town website • All assessment revisions, special franchise, sales processing change notice and some/most communication/correspondence • Sales processing • Exemption application already received could be processed • Apportionment of special franchise • Some correspondence to owners/public to inform them of any exemption denials or requested data • Adequate communication could be done phone, email to owners, customers and public • Legal notices and roll processing
<i>Tax Receiver</i>	<p>Tax bills have to go out no later than 4/1/20 unless the Governor declares a state of emergency that includes the collection of taxes. Taxes are due no later than 4/30/20 without penalty unless the Governor declares a state of emergency. While the Governor has cited a state of emergency, he has not mentioned tax payments.</p>
<i>Town Clerk</i>	<p>The Town Clerk's Office works one on one with the public on a daily basis. If quarantined, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk would be able to work remotely and communicate with residents regarding day-to-day business needs for the most part (all types of permits, licenses, certifications). The Office would not be able to issue marriage licenses and birth certificates, but death certificates could be done remotely.</p>



Emergency Contingency Protocols for Town Employees

In the Event of Town-Wide Shut Down: Based on the requirement or order of a government entity, the Town Supervisor will inform all staff of a Town-wide shut down. If employees can work from home, they will be instructed to do so and given the necessary devices and tools. If not, they will remain home and await further instructions and updates. Employees will not have to use their leave balances to cover the shutdown/quarantine period.



**TOWN OF BEDFORD
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY**



Notice to Town Employees Regarding Coronavirus

As the coronavirus has spread to Westchester County, the Town Board wants to communicate with Town employees about protocols it has in place. The Town will continue to monitor the situation and stay in contact with the State and County government. The Town will implement any directives issued by Westchester County, New York State or the federal government.

Should an employee be directed to quarantine, the Town will not charge such absences against sick leave accruals. You will need to provide some documentation that a governmental entity made the request of you. Additionally, the Town reserves the right to assign you to home with pay if the Town believes, in its judgment, that it will be to the benefit of the staff to have you not come to work. In either of these instances, if you have the capability to work from home and are healthy enough, the Town may direct you to do so.

While there is no indication that there will be any disruption to our workplace presently, there are things we all can do to maintain a healthy work environment.

Respiratory Etiquette

- Remember to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Carry tissues for this purpose.
- Discard your tissues immediately after use into a waste basket.
- If you do not have a tissue on hand, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve.
- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing
- Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Consider using alcohol-based hand sanitizers also.

Social Distancing

- Social distancing means remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.

Hand Hygiene - Wash Your Hands After Doing the Following:

- After using the bathroom
- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound

Environmental Cleaning

- Use disinfectant wipes and wipe down your desk, door knobs in your offices and keyboard. The cleaning staff has done so, and will continue to do so on a regular basis.
- Touch elevator buttons with your knuckles.

Use Your Judgment

- If you are not feeling well, consider taking a sick day rather than coming to work sick.

Please refer to the following links for further information from the CDC:



WESTCHESTER COUNTY CARES

Westchester County
Department of Health
Westchester
gov.com
George Latimer, County Executive
Sherita Amler, MD, Commissioner
Department of Health



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Update March 4, 2020

Am I likely to become infected with COVID-19?

While there are known cases of COVID-19 in New York State, including Westchester County, the risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 remains low. If widespread cases were to occur in our area, most people are likely to experience mild to moderate disease with full recovery. In addition to staying informed, you can reduce your risk of becoming infected by taking proper prevention measures similar to what is recommended to avoid the common cold and flu.

What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that can cause either mild illness, such as a cold, or can make people sick with pneumonia.

What is a novel coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans. Recently, a novel (new) coronavirus called COVID-19 was detected in thousands of people worldwide, primarily in China. Multiple cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in the U.S. and it is expected that more cases of COVID-19 will be identified in the future. For the most recent case information, visit the [CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Situation Summary webpage](#).

How is COVID-19 spread?

Many of the initial patients with COVID-19 in China had links to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. However, cases being reported at this time have been occurring through person-to-person spread. The virus is thought to spread mainly:

Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).

Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

What should I do if I (or someone I know) traveled to an area where COVID-19 is spreading?

Anyone who has traveled to a CDC Level 3 destination (one that is experiencing widespread sustained transmission of COVID-

19) should self-quarantine at home for 14 days following their return. For the most recent travel alerts, visit the [CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information for Travel webpage](#). You should monitor your symptoms and call your health care provider if you feel sick with fever, cough, or have difficulty breathing. **If you need to go to your doctor's office or an emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.** The same precautions should be taken if you have been in close contact with someone who has confirmed COVID-19. You should also avoid contact with others.

Who can be tested for COVID-19?

New York State is now able to perform testing for COVID-19. All testing performed on patients in Westchester County must be approved by the Westchester County Department of Health. The CDC has developed specific criteria for who can



be tested for COVID-19. As the situation evolves, the criteria may change. For the most current testing criteria, visit the [CDC Evaluating and Reporting Persons Under Investigation \(PUI\) webpage](#).

Is there a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. There is also no specific treatment for COVID-19 disease at this time. However, most people will recover on their own after resting and drinking plenty of fluids. To relieve symptoms, people with the virus can take pain and fever medication, use a room humidifier or take hot showers to help ease a sore throat and cough.

What can I do to protect myself?

You should go about your daily life, but take the same precautions that you would during cold and flu season:

[Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue (not your hands), then throw the tissue in the trash.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Stay home when you are sick.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a cleaning product that contains bleach.

Will wearing a surgical mask protect me from COVID-19?

Surgical masks do not protect the person wearing the mask from infection with COVID-19. Surgical masks should only be worn by people showing symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of disease to others. In addition, N95 respirator masks are not recommended for the general public and should only be worn by health care workers who have been properly fitted for them.

Should I travel during the COVID-19 outbreak?

If you are planning to travel, visit the [CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information for Travel webpage](#) for the latest travel advisories related to COVID-19.

Hotline Phone Numbers

People under self-quarantine or exposure to known cases, call (866) 588-0195 NYS Department of Health COVID-19

Hotline (888) 364-3065

Westchester County COVID-19 Information Call 211

Additional Resources

[Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) (CDC) , [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#) (WHO), [Westchester County Department of Health Website at www.westchestergov.com/health](#)

