



NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Update on COVID-19 From the Town of Needham and Needham Public Health

March 23, 2020 – The Town of Needham and Needham Public Health today provided the following update regarding COVID-19.

State DPH COVID-19 Numbers

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is reporting that as of March 23, 2020 there are

- 777 cases statewide
- 82 Norfolk County
- 9 deaths

There are currently three cases in Needham. Beginning tomorrow, the Town will release the confirmed cases in Needham weekly each Tuesday at 5 pm.

Governor Charlie Baker Orders All Non-Essential Businesses To Cease In-Person Operation, Directs the Department of Public Health to Issue Stay at Home Advisory For Two Weeks

Governor Charlie Baker today ordered that beginning at noon on Tuesday, March 24, all non-essential businesses must close until noon on April 7th. The Governor also revised his previous order to limit gatherings of more than 10 people.

Grocery stores, pharmacies, public transit, restaurants offering to-go or delivery and other businesses designated as essential may remain open. More details can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-charlie-baker-orders-all-non-essential-businesses-to-cess-in-person-operation>

RTS Remains Open for Waste Disposal

The Recycling and Transfer Station remains open for waste disposal in Needham during the global COVID-19 outbreak with modified operations. Residents and commercial haulers may continue to drop off household waste and recycling during normal business hours. The RTS is also currently accepting yard waste.

Please note the following changes:

- The Swap Shop is currently closed;
- The Goodwill trailer is currently closed;
- Scrap metal, tires, refrigerators, air conditioners, propane tanks, and computer and TVs may not be dropped off for recycling until further notice;
- The bottle and can shed recycling program is suspended. Bottles and cans may be recycled in the coming containers for the time being or may be kept at home for the time being until the shed is re-opened;
- Used napkins, paper towels, tissues, wipes and similar items are not recyclable. They must go in the trash.

Stickers scheduled to expire March 31st for commercial haulers will be automatically extended to April 30, 2020.

Please adhere to social distancing guidelines, including staying 6 feet away from fellow RTS patrons and staff. To minimize interaction, consider dropping items off during off-peak times instead of Saturdays.



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Special Voter Registration Session Cancelled

The special Voter Registration Session scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2020 from 9 AM to 8 PM is cancelled due to the closure of Town Hall. Individuals who need to register to vote prior to the April 14th Annual Town Election may register online at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/OVR/> or call the Needham Town Clerk's Office (781-455-7500 x 216, 218, 219, 252) for a mail-in voter registration form that can be filled out and dropped in the Town's drop box outside Town Hall.

Community Council Changes Food Donation, Food Pantry Protocols

The Needham Community Council sent the following message today to the community: "Over the past several weeks, your outpouring of support for our Food Pantry has allowed us both to continue to serve Needham residents with food insecurity and to increase our efforts for an expanding number of families and individuals. Thank you. Things are changing quickly, though, and we need your help. **At this time, we are suspending all food drop-offs and food drives; including any food donations from online delivery sites [eg. Amazon].**

Instead - if your own circumstances permit - we would like to ask you for your continued support of the Council Food Pantry by making a financial donation <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/NeedhamCommunityCouncil/onlinedonation.html> . The funds raised will allow us to directly purchase the products needed to continue our work. This is the best way for our limited staff to meet the needs of our constituents, and the way in which the community can best support the Council at this time.

Due to the recommendations around social distancing, **the conditions under which we serve our constituents have also changed.** Whereas we have for years invited clients into the Food Pantry to select their own products with the support of our dedicated staff and volunteers, this model no longer meets the guidelines set to reduce COVID-19 transmission.

We are transitioning, until further notice, to a new model. **We will be pre-packing boxes of groceries and asking Food Pantry customers to come, by appointment only, to the Council for curbside pickup only.** Housebound residents or those without transportation should call us at 781-444-2415 to request home delivery. This will reduce potential coronavirus exposure to our staff and volunteers as well as to all of the residents who rely on the Food Pantry for groceries.

If you, or someone you know, needs food/grocery supports, but is not currently registered with our food pantry, please call the Council at (781) 444-2415. We will continue to be a resource for all our neighbors, for as long as the need is there."

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