

Town of Wilson Coronavirus Emergency Response Plan

Updated March 18, 2020

These are certainly trying times in our community and around the world. However, your town government is committed to serving you as best that we can during this unprecedented crisis. As such, we will be making some several changes to our operations to ensure we are able to provide basic services while also keeping the public and our employees and volunteers safe. As you know, conditions and plans are changing rapidly at both the national and local levels. Accordingly, we will be diligent in updating our plans as conditions warrant and to communicate those updates to you in a timely manner.

CHANGES TO HOW WE SERVE THE PUBLIC

1. Beginning immediately **the public will NOT be allowed in the town office, town hall or maintenance building** for any purpose other than to process absentee ballots, to participate in early voting or to handle any emergencies that may arise. No other public business will be conducted in the town office until further notice.
 - a. **Early Voting** – Strict safety procedures will mandated for early voting at the town office, including restricting building access to one person at a time, a no touching policy, prohibiting use of restrooms, and sanitizing anything touched by voters after each entry.
 - b. **April 7th Voting** – We anticipate some challenges with primary day voting at the town hall, including a possible shortage of poll workers. We will be developing a plan that balances safety with trying to get voters in and out in a reasonable amount of time. We encourage voters to dress accordingly as lines may extend outdoors in order to maintain appropriate social distancing. We also encourage you to avoid peak voting hours such as 5:00-7:00 p.m.
2. All other essential town business with the public is to be conducted remotely by email or phone, and by using the town office drop box, email or snail mail to deliver documents.
 - a. All general **permit applications** (building, electrical, fill, conditional use, etc.), **liquor license applications** and **other forms** can be downloaded from the town’s website. Completed applications and forms should be placed in the town office drop box along with a check for the appropriate payment. Consultation and other discussions related to permit applications or other forms must be conducted remotely via telephone or email.
 - b. **Dog license applications** and payments should be left in the drop box or mailed to the town hall by March 31. Checks should be made out to The Town Wilson. Fees are \$7.00 for each dog that is spayed or Neutered and \$14.00 if not. A copy of a rabies certificate must be included for each dog. Lastly, include a self-addressed stamped envelope so a receipt and a tag can be returned to you.
 - c. We will require **payments for all other types of services** to be made online, by credit card over the phone, or by check or cash deposited in the town office drop box.
 - d. At the discretion of our town staff, we may instruct residents to delay nonessential town business until a future date in order manage our workload and maximize safety.

3. The **transfer station** will remain open during our regular Saturday and Tuesday hours. However, we are adopting strict safety rules in accordance with the CDC guidelines. Town staff are instructed to maintain a minimum 3' distance (6' preferred) from residents and to NOT handle any resident refuse, recyclables or other materials. Transfer station staff will also be required to wash and/or disinfect their hands regularly throughout the day.
4. The **fire department** will temporarily suspend all meetings and firefighter trainings.
5. We will require all businesses in the town's sanitary districts to self-report **meter readings**. Sanitary district staff will continue to read outdoor meters.

CHANGES TO HOW WE CONDUCT PUBLIC MEETINGS

1. We are moving rapidly to require certain **town public meetings** to be conducted remotely. As such we have classified meetings into three categories.
 - a. **Essential** – town board, sanitary commission, plan commission
 - b. **Optional** – fire advisory committee, parks & forestry commission
 - c. **Nonessential** – Board of appeals (unless urgent), wage & salary committee, long-range planning committee, sex offender residence board, annexation ad hoc committee
2. The town board, at its discretion, will require town public meetings to be conducted in one of two ways, either remotely by conference call or by moving them to the larger town hall where appropriate social distancing can be accommodated. Essential meetings will be conducted accordingly using one of these two methods. Optional meetings, at the discretion of the chairperson, can be held in that same manner or cancelled altogether. Nonessential meetings will be suspended for an undetermined period of time.
3. We are currently researching the technology that will allow us to conduct meetings via telephone conference call in accordance with open meetings laws. Should the board determine that is the direction we will take, we will post meetings accordingly with the dial-in instructions for the public. Agendas and other meeting documents will be available on our website.
4. Guidance from the Department of Justice states, "Governmental bodies typically can meet their open meetings obligations, while practicing social distancing to help protect public health, by conducting meetings via telephone conference calls if the public is provided with an effective way to monitor such calls (such as public distribution, at least 24 hours in advance, of dial-in information for a conference call)." The town will comply with these requirements.

HOW WE WILL KEEP OUR EMPLOYEES SAFE

1. If any town employee has traveled outside the country or to a known high-risk area, has had contact with someone with either suspected or confirmed COVID-19, or feel they are exhibiting mild symptoms they think may be associated with COVID-19 such as mild respiratory illness, fever or cough, they will be instructed to call their primary care provider for further direction and to self-isolate at home for the minimum 14-day period recommended by the CDC or until further instructions from their doctor.

2. The town office (except for early voting), town hall (except for April 7th primary voting), and maintenance building will be off limits to the public until further notice.
3. Maintenance staff are instructed to maintain a minimum 3' distance (6' preferred) from residents and to minimize handling of resident refuse and recyclables.
4. The office cleaning service has been suspended indefinitely.
5. Deliveries will be managed to limit access to buildings and employees and to sanitize surface areas where there may have been contact by delivery persons.
6. Office and maintenance staff will practice strict sanitary procedures that include adhering to appropriate social distancing and coughing protocol, regularly washing and/or sanitizing hands, wiping the restroom after each use, regularly wiping common area surfaces (door handles, tables, file cabinets, etc.) and sanitizing individual work areas.

HOW WE WILL COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

As mentioned, circumstances can change quickly. Therefore, our plan will remain dynamic and can also change quickly. We will communicate to the public in the following ways. Any other suggestions are welcome.

1. We will rely mostly on the town website to provide timely updates to the public.
2. We will also maintain limited signage on the town office outer door.
3. Initially, we will have pamphlets available at the transfer station.
4. We will also devote a substantial amount of the upcoming town newsletter to this topic.
5. Residents can also call the town office or email/call the town supervisors if they have any questions or input.

We appreciate your patience and understanding. Stay safe!