



TOWN OF DURHAM

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Hello fellow residents of Durham,

We are currently in uncharted territory. The virus COVID 19 has wreaked havoc on our day to day life, businesses and families. I have found it increasingly difficult to get real information on what is going on, and what if anything, we should be doing. I wanted to reach out to all of you to give a little insight on what information we have received so far, and what steps the Town is taking.

First, as I am sure we are all well aware of, our school district has been shut down for at least two weeks. Students are still required to do work on their time off. The schools are still feeding children at various pick up points. Any parents looking for assistance please go to the Cairo Durham School website (www.cairodurham.org).

Second, Governor Cuomo has put out several executive orders with directions for New Yorkers. A few key orders are as follows;

1. Exec. Order 202.3 states “Any restaurant or bar in the State of New York shall cease serving patrons food or beverage on-premises effective 8pm on March 16th, 2020, and until further notice shall only serve food or beverage for off premises consumption (Take out only).
2. Exec Order 202.3 also states that any casinos, gyms, fitness centers or classes and movie theaters shall cease operation effective March 16th, 2020.
3. Exec Order 202.3 limits any event to no more than 50 people.
4. Exec. Order 202.4 states that government or political subdivisions shall allow non-essential personnel as determined by the local government, to be able to work from home or take leave without charging accruals.
5. Exec. Order 202.6 states that **ALL** businesses and not for profit entities in the state shall utilize to the maximum extent possible, any telecommuting or work from home procedures that they can safely utilize. This Executive order goes on to give a list of essential businesses that are exempt from this, including healthcare providers, grocery stores, pharmacies, banks and a few others. For more information go to (www.governor.ny.gov) and look for the executive orders tab at the bottom.

Greene County is in a State of Emergency effective March 15th, 2020. The County has issued the following executive orders;

1. Exec. Order #1 The Greene County Dept. of Health recommended shutting down of schools.
2. Exec. Order #2 Senior centers will be closed to the public for 5 days. This may be extended, and will be re-visited every 5 days.
3. Exec. Order #3 General public will not be permitted to enter DMV without a previous appointment scheduled.

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We are being advised to stay inside and avoid any unnecessary exposure to other people. While I know this is difficult, and burdensome, it is a necessary evil to try and combat the furtherance of this virus spreading. Anyone displaying mild symptoms listed should contact their health care physician. If symptoms are serious, you should contact a hospital and arrange for immediate treatment. The government is in the process of setting up new screening sites and tests to be able to test more people, more effectively. I just received a press release from Governor Cuomo stating that the USNS Comfort will be deployed to New York harbor in April. It is a 1,000 bed hospital ship that has 12 fully equipped operating rooms. It will be there to increase effective care for any patients. This release also gave numbers of 2,382 confirmed cases in New York State. Of those, we have 2 in Greene County.

The Town of Durham has suspended all public access to the Town Building. Any and all business should be handled by phone or email. Our website (www.durhamny.com) will have all contact numbers for us. **Our Recycling Center has been closed for a two week period. We apologize for the inconvenience.** We have also suspended public meetings. I am in the process of testing a conference call system that may be used to hold meetings via phone that anyone can listen to and participate. I will have more information on this before our next scheduled meeting date of April 7th, 2020. Our highway department has been split into two working crews. This is done to help in reducing their exposure to potential carriers of the virus, and to assist with the needs of the Town. One crew will be off for one week, while the other works. At the end of that week, the crew will sanitize all equipment in preparation of the next crew coming in. The crews will then switch the following week. This schedule is in place for at least two weeks and will be revisited. All Courts in New York State have stopped all proceedings until at least April 15th, 2020. You can still call our Court Clerk with any questions.

In the unlikely event that this pandemic spreads and fills local hospitals and treatment facilities, the Red Cross has an agreement with the Cairo Durham School District to use any and all of their facilities as needed.

We at the Town of Durham are here to assist anyone with any questions or concerns. If anyone has anything they need to discuss, or need assistance with, please do not hesitate to contact me. We are all in this together, and I fear we will feel the ramifications of these uncertain times both immediately and in the future. I will do everything I can to assist our Town in coming back from this crisis. I wish all of you a safe and peaceful day.

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