

Borough of Hopatcong



COVID-19 Pandemic & Continuity of Government Plan

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**Borough
Administrator
QPA**

INTRODUCTION

The SARS-CoV-2 virus (the contagious virus that causes COVID-19, commonly known as novel coronavirus) continues to spread globally. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has indicated that COVID-19 is a serious health threat.

While we cannot predict when or if the coronavirus will impact Hopatcong, and to what extent, we can anticipate that such an impact could result in high rates of employee absenteeism and an increase in demand for public safety services.

PURPOSE

The COVID-19 Pandemic & Continuity of Government Plan will guide assist the Borough in preparing, responding to, and conducting essential operations during a potential coronavirus pandemic outbreak. This plan establishes the following goals:

- Protect employees, their families, and Borough residents
- Minimize the effect on services provided by Borough employees
- Communicate accurate information about COVID-19
- Communicate accurate information about Borough closures
- Continue essential operations and provide primary services to the public

This plan will be updated as necessary based upon new and updated information. The need to develop additional procedures and/or practices related to this Plan or any amendments or suspensions of this Plan will be communicated through this document, the Borough web site or communications from the Ma

Department Heads shall plan for an expected increase in worker absentee rates due to personal illnesses, family illnesses, community mitigation efforts, social distancing mandates, quarantines, and childcare issues resulting from school and daycare closures, the overall fear of risking exposure by leaving the sanctity of one's home, and other causes for employee absences. Where possible, employees shall be cross-trained within their department to meet the ongoing challenges and demands that will impact their operations. Employees who are able to perform their job duties remotely from home and are healthy enough to work from remote locations will be encouraged to do so if technologically feasible with prior authorization from the Borough Administrator.

These measures are temporary in nature and do not impact any of the Local Contracted Bargaining Units or the Borough's approved Handbook.

GOAL 1: Protect Employees, Their Families, and Borough residents

In order to have the personnel resources to fulfill organizational and operational needs during an outbreak, employee protection and safety is the key objective. All other goals and objectives are predicated on successfully carrying out this core responsibility.

Objective 1.1 – Make the workplace safe to ensure the health and well-being of our employees and residents.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Hand sanitizers are available throughout the municipal building.
- b) Soap, water, and paper towels are available for handwashing.
- c) Use gloves when handling money and/or mail.
- d) Our internal DPW staff is disinfecting the Borough Administration offices twice a day and our Chief of Police has put tight restrictions on entry to the police station.
- e) The Borough Building hours will be restricted to the public.
- f) All Borough inspectors will use their best judgment when entering a home. Currently the restrictions are no more than one (1) contractor or owner in the building during any and all inspections.
- g) Due to the severity of the virus, please notify the Borough Administrator immediately if you or an immediate family member, or a person you have close contact with, recently travelled to any affected country or have been otherwise exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

Objective 1.2 – Establish and enact policies to limit public meetings and social interactions

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Arrange the Court Room seating allowing only allowing social distance between chairs.
- b) Communicate and follow all mandated New Jersey Municipal Court schedules
- c) All Borough Council and Land Use meetings will be conduct on a “as needed’ or “emergent condition” and will be advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
- d) All meetings will be conducted with the utilization of any and all electronical means to reduce the number physical Council or Committee members needed.

Objective 1.3 – Establish and enact policies to limit the potential spread of illness.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Out of the abundance of caution, if you are ill, particularly if you have a fever, you are required to stay out of the office. If you come to work sick, your supervisor will send you home at least until you are not exhibiting symptoms of illness.
- b) Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illnesses are required to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F or greater) using an oral thermometer, signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
- c) Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify the Borough Administrator and speak to their physician before returning to work.
- d) The Borough Administrator has reviewed and continues to review all travel, education, seminars, training, classes, and other events to restrict access to same as necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of employees, their families, and Borough residents.

Objective 1.4 – Communicate and make information available to minimize exposure.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Stay home when you are sick and if you are able to do so, check emails and monitor phone calls.
- b) Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Instead, use the telephone or computer.
- c) Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- d) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- e) Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. If you do not have tissues available, cover your nose and mouth with your elbow to cough or sneeze.
- f) Clean and disinfect your workspace frequently.
- g) Avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands, fist bumps, hugs, or kisses.
- h) Avoid unnecessary travel and postpone non-essential meetings, workshops, and training sessions.
- i) Do not congregate in work rooms, pantries, copier areas, or other small areas where people normally socialize.
- j) Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others. If you are ordering food, try to order in groups by department to minimize the number of delivery people coming to the municipal facilities.
- k) Do not use or share anyone else's keyboard, computer, telephone, or office supplies.
- l) Prop office doors open while closed to the public to avoid unnecessary touching of doorknobs and handles.

Goal 2: Minimize the effect on services provided by Borough employees

It is essential that we make every effort to provide the public with the services they need. This section shall outline the steps that should be taken to maintain services and mitigate further risk.

Objective 2.1 – Review Borough services and identifies ways to provide these services without customer interaction.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Each service area will implement a 50% employee rotation schedule. Each Department Head will facilitate the design of the schedule and the rotation of the same. Each payroll entry shall use the “**CV**” code for days off.
- b) Communicate to the public the service we provide on a day-to-day basis that can be accomplished by other means. See Appendix A for list of online services.
- c) To the extent possible, reschedule future meetings and large public gatherings. It is recommended that all public gatherings with 10 people or more be postponed until further notice or managed via telephone or video conferencing.
- d) Each Department Head will place on their respective email account an instant reply that indicates that the Borough is closed to the public however, their respective area is conducting (indicate functions/services). You can contact this office by (indicate phone numbers/email addresses etc.).

Objective 2.2 – Review Borough material and supplies that may be impacted due to supply chain disruptions.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Encumber funds and order essential material and supplies that may be needed to protect public safety.
- b) Work with the Borough QPA, OEM, Sussex County OEM on any personal protective equipment (PPE) orders that must go through proper OEM channels to secure.

Goal 3: Communicate accurate information about COVID-19

It is essential the Borough communicate a concise and accurate message when disseminating information. This section shall outline the steps that should be taken to ensure residents are receiving the proper information.

Objective 3.1 – Establish a chain of command for disseminating information to the public.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) The Sussex County Health the Department shall be the lead agency as it relates to disseminating information to Borough.
- b) Hopatcong OEM and Borough Administrator's Office shall be responsible for the dissemination of information that comes from the County of Sussex, Sussex County Health Department, NJ State Police, NJ OEM, NJ Governor's Office, NJ Department of Health, US President, CDC, FDA, or other governmental agencies.
- c) The Borough will utilize existing Borough websites (Hopatcong.com and Hopatcongpolice.org) and social media such as (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and the emergency broadcast system NIXLE for the proper dissemination of information.
- d) The Borough will also utilize the Nexle Alert System to provide information to residents and business owners.

Goal 4: Communicate accurate information about Borough closures

It is essential that employees and residents receive timely and accurate information as it relates to the closure of municipal facilities and any disruption of services. This section shall outline the steps that should be taken to ensure employees and residents are receiving the proper information.

Objective 4.1 – Establish a chain of command for disseminating information to employees.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Hopatcong OEM and Borough Administrator's Office will be responsible for overseeing any closures of facilities in the Borough of Hopatcong.
- b) Should the Borough Administrator close municipal offices to Borough employees, same will be announced to employees through the NIXLE system. Department Heads should ensure that contact information for all staff members is up to date and employees have received any test messages.
- c) Hopatcong OEM and Borough Administrator's Office will announce any closures on the Borough website (Hopatcong.com), and Borough social media pages (Facebook, N I X L E , Twitter, Instagram). All other departments may share the information once posted.
- d) IT professionals may assist with the aforementioned if necessary.

Goal 5: Continue essential operations and provide primary services to the public

The initiatives for this goal are intended to address inadequate staffing due to absenteeism, establish a process for remote access to workstations, and ensure the continuity of essential operations.

Objective 5.1 – Prepare an executive personnel resource plan.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) The Borough Administrator will review available personnel resources and coordinate with Department Heads to establish staffing level needs as necessary.

Objective 5.2 – Establish a process for remote access to workstations and telephones.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) Employees whose jobs are conducive to working remotely and who have the technological means to do so shall be encouraged to work from locations outside of Borough facilities such as their homes with prior authorization from the Borough Administrator.
- b) The Borough Administrator will review with Borough IT professionals the list of employees who currently have VPN or remote access into Hopatcong workstations.
- c) Additions or modifications to the list of employees who have VPN or remote access shall be done as necessary by the Borough Administrator.
- d) Office employees without remote access shall be available to work from Borough facilities during normal office hours as required by the Borough Administrator.

Objective 5.3 – Ensure the continuity of essential operations.

Supporting Initiatives:

- a) The Borough Administrator shall review with Department Heads the essential operations and determine how same will be delivered.
- b) It is a priority that Department Heads continuously work to expand the list of services available to be provided online as identified in Appendix A.
- c) At a minimum, the following services will be continued:
 1. Payroll
 2. Purchase Orders and Requisitions
 3. Tax and Utility Collections
 4. Public Works Operations
 5. Police and Dispatch Services
 6. Fire Department and First Aid Squad Services
 7. Limited Building, Fire and UCC Inspections
 8. Emergency Utility and Road Repairs
 9. Water Testing, Treatment, and Sewer Facility Operations
 10. Building Cleaning and Disinfection
 11. Maintenance on Emergency and Essential Vehicles
 12. IT Support and Maintenance
 13. Emergency Inspections that Effect Public Safety

APPENDIX A

In an effort to minimize exposure to COVID-19, we will be temporarily closing Borough Hall to the public. Many services can be provided online or over the phone or just simply placing in the drop box located outside Borough Hall. A listing of the Borough Department Heads and their respective e-mail address are attached. The functions not limited to but included are indicated by area below. Always refer to www.hopatcong.org

Mayor	Mike Francis	Mfranis@hopatcong.org
Administrator / QPA	Ron Tappan	Rtappan@hopatcong.org
CFO / Deputy Administrator	Lorraine Rossetti	Lrossetti@hopatcong.org
Borough Clerk	Valerie Egan	Vegan@hopatcon.org
DPW Supervisor	Pat MASON	Pmason@hoptcong.org
Tax Collector	Patty Emery	Pemery@hopacong.org
Tax Assessor	Therese dePierro	Tdepierro@hopatcong.org
Court Administrator	Erin Geiger	Egeiger@hopacong.org
Construction Official	Bill O'Connor	Boconnor@hopatcong.org
Zoning Official	Bill Donegan	Bdonegan@hopacong.org
Senior Center Director	Cathy Millian	Cmillian@hopatcong.org
Council Women Community Center Director	Dawn Roberts	Droberts@hopatcong.org
Chief of Police	Robert Brennan	Rbrennan@hopatcongpolice.org
Fire Chief / Fire Marshall	Shaun Poland	Spoland@hopatcong.org
OEM Coordinator	Wade Crowley	Wcrowley@hopatcong.org

Administration

Questions/Complaints
Central communication organization
Process all purchase orders and emergency request
Employee benefit enrollment/changes/ information
Liaison to Council and Committee members
Job Applications
Real Estate Applications

Clerk's Office

Request for Public Records
Code Book
Minutes/Agendas
Election Information
Garage sale license
Raffle license
Dog/cat license Film Permit application
Request for Vital Statistic (Birth, Death, or Marriage/Civil Union)
Food Establishment application

Construction Department

Provide permit application by mail or download from the Brough's web site www.hopatcong.org
Accepting permit applications by mail or drop box
Scheduling inspection by phone or email
Provide Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire inspections for unoccupied and limited occupancy (one (1) contractor or resident present) buildings as well as open air inspections (footings etc.)
Answer questions by phone, email or general mail
Perform Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire plan reviews
Issuance of permits by mail or email
Perform all other office duties as needed

Zoning

Investigation of complaints
Accepting Land Use, Lot Grading plans, Zoning, Sign/Banner, Improvement of Right of Way and Home Occupation permits and applications. Applications may be submitted by mail, or placed in the drop box
Continuing Zoning CO applications
Issuance of Notice of Violations and Summonses

Court

Pay traffic tickets online at www.njmcdirect.com
Payments for criminal complaints can be mailed to the court (checks or money orders only)

Finance Department

Maintain all financial documents such as Budget, Financial Statements, Debt Statements and Annual Audits that are available for review on municipal website

Fire Marshal

Provide all Fire Safety prevention inspections within the same Social Distance criteria and within the same one (1) contractor or residence present at building as the Construction inspectors are conducting

Public Works

Pot-hole and road repairs
Recycle center operations
Emergency Water and Sewer repairs
Road Sweeping/Environmental Storm Water repairs

Land Use Board

Zoning permit applications
Planning Board applications
Minutes/Agendas

Police

All Police functions can be located at www.hopatcongpolice.org and can be linked from the Borough's web page at www.hopatcong.org

Maintain Animal Control functions and the Hopatcong Animal Shelter operations

Senior Nutrition Center

Maintain delivery of Senior emergency lunches as program availability provides

Hopatcong Community Center

The Community Center is open to all communications via phone, email, and private messages on our page

The door will be locked to any foot traffic, limited foot traffic for the Administrator, the Mayor, Center Point of Contact, Center Director, and two volunteers, but not at the same time and maintaining social distances at all times

Maintain volunteers to two (2) at any given time to prevent any group of three (3) from being in the center at one time, while maintaining social distances at all times.

Volunteers are coming in for supplies only

Volunteers make deliveries to residents that have reached out due to being immunocompromised and cannot shop

Volunteers are required to wear gloves and a mask (Borough supplied) to the center to pick up the boxes that only the Center Point of Contact and the Center Director has packed and they must wear gloves and mask to the resident's home as well

Volunteers or the Center Director will leave packages on the resident doorstep. By calling, the Center Point of Contact will verify that the packages have been delivered. At no time should the Volunteer or Center Director come in contact with the resident or anyone at the residency.

Tax Assessment

Maintain tax records and process deeds, if the County sends them and do address changes.

Monitor phone calls and emails.

200' list requests

All mode IV updates

Periodically check mail

Tax Collection

Tax & Utility Collection

Accounts can be accessed at www.Hopatcong.org under Online Payments; you can view information and make payments here. Payments can also be made by mail and the drop-box in front of Borough Hall.

Tax payments

Water & sewer payments

PTR1 and PTR2 (Property Tax Reimbursement) Forms are all being handled through the mail or the drop-box in front of Borough Hall. These will be mailed back to the property owner once completed.

Monitor emails and phone calls/messages

Process mail

Process all required tax, water and sewer billing

Process final water and sewer inspections

Process all faxes. Fax# (973) 770-4892

As per Council approval, we will be waiving late fees and interest on tax, water & sewer payments for the current quarter, until further advised.