



MAYOR'S OFFICE



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March 18th, 2020

To the Citizens & Visitors of Westbrook,

Today Governor Mills provided some new orders and recommendations that our staff is meeting regularly to discuss the City's plans and handling issues that arise due to the coronavirus (COVID-19). As we now know, there are currently 42 confirmed cases in Maine, most of which are from Cumberland County, and still have only one confirmed case of a City resident who is currently being treated at Maine Medical Center. We are still awaiting a CDC investigation and for further details to become public. We remain in close communication with federal, state and regional officials on developments related to this situation and I would like to provide additional updates on the City's response to protect the public health and safety for this current State of Emergency.

Ensuring the safety of our employees and the general public, while also continuing to provide the critical services necessary to run the City, is of paramount importance to us. In order to minimize the rise of exposure to employees, volunteers and the general public, I have done the following:

- Previously signed an Emergency Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency in the City of Westbrook on March 15th. This action gives us the ability to make emergency decisions for the protection of the City and provides access to critical federal funds & resources. To continue under this State of Emergency for longer than 5 days, we must seek a renewal from the City Council per City Ordinance. Therefore, I will be calling an Emergency Meeting of the City Council tomorrow, March 19th, 2020 at 6 PM. As now allowed under Emergency Legislation, this meeting will be held using the videoconferencing platform Zoom and simulcast via Facebook Live on City social media accounts. This platform was tested yesterday for some announcements, allows for public participation and we believe this will serve our needs while under this crisis. We are developing rules of procedure for these meetings and will continue to work out any issues as they arise. All meetings will be recorded and made available to the public.
- Previously established the Mayor's Coronavirus Task Force of key municipal officials to navigate this State of Emergency.
- Previously imposed a spending freeze on discretionary expenses not critical to our operations and this State of Emergency and suspended in person City Council Finance Committee accounts payable review.
- Previously closed all municipal facilities to the general public until further notice.
- Cancelled all public meetings at this time until advised otherwise. We will be developing a future schedule via videoconference meetings as previously outlined.
- Previously enacted a Human Resources Policy and Procedure Pandemic Policy
- Exploring the possibility of offering childcare services at the Community Center for Emergency Personnel who are Westbrook residents or employees.
- Previously announced existing business licenses may be extended past their expiration until regular operations resume and Planning & Code Enforcement will work to issue building permits and accept applications for projects.
- Previously established a City Webpage providing details on the City's response to this State of Emergency along with a list of frequently asked questions, information about municipal services, and resources for assistance with translation available via Google Translate.
www.westbrookmaine.com/639/Coronavirus
- Follow Governor Mills' Executive Order as of March 18th, 2020 as follows:
 - Prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people statewide. Gatherings subject to this Order are those that are primarily social, personal, and discretionary events not work-related events. Such

- gatherings include, without limitation, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based events; social clubs; sporting events with spectators; concerts, conventions, fundraisers, parades, fairs, and festivals; and any similar event or activity in a venue such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, theater, gymnasium, fitness center or private club.
- Closes dine-in facilities at all restaurants and bars statewide. All restaurants and bars shall close their dine-in facilities. Such businesses that offer carry-out, delivery, and drive-through food and beverage service may continue to do so but eating and drinking inside restaurants and bars is temporarily prohibited. Such businesses offering carry-out, delivery, and drive-through food and beverage should employ social distancing best practices and minimize gathering of customers. The Governor urges Maine people to continue to support our establishments by purchasing take-out meals or by buying gift cards or other measures of support.
 - In addition, Governor Mills strongly urged non-essential public-facing businesses, such as gyms, hair salons, theaters, casinos, shopping malls, to close their doors for the next two weeks.
 - This does not include businesses that provide essential services including, but not limited to: food processing, agriculture, industrial manufacturing, construction, trash collection, grocery and household goods (including convenience stores), home repair and hardware and auto repair, pharmacy and other medical facilities, biomedical and health care, child care, post offices and shipping outlets, insurance, banks, gas stations, laundromats, veterinary clinics and animal feed and supply stores, shipping stores, public transportation, and hotel and commercial lodging.
 - Although these businesses may remain open, Governor Mills strongly urged Maine people to implement social distancing measures and to be thoughtful about the need to visit these businesses.
 - Other businesses, including but not limited to legal services, business and management consulting, professional services and insurance services, are encouraged to have employees work remotely. If that is not possible, Governor Mills urges employees to implement social distancing measures.

During this time period, we will monitor this public health situation and modify this directive as appropriate. Under the continued advisement, we are seeking to minimize our public contact in order to reduce the spread of this highly contagious virus. Please continue to practice “social distancing” to protect themselves and others.

Police, Fire & Rescue and Public Services continue to remain fully operational. Given these closures, we strongly encourage the use of telephone, email and online services wherever possible for conducting business with the City. **Superintendent Dr. Lancia previously announced the Westbrook School Department is closed for two weeks beginning March 16th, 2020 and they also have details on their website regarding their response. We anticipate updates on their response soon.**

All these preventative actions are being taken out of an abundance of caution and concern for everyone and not panic. We apologize for any inconveniences you may experience as a result of these measures.

We continue to recognize that the spread of this virus is a fluid and rapidly evolving situation that requires close monitoring and the need to adapt quickly. We will continue to monitor and respond accordingly and provide additional updates to everyone should recommendations change. We encourage everyone to check in with their neighbors and help each other out if/when possible. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all affected by this crisis, our community is strong and we will come out stronger.

For more information on the City’s response and the status of the pandemic, please visit www.westbrookmaine.com/639/Coronavirus with links to the CDC and Westbrook School Department.

Thank you and stay safe.



Mayor Michael T. Foley