CITY OF PORTSMOUTH

UPDATE from the City Manager for Monday, April 27, 2020

The Governor's "Stay At Home" order remains in effect through May 4, 2020. He announced the formation of an Economic Reopening Task Force comprised of a broad spectrum of NH businesses and organizations. At his press conference today, he suggested that openings in some counties may lag other parts of the state due to health cautions. He is expected to update his guidance at the end of this week.

Sign up for the Daily Advisory, here. The latest news is always at the top, in red.

NEW! PARKING PASS HOLDERS: The Parking Department has issued a 5-week credit to pass-holder accounts. As a result, your next payment due May 1, will be for just ½ the monthly fee.

- **REMINDER HEALTHCARE WORKER/FIRST RESPONDER PARKING PASS PROGRAM STARTS TODAY --** City Manager Karen Conard has directed the creation of a program to provide free parking on City streets to Portsmouth residents who are healthcare workers or First Responders, to allow them to park as close as possible to their homes. The new program provides them with hangtags that alert parking enforcement officers that on-street parking fees are being waived. Apply for a Healthcare Worker/First Responder Parking Pass at the Foundry Place Garage office with proof of employment in healthcare or as a First Responder, and Portsmouth residency. The program is in effect April 27 through June 30, 2020. All Portsmouth parking has a 72-hour limit, which will apply to these pass-holders, as well.

FACE MASK DRIVE CONTINUES! Drop-off or Pick-up Donations of PPE Masks for Healthcare Workers/First Responders and Fabric Masks for Seniors
The City of Portsmouth Senior Services is collecting donated masks Homemade Masks will be distributed to seniors and other individuals in need throughout the community. Medical/surgical/construction type masks will be distributed to healthcare workers and first responders. All donations should be brought to the Community Campus tennis court parking lot. Drive up and leave the masks in the box. Brinn Sullivan, Senior Services Supervisor will be on site to collect them. Contact 603-767-2697 to coordinate or if you have any questions. If these times do not work, please call. All homemade masks will be washed before being distributed. **If you need a cloth face mask, homemade masks can be mailed to those who could not attend the Distribution Drives.** Please email or call Brinn Sullivan, Senior Services Manager, and she will mail you a mask. 603-767-2697.
bsullivan@cityofportsmouth.com
Face Mask Donation Drive-Thru Hours:

Tuesday, April 28, 10-11am
Thursday, April 30, 1-2pm

NEW: There's a new page on the City website with information about Farmers Markets and grower resources. Click here. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/health/farmers-market Although the City Hall markets were cancelled for the interim, many participants are offering direct food sales from their farms. Click here for the Seacoast Eat Local directory of these resources.
http://seacoastharvest.org/safe/?fbclid=IwAR04lIEibUrNJX9fPZk5Y1mCF5QvAsYEfkU7UREodPDffpas3trafficB4nOZA7_fY

DPW PROJECTS THIS WEEK. For the latest on individual projects, click here and then on the Projects tab. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks

- **GOSLING ROAD: Starts Tuesday, April 28.** Between the Spaulding Turnpike on/off-ramps and Market Street. Portsmouth and Newington will complete a shared repaving project, one lane at a time, while traffic is light over the next couple of weeks. Flaggers and police details will be on station to direct traffic, as needed.
- **MARKET STREET & KEARSARGE WAY BRIDGES:** Prep work and signage installation start next week. Kearsarge Way Bridge will be reduced to one lane, with alternating traffic directed by temporary traffic signals. Market Street between the Sarah Long Bridge and the Noble's Island traffic signal will be reduced to one lane in each direction. For more information, click here.
- **CITY HALL PARKING LOT AND DRIVEWAY REPAVING starts Thursday.**
- **BARTLETT/ISLINGTON STREETS: Construction work started today on the Bartlett intersection.** The detour for the season starts Thursday for one-way, inbound/easterly traffic between the bridge over the Bypass to Aldrich Road and outbound/westerly traffic, detoured down Aldrich.
- **BOW STREET REPAVING:** Daniel Street to Chapel Street will be closed to through-traffic and no parking will be allowed in that section. A flagger will be in place to direct traffic around the Penhallow Street detour. The rest of Bow St. is unaffected.
- **MAPLEWOOD AVE** work has resumed for the season.
- **PRESCOTT PARK DOCK RAILING replacement work continues.** The dock remains closed.

CITY MANAGER HAS PRESENTED FY21 BUDGET: 0% TAX RATE INCREASE & NO INCREASE IN SEWER OR WATER FEES (click here for details) https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city-manager/press-releases/city-manager-presents-fy21-budget-0-tax-rate-increase-no-watersewer

Next steps in the FY21 Budget Process:
Wed. Apr 6 – City Council Meeting, Public Hearing on the Budget
Mon, May 11 – City Council Work Session. Public Safety (Police/Fire) Review & Listening Session
Wed. May 13 – City Council Work Session, School Dept. Review & Listening Session
Thurs. May 14 – City Council Work Session, Gen. Govt. & Parking Review & Listening Session
Tues. May 19 – City Council Work Session, Water, Sewer & Stormwater Review & Listening Session
Thurs. May 21 – City Council Work Session, Budget Review
Thurs. May 28 – City Council Work Session, Budget Review Follow-up
Mon. June 1 – City Council Meeting to Adopt Budget

FRIDAY, MAY 1 CHAMBER CHAT LIVE at 1 pm: Representatives from the NH Congressional Delegation offices will join Chamber Chat Live on Friday, May 1 at 1 pm, produced by the Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth, to discuss the details in the new stimulus/relief package passed last week. To register for the zoom meeting, click here. http://portsmouthcollaborative.org/events/details/chamber-chat-live-education-update-51138?calendarMonth=2020-04-01

EVERY FRIDAY at 7 pm: Clap! Ring bells! Blow horns! Show our healthcare workers and First Responders #WeClapBecauseWeCare

#alonetogether does not mean "You're on your own." Here are some quick links to additional resources including the Daily Advisory "Where to find answers" edition.
https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-04/Advisory%202020.04.15.pdf

Click on the banners at the top of the homepage. They include:

- Health-related information https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/health/coronavirus-preparedness
- Food aid, grocery resources and restaurant takeout options https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/covid-19-food-resources
- Business and employee resources https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/economic/covid-19-response-resources-businesses-employees
- Archive of all City Manager Daily Advisories https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/city-manager-daily-updates

- For answers to other questions about the City's response to COVID-19, please email: hotline@cityofportsmouth.com
- For more information, visit City's page on COVID-19, https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/covid-19-information
- For more information from the State of NH, call 2-1-1

Health Resources:

- **Portsmouth Regional Hospital offers a Coronavirus Resource Hub** on its website. https://portsmouthhospital.com/covid-19/?assessment=true
- **ConvenientMD offers a Virtual Care portal** and reminds residents they still provide non-COVID-19 emergency care, with strict guidelines for keeping all patients safe. https://convenientmd.com/virtual-visit
- **2-1-1 for State of New Hampshire** guidance and answers COVID-19 related questions.
- **Keep Wearing Cloth Face Masks** The City Health Officer also reminds everyone to wear cloth face masks in public. Reserve medical grade PPE for healthcare workers and first-responders. The NH State Epidemiologist Dr. Benjamin Chan issued a formal statement this week, urging citizens to wear cloth face masks whenever they are out in public, and where there is risk of transmitting the virus, even when there are no symptoms, in homes and offices. to **Directions for making your own face mask in 45 seconds, here.** https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html **A few additional recommendations, where possible, on cloth facemasks. They should:**

  - Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
  - Be secured with ties or ear loops;
  - Include multiple layers of fabric, preferably a tight weave material;
  - Allow for breathing without restriction; and
  - Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Employment security: File for unemployment **online** [https://www.nhes.nh.gov]/or by calling the hotline at **603-271-7700**. Your application appointment is based on the first letter of your last name. There are still delays in processing, but you should start seeing a check 9 days after filing. You must file weekly to receive weekly benefits.

- The CARES Act supplements your unemployment pay with a $600 per week benefit.
- Check out the Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth's COVID-19 emergency Job Board. http://portsmouthcollaborative.org/jobs

MORE Help for small businesses, including non-profits: Representatives from the NH Congressional Offices will join Chamber Chat Live on Friday, May 1 at 1 pm, produced by the Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth, to discuss the details in the new stimulus/relief package passed last week. To register for the zoom meeting, click here. http://portsmouthcollaborative.org/events/details/chamber-chat-live-education-update-51138?calendarMonth=2020-04-01

For a Small Business Guide to the CARES Act relief program, click here. https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources#section-header-2

- **The City's Economic Development Department webpage dedicated to COVID-19** response information and resources covers Federal, State and local government programs, organizations and experts with answers to frequently asked questions about making it through and planning for recovery, and highlights webinars that drill down into very specific concerns. Visit the page frequently for updates. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/economic/covid-19-response-resources-businesses-employees
- **For information about business assistance resources,** the Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth continues to support small businesses as they navigate through the challenges and resources of the COVID-19 disruption to our economy. New information is added daily:
  - Click here for **Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth** COVID-19 response pages.
  - **Click here** Portsmouth Calendar of helpful COVID-19 Resources.
  - And for hospitality businesses in particular, **www.GoPortsmouthNH.com**.
  - **Click here** for the Chamber's calendar of COVID-19 business webinars.

- **Click here** for the Chamber's Job Board

- **Non-profits** will find useful information from the **NH Community Development Finance Authority** https://nhcdfa.org/covid-19-resources/ **The Business Finance Authority** started accepting applications for funding this week. https://nhbfa.com/

Self-quarantine for returned travelers: Follow these guidelines.
https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-04/Home%20Isolation%20and%20Quarantine%202020.04.09.pdf

Restaurant, grocery and pharmacy options:

- Local restaurants are also providing takeout service and delivery via GrubHub, DoorDash, TakeoutGuys and similar services. For a list of takeout options, click here. . https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-04/Restaurant%20Takeout%202020.04.08.pdf
- Local grocery stores and pharmacies have special hours for seniors and other immune-challenged people to shop when there are fewer people in the stores. For a list of options, click here.
https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-04/FoodPharmacy%202020.04.23.pdf
- The Food and Drug Administration reassures consumers that there is currently no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. Also, though your grocery store may be temporarily out of certain products, there are no nationwide shortages of food. Food production and manufacturing are spread throughout the United States. https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/shopping-food-during-covid-19-pandemic-information-consumers/?utm_campaign=FoodCOVID_Shopping_04152020&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Eloqua
- Although COAST has suspended the regular fixed route services, Senior Transportation, ADA Service, Community Rides, and accessible Ready Rides are still in operation. https://coastbus.org/pst

Veterans: The VA Medical Center in Manchester urges veterans to use the VA's online tools for telehealth appointments, prescription needs, questions and automated text messages. As with all doctors' appointments, *call first*. Click here https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/home for the VA's online patient portal. There's also a VideoConnect app. For more information on that, click here https://www.mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect For more general COVID-19-related information, click here. https://www.connectedcare.va.gov/

Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Centers and Congregate Housing
From the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health officials, including Portsmouth's have kept close track of the health of the elderly and health-compromised who live in nursing homes, assisted living centers and congregate housing. In Portsmouth, all of the local facilities moved quickly to take proactive steps to prevent infection. The City Health Officer and her team, and the Fire and Police Departments have been working with the facilities to monitor their health and to make sure those populations and the staff who serve them have the PPE they need. Several deliveries of supplies, including the facemask strap-extenders made by the Portsmouth Public Library on their 3D printers, have been distributed to city and regional facilities. The weekly Face Mask Drives also generate donations supplied to seniors and others who need them. So far, this intensive effort has paid off. The City Health Officer reminds everyone of the "rules" for the public interacting with friends and family in these facilities, to keep them safe:

- **NO PERSONAL VISITS!** Facilities with vulnerable residents are currently closed to outside visitors. Consider those you might visit who are also vulnerable but live on their own to be 'off-limits' as well. But check on them with a call, wave through the window or a note.
- Physical distancing is still the best solution to avoid the spread of the virus. Practice the basics, especially around anyone who is in contact with vulnerable populations.

    - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
    - Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
    - Avoid close contact with people who are sick
    - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands
    - Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces
    - Do not go out if you have a fever or are not feeling well

Additional food assistance:

- **GATHER, our local food pantry, can help**. **Pantry** hours are Mon, Tues, Wed: 10 am – 3 pm at 210 West Road #3 in Portsmouth. Fri: 9am-1pm at Community Campus, 100 Campus Drive in Portsmouth. NEW: **Open-Air Market for laid-off workers, Thursdays 10 am to 3 pm** at Community Campus, 100 Campus Drive in Portsmouth.
- **Operation Blessings** d**rive-up food pantry** at 600a Lafayette Rd. Wed-Fri, 10am to 4pm, for Portsmouth residents only. For more information, please call 603-430-8561. **Senior mobile food pantry** to the residents of the Portsmouth area, ages 62 and up, Mon-Sat 10am-4pm. Anyone who is interested please contact Tammy Joslyn at 603-988-2671
- **Meals on Wheels** makes deliveries to Portsmouth seniors on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with the extra meals for Tuesday and Thursday included in the delivery. Additionally, they will continue to deliver extra shelf-stable food and frozen meals, just in case. New customers are still being accepted, so please call 603-431-0561 to complete an application over the phone.
- **The Portsmouth School Department provides daily lunches, Monday though Friday, to schoolchildren**. See the schedule for pickup and drop-off, here: https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/press-releases/portsmouth-schools-offering-breakfast-lunch-and-delivery-schedule-update. The School Department is also working with End 68 Hours of Hunger to supply weekend meals to food-insecure children.
- For other food resources, see this map. https://unhcoopext.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=5caa235e0e024beb8bebba50a0297d15#
- **The NH Local Welfare Administrators Association** has advised Portsmouth that SNAP (Food Stamp) benefits are being supplemented for the already approved clients who receive less than the maximum monthly benefit. Contact the City of Portsmouth Welfare Department for more assistance. Call 603-610-7267 or email WFDept@CityofPortsmouth.com

Support networks

- **Seacoast Mental Health** has geared up for exactly these challenges call 603-431-6703 or click here. https://smhc-nh.org/covid-19-updates/
- **SOS Recovery Community Organization** on the Seacoast is answering the phones Mon-Sat from 9 am to 8 pm and on Sunday, noon to 4 pm. Click here
- **The Doorway**, NH's substance-abuse treatment and recovery offers phone assistance during the week and teams with the statewide 2-1-1 system on weekends. https://thedoorway.nh.gov/home
- **Alcoholics Anonymous** in New Hampshire programs are operating by zoom and other work-arounds, including relying on each group's telephone hotline of other members. https://seacoastaa.org/meetings/
- **The NH Department of Health and Human Services** is alert to greater concerns about domestic and child abuse when families are confined to close quarters and under stress. For more information, click here. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-04/Family%20Well-Being%20Guide%20COVID-19.pdf
- **Seacoast Mental Health** has geared up for exactly these challenges call 603-431-6703 or click here.
- **Seacoast Pathway's virtual clubhouse supports adults living with mental illness** on their paths to recovery through a focus on health, wellness, employment-preparedness, and community fellowship. Click here www.seacoastpathways.org
- **Connections Peer Support in Portsmouth supports anyone over 18 with mental health issues.** They offer a "warm line" for support and connection Mon–Fri from 8:30am to 10:00pm and Sat/Sun from 5:00pm to 10:00pm. Also video conference groups, including a women's group, a young adults group, and a creativity group, among others. For information call 603-427-6966 or click here. http://connectionspeersupport.org/

City services while City Hall is closed. For the key contact information, click here. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/covid-19-information

- All of the City Departments are fully operational, though working with staggered shifts, reduced capacity and telecommuting physical-distancing. But pay bills online, click here. Contact the City Clerk's office for license

renewals. https://www.invoicecloud.com/portal/(S(jstxdukwvet41atugusnhle2))/2/Site.aspx?G=0055530e-d1ee-4599-a935-a8e88ab5b845

- For licenses, birth and death certificates and other vital records, https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/cityclerk/birth-marriage-death-certificates **C**all or email the City Clerk at 603-610-7245 or cityclerk@cityofportsmouth.com
- City Boards, Commissions and Committees continue to conduct business via zoom and teleconference meetings. Check the Municipal Calendar on the City website homepage for specific dates, agendas and participation instructions.
- Take advantage of City services and resources including the treasures of the Recreation Department network of parks https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-03/3revClosedPlaygrounds%202020.03.26.pdf and off-leash dog parks. http://files.cityofportsmouth.com/maps/OffLeashArea.pdf
- **Portsmouth Public Library ---** Although the library building is closed, Portsmouth Public Library staff are still hard at work --remotely.
    - Library experts are hosting events online, including weekly meditation, a world affairs discussion group, four weekly language discussion groups, reading dogs, classes, and nine (!) different book clubs for all ages. In May, the Library is offering new events, including Harry Potter Trivia, an Organic Gardening Q&A, an End of Life discussion, and a lecture on Wild Edible Plants.
    - The **Library's Special Collections staff have just launched the Pandemic Community Diary, an initiative to record historical observations about this strange time.** The library acts as a repository for Portsmouth and Seacoast history, and with this project hopes to record our shared history as it happens. All residents are encouraged to share their story! Visit cityofportsmouth.com/library/communitydiary to learn more.
    - **Library Cards:** to access to all of the events, programs and resources: download ebooks, audiobooks, movies, TV, and music from Hoopla and Overdrive, take classes on arts, crafts, and computer topics with Creativebug and Lynda Learning, learn a new language with Mango, access free unlimited *New York Times* articles, and so much more. It's easy to apply for a library card: Just visit libcat.cityofportsmouth.com/ and click "**Log in to your account**" and then select "**You may register here.** Enter your current Portsmouth address and correct contact information. A library staff member will contact you promptly to give you a library card number and verify your information!
- **School Department:**
    - **Schools are now following online learning lesson plans four days a week**, with Wednesdays reserved for art, physical education and other enrichment activities while teachers spend Wednesdays on collaborative lesson planning.
    - **The school district** has made sure every student has a computer, and WiFi hot spots were purchased and distributed to families without connectivity. The district and Portsmouth Public Schools continue to adjust the plans to address survey responses from students and families about the remote learning system.
    - **The School Department will continue to provide daily lunches, Monday through Friday, for the balance of the school year**. See the schedule for pickup and drop-off, here: https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/press-releases/portsmouth-schools-offering-breakfast-lunch-and-delivery-schedule-update. The School Department is also working with End 68 Hours of Hunger to supply weekend meals to food-insecure children and to develop plans for the summer.
- **Fire Department:**
    - **Burn Permits:** All previously held Class I and II seasonal permits (backyard firepits and chinmeas, etc.) that expired on 12/31/2020 have been extended. They are now valid through June 30. The Department asks these permit holders not to seek renewal until July 1. For those seeking new seasonal Class I and II permits, as well as Class III permits (brush piles), a site visit to the burn location is required. **Please call 603-427-1515 during business hours and ask for the Shift Captain who will scheduled a**n appointment to visit your site. The permit fee is $10, cash or check made out to City of Portsmouth. For more information about Portsmouth Outdoor Burning Rules, click here. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-04/2020%20Outdoor%20Burning%20Rules%20%26%20Regulations.pdf.

- **Fire Chief Todd Germain Offers COVID-19 Emergency Management Update**
  Click here for the short video with Chief Germain, reporting as the City's Emergency Management Coordinator, on the Fire and Police Department response. https://youtu.be/3ZTGEmfrk8E

- **DPW:**
  - **Parking:** Regular rates and time limits are back in force at kiosks on city streets and garages. For a map of downtown lots offering free parking, click here. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/parkportsmouth/parking-locations-map-pricing **Please continue to observe the 15-minute free parking zones, as marked, for takeout/pickup.**
  - **Wipes Clog Pipes!**
  - **Residents should continue to use Click 'n Fix** as needed so service requests can be logged and addressed. https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/portsmouth-click-n-fix
  - **The recycling center is open** and staffed to allow just a few vehicles at a time for physical-distancing. Payment for the usual special item disposal fees must be by check (no cash accepted).
  - **Trash pickup is on the normal schedule and yard waste pickups have also begun** but may be limited by the availability of workers and trucks.
  - **Trees & Greenery invites you to participate in the City's Adopt-A-Spot Program** -- a great family project you can do while staying 6 feet part.
    https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/adopt-spot
  - **In case you were wondering, the City's Regional Water System continues normal procedures for operating, monitoring and maintaining the Portsmouth and Pease Tradeport Water Treatment systems.** Our source waters are chlorinated for adequate disinfection, monitored continuously for chlorine residuals and sampled throughout the water system to assure proper treatment continues. Water & Sewer Division services are considered essential businesses and are staffed accordingly so the water supply is adequately meeting demand. For the latest comprehensive water supply update, click here.
    https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/water/supply-status

What can I do to help?

- **Donate.** Food to GATHER. Empty plastic bottles (for homemade hand sanitizer) to Operation Blessings (contact Tammy Joslyn at 988-2671). Funds to your favorite non-profit. Time to health care workers, homeschooling/telecommuting parents. Additional suggestions: United Way of the Greater Seacoast, New England Grassroots Environmental Fund. United Way of the Greater Seacoast http://www.uwgs.org/covid-19-family-support-fund/ and New England Grassroots Environmental Fund https://grassrootsfund.org/dollars/rapid-response-funding
- **Volunteer: For those who need volunteers and those who want to volunteer,** sign up with VolunteerNH.org which is focusing on COVID-19 related relief right now. **Operation Blessings asks those who are interested in volunteering**, to please use this online system, click here.