



## FROM THE CITY MANAGER

With summer coming to an end and school reopening plans being drafted, I thought it would be a good time to remind everyone of our operational protocols to keep everyone safe at work while the pandemic remains of paramount concern.

As you know, the City developed a reopening plan, which has enabled safe operation of **most facilities**, in concert with the Governor's ["Stay At Home 2.0" guidelines](#). To accommodate reopening, we developed some Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which remain in effect until further notice. These practices are based upon public health guidelines, and are designed to keep employees and the public safe.

Departments may continue to adapt procedures specific to their facilities and services. We will keep learning and adjusting as we move forward, and ask for your help and patience during this time.

## PROCESS/FACILITY ADAPTATION

The following shall be in place at each City facility –

- Each facility shall be thoroughly cleaned.** Hand sanitizer stations have been established throughout the building and cleaning supply caddies and/or carts have been located in each Department area.
- Sneeze guards** have been installed at all customer service counters.
- Cloth masks have been provided to all employees that need them, as well as mask extenders.**
- When possible, **workstations will be separated by at least six feet.** Wherever needed, **6' demarcations will be added to areas where people are waiting for service.**
- Each facility shall **limit occupancy to 50% (or less)** of allowed occupancy under NH Building and Fire Code
  - Each facility will have a method of tracking occupancy levels throughout the day
- Each facility should continue to consider dedicating certain hours of operation for **service limited to senior and vulnerable populations – City Hall will give priority for appointments** to these members of the public, to limit their exposure.
- Each facility shall **assign a staff compliance officer to a reception area as a single point of public entry.** This may be in addition to those typically responsible for reception.
- Signage** for all building entrances is posted that includes:

**ATTENTION ALL VISITORS:**

For your health and the health of others, we require that you: please **use hand sanitizer upon arriving AND wear a face mask while in the building.**

Occupancy of the facility may be limited, and visitors are strongly encouraged to call ahead for appointments - 431-2000 and ask to speak with the department you wish to meet with. Alternative arrangements may be made for service outside of the building on an as-needed basis.

**ALL visitors are required to check in with the reception** prior to proceeding. Entry may be refused to visitors due to occupancy restrictions, availability of staffing, and/or other extenuating circumstances.

Thank you, in advance, for your patience and cooperation.

- [Informational signage on COVID-related health best practices](#) is placed in in public restrooms, meeting spaces, and corridors.

## EMPLOYEE PROTOCOLS

1. Employees **who are sick or not feeling well must stay home**, and should notify their supervisor by phone one hour prior to their start time. Possible symptoms of COVID-19 include:
  - Fever
  - Respiratory symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath
  - Flu-like symptoms such as muscle aches, chills, and severe fatigue
  - Changes in a person's sense of taste or smellEmployees should utilize the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#), if needed, to account for absence from work. Non-COVID-related absences must be accounted for as leave time (sick, vacation, personal) – employees are referred to [Family Medical Leave act benefit](#) for other unpaid leave.
2. **Employees are encouraged to work from home as much as practical**, subject to supervisor approval in advance. Supervisors have been instructed to plan for potential COVID cases in the event we experience higher than usual absenteeism. This may include rotating groups of employees to work from home/work on site. Please note: this is not a permanent policy at this time.
3. **To assist in keeping track of everyone's health and to make them aware of any workplace safety concerns, employees shall continue to report on their health status at the start of each work day.** Employees who report having COVID-related symptoms at the start of a shift will be instructed to leave the premises immediately. For ease of administration, **an on-line form** (attached) has been created for employee use.
4. **Employee travel outside of New England requires quarantine prior to returning to the workplace.** Please see the travel policy issued by the City Manager for more information – the Safer at Home

Universal Guidelines, produced by the Governor and updated as of August 12<sup>th</sup>, considers travel outside of New England a risk factor that warrants a 14-day quarantine.

5. **Employees must continue to follow [CDC Preventative Guidelines](#)** recommendations, including:
  - **[Wearing masks](#)** any time staff are in close proximity with each other, contractors and/or the public. For example, this includes traveling with other staff in a vehicle, and walking the hallways. PPE shall be used in shared spaces (conference rooms, break rooms, etc.). Care should also be taken when putting masks on and taking them off. Hands should be washed or disinfected prior to putting a mask on and off. While in an office with closed doors or working alone or at distance from other staff, masks/face protection can be removed. Care should be taken to keep the mask clean and uncontaminated.
    - **Wear gloves** when using high-volume, shared devices such as the postage machine.
    - **Wear other PPE as appropriate** to your work place (e.g. Tyvek suits, gloves, etc.).
    - **Wash your hands** frequently during the day, especially after using shared equipment.
  - **Minimizing in-person meetings.** Maximum use of electronic meetings shall continue to be used until further notice. Employees should avoid congregating in any area of all facilities, and should utilize emails, mailboxes and the telephone to provide information to one another.
  - **Staff will stagger breaks and maintain social distance (6')** and when possible, breaks should be taken separately.
  - **Conduct regular cleaning of surfaces and shared equipment.** Employees are responsible for wiping and disinfecting touch surfaces in their vehicles, equipment and office space as well as shared equipment in common spaces, i.e. copies, printers, kitchens. When in doubt, wipe it down. Cleaning supplies will be located in common areas. If you cannot find them ask your supervisor for assistance.
6. Employees should **continue to encourage and help the public to use on-line resources to the maximum extent.** Employees should work to minimize the time spent conducting in-person transactions with the public and each other (e.g. keep non-task-related conversation to a minimum).
7. Board/Committee meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice, as Emergency Order #52, which recommends those over 65 with underlying health conditions limit out of home travel to essential needs, has been extended (E.O. #61).

Please keep in mind that these protocols continue to be in place until further notice. Thank you for your on-going cooperation. Working together, we have managed to remain COVID-free in the workplace. Again, please note, departments may need to adapt procedures specific to their facilities and services. Do not hesitate to contact your supervisor if you have any suggestions as to how we continue to help keep the City of Portsmouth healthy.