BOROUGH OF DUNELLEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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March 17, 2020

Dear Dunellen Residents & Business Owners,

I am writing to you to provide the most recent update regarding Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the actions the Borough of Dunellen will be taking. Today, I was notified by the Middlesex County Public Health Department of the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Dunellen. Personal information cannot be shared in identifying the person. At this time, Middlesex County Public Health Department is in lead of the investigation regarding said individual, including all close contacts. If it is determined that a member of the community has been in close contact with this individual, the county will reach out to that individual(s). I am in daily contact with the Middlesex County Public Health Department and will continue to update the public regarding this matter and any future cases.

In conjunction with Dunellen's Office of Emergency Management, our Borough Administrator, and in communication with Councilpersons, the Borough of Dunellen will be implementing the following procedures effective immediately to help curtail the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and assist in flattening the curve:

MUNICIPAL SERVICES, OFFICES & FACILITIES

Municipal Offices

- Physical public access to all municipal offices will be suspended until further notice.
- All offices are open and Municipal Staff will be available during this time to answer questions and concerns from the public via telephone and email. Our borough directory can be found at: http://www.dunellen-nj.gov/directory
- Residents, businesses and property owners can use the drop box for payments:
    - Property Taxes/Court Payments: Tax Collectors Office mailbox located at the corner of North Avenue & Prospect Avenue.
    - Construction Permits can be deposited in the Recreation Mailbox located on Prospect Avenue by the Clerk's Office Door.
- All Vital Statistics applications and document production is suspended. This includes marriage applications, certified copies of marriage licenses, and death certificates. Please contact our Registrar for further information including how

to contact Vital Statistics in Trenton. Registrar's telephone number: 732-968-3033, ext. 4. Animal licensing is suspended as well as the senior bus.

Construction/Zoning Department:

- Permit/Plan applications can be dropped off using the drop box at the entrance to the Municipal Clerk's Office.
- The Borough will be erring on the side of caution and will be conducting only essential inspections.

Senior & Disabled Services

- Dunellen will keep the Senior Bus running until tomorrow Wednesday, March 18th on a limited schedule to provide only essential services such as doctors' appointments and grocery shopping, and to provide our senior and disabled community the opportunity to stock up on food and take advantage of health care appointments before the services are postponed until further notice.
- Dunellen's Senior Coordinator, Alex Miller, is working on implementing a volunteer service for food delivery for Dunellen's most vulnerable in our community. Starting Wednesday, March 25th, the Senior Coordinator will implement limited grocery pick-up each Wednesday at Tropical Supermarket for seniors and disabled individuals. Orders and payment for Wednesday pick-up will have to be scheduled on Tuesday by 2 p.m. Please contact Alex Miller at (732) 968-3033, ext. 8 or amiller@dunellenborough.com for further information and details.

Public Meetings

- All Boards, Committees and Commission meetings are cancelled until further notice
- The Borough Council meeting scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2020 will be cancelled. The Borough will plan to have its April 20th Council Meeting and should teleconference be appropriate at that time, we will notify the public and provide them the opportunity to call into the meeting. More information on this including how the public will be permitted to participate in the meeting will be forthcoming before the meeting date.

Recreation/Playgrounds

- All Borough sponsored activities are cancelled; please reach out to Dunellen's Recreation Director, Alex Miller for any further questions: (732) 968-3033, ext. 8 or amiller@dunellenborough.com.
- ***Out of an abundance of caution and with the best interests of our residents in mind, we are closing playgrounds, fields and courts to the public.***
- Residents may enjoy open spaces such as our walking path in Columbia Park while maintaining the recommended 6 feet of separation between other people.

Therefore, if you find yourself outdoors amongst others, please practice social distancing

Garbage & Recycling

- Curbside garbage will operate based upon your service provider's own guidance.
- Recycling will operate based upon Middlesex County Improvement Authority's own guidance. Please visit their website for further information: http://www.middlesexcountynj.gov/Government/Departments/mcia/Pages/Recycling/Division-of-Recycling.aspx

Downtown Dunellen:

- In partnership with Tropical Supermarkets, it has been decided that the supermarket will limit access to the general public during certain days and times. It will provide open hours to seniors (55 and up) and disabled individuals two days per week – Tuesdays and Fridays – between 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. This is being done to limit contact with the most vulnerable in this community.
- We have contacted Devine's Pharmacy and Ray's Pharmacy and they will be open to the public during their normal operational hours and are still providing prescription deliveries to all customers. They are also providing their services to non-customers who need to fill their prescriptions on an emergency basis.
    - Phone Contact Information:
        - Devine's Pharmacy: (732) 968-0003
        - Ray's Pharmacy: (732) 968-1481
- All downtown businesses will be following the guidance of the Governor's Executive Order #104 (see below).
- The State of New Jersey has provided a website for business concerns about COVID-19 at: cv.business.nj.gov
- It is important to understand the impact this disease may have on our local economy, so I remind residents to support local businesses in any way possible that is within social distancing guidelines. I implore residents that once this is all over, to PLEASE Shop Local, Dine Local and Play Local. It is important we remember our downtown is vital to Dunellen's success and our local business owners are going to need our support after all of this is said and done.

DUNELLEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Dunellen School District is following the directions of the State of New Jersey and will be closed until further notice and have implemented distance learning. Information pertaining to Dunellen's School District may be found at: www.dunellenschools.org

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

On March 13, 2020, President Donald J. Trump issued a Proclamation declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak. This means certain funding will be made available to states, territories and localities.

NEW JERSEY STATE GOVERNMENT

On March 16, 2020, Governor Phil Murphy signed Executive Order EO-104 directing:

- Gatherings of persons in the State of New Jersey shall be limited to 50 persons or fewer.
- Public, private and parochial preschool programs, and elementary and secondary school charter and renaissance schools, will be closed beginning on Wednesday, March 18th and will remain closed until further notice.
- Institutions of higher education will cease all in-person instruction beginning on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, and shall cease such in-person instruction as long as the Order remains in effect.
- The Commissioner of Education shall continue working with each public, private, and parochial school to ensure students are able to continue their education through appropriate home instruction.
- The Secretary of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Education shall take all necessary actions to ensure all students eligible for free or reduced meals will continue to receive the services necessary to meet nutritional needs during closures.
- All casinos, concert venues, nightclubs, racetracks, gyms, fitness centers and classes, movie theaters, and performing arts centers will be closed to the public beginning on Monday, March 16, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. and remain closed as long as this Order remains in effect.
- All other non-essential retail, recreational, and entertainment businesses must cease daily operations from 8:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m.
- All restaurant establishments, with or without a liquor or limited brewery license, are limited to offering delivery and/or take out-services only.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY GOVERNMENT:

- Declared county-wide state of emergency in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak. The declaration makes the County eligible for federal reimbursement for extraordinary measures, authorizes the County and its agencies to the necessary steps to contain, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the COVID-19 outbreak. The declaration also allows the County to procure necessary goods or services under contracts not currently available.
- County information provided is subject to change as the pandemic evolves. Residents are advised to monitor the websites of the CDC – https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html, NJ Department of Health https://www.nj.gov/health/ and the Borough website http://www.dunellen-nj.gov/news_detail_T30_R11.php.

The best way to make sure this virus does not spread is appropriate measures when dealing with family, friends, colleagues and the public. Take the following steps to protect yourself to reduce the likelihood of contracting COVID-19 and/or spreading it:

1. Practice proper hand hygiene by promptly washing or sanitizing hands after coughing, sneezing, or physically interacting with others. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
2. Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, and mouth).
3. Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. (Make sure to dispose of the tissue immediately.)
4. Wash your hands with soap immediately after sneezing or coughing.
5. Avoid close physical contact with others, including shaking hands and hugging.
6. Maintain at least 6 feet distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing, when possible.
7. Keep disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer in an easily accessible place while working.
8. Seek medical care early if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing.
9. Sanitize items you frequently touch during a shift: phones, computers, laptops, keyboards, desk surfaces and door handles.
10. Avoid large public gatherings and public transportation.
11. If you develop symptoms of a cold or flu, please stay home! People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness. You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care.

If you are aware of an elderly, disabled or ill individual in Dunellen, please continue to check in on them. Should they need additional emergency services, please help them register with *Register Ready* at: www.registerready.nj.gov or dial toll-free at 2-1-1. If you are able to, help them with essential items such as medical needs and groceries. If an emergency, please call 9-1-1.

If you have any questions related to COVID-19 and public health matters, you can call the Middlesex County Public Health Department 24/7 at (732) 745-3100 and they will assist you in any questions or you can call borough hall at (732) 968-3033 Ext. 3.

Please sign-up for the Next Stop! Dunellen enewsletter, as we will be using this forum as a tool of communication. Sign-up link is: https://tinyurl.com/nextstopdunellen

Finally, there have been reports in a neighboring township of people posing as CDC workers and saying that they are doing a Coronavirus Study. THEY ARE NOT CDC WORKERS. Although there have been no reports in Dunellen, be aware that if someone comes to your door identifying themselves as a CDC worker, you should not let them in and should call the police immediately with a description of the individuals.

Again, the Borough is taking this matter very seriously and is taking all necessary steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and we ask that you remain diligent in these efforts. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Jason F. Cilento, Mayor
Borough of Dunellen