

Town of Harpswell: COVID-19 Response Plan

March 25, 2020

Town Operations:

- The Town Office at 263 Mountain Road is closed to public access for an unknown period, with postings on all exterior doors.
- This closure will remain in effect, pending information from the Maine CDC, Town staff, and the Board of Selectmen.
- On March 18th, Select Board Chairman Kevin Johnson, signed an emergency proclamation for the Town declaring a public health emergency, which was renewed at the Board meeting on March 23, 2020, with a timeline paralleling the State of Maine. This proclamation affirms how seriously we take the COVID-129 situation and may enable us to more effectively access additional resources, if needed.

Town Offices:

- We encourage you to use our online services as much as possible through www.harpswell.maine.gov
- Most of the staff is not in the building now, except for essential staff, but we anticipate return of some staff in the near future. We are actively engaged in pursuing methodologies that allow staff to work remotely.
- Prior to the closure, every office had sanitizer on the counter as you would approach. Once re-opened, we will continue to encourage this sanitizer use.
- Messages can be left on the Town's voicemail by calling 833-5771.

Board/commission/committee meetings:

- The Town Office is presently closed to any public access.
- The Board of Selectmen is able to convene remotely via Zoom and has. The public can participate by going to the Town's website at harpswell.maine.gov and clicking

on the Zoom link. This technology may be available for other essential meetings. All non-essential meetings are postponed until further notice.

Town Employee Safety and Health:

- All town employees have been informed about safety and hygiene related to COVID-19 and the need for extreme precautions when sick, i.e. staying home. When medically appropriate, using ME CDC guidelines, employees will self-quarantine at home.
- All publicly accessible work surfaces have been cleaned daily when the building was open. This includes entrance doors to the building.
- No one is planning to travel internationally in the near future. Several employees slated to travel this month have cancelled or postponed their travel plans.
- Dept. of Safety and Emergency Services employees are kept updated with the latest information, sometimes on a daily basis. If responding to medical calls, they have full Personal Protective Equipment. Several are in the process to be fit tested for the N95 mask, required for health care professionals, but would not be allowed patient contact until all requirements are met. Safety for all is of the utmost concern. The Town's Emergency Management Agent as well as Fire and Rescue Chiefs are in constant contact with the ME CDC, Maine EMS (emergency medical services), and each other to provide the most updated equipment and safety practices.

Recycling Center & Transfer Station:

- New Daily schedule, Tuesday, Friday & Saturday. 8AM-4PM at the Transfer Station. 8AM-4:15PM at the Recycling Center.
- Current services are limited due to handling issues. Trash, Recycling, Compostable Material, Rechargeable Batteries, Bottles & Cans are still being accepted and processed. Most others have been suspended for the time being. Please check with an attendant for more information. Until further notice there will be no more than 8 vehicles allowed in Recycling Center parking lot at one time. Please plan for delays.
- Transfer Station is currently open during revised scheduled. Closure of the Transfer Station may become a necessity at some point in time. Businesses and the public should be aware of and stay abreast of changes as current events unfold.

Town Recreation/Trails:

- All recreation programs are suspended for the time being. We followed the MPA (Maine Principal Association) guidelines in suspending spring sports until April 27. This is subject to change as events unfold and are changing daily. We post updates and community information on our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/harpswellrecreation>
- Our trail and open space usage has increased. We will be monitoring this usage and encourage all users to practice social distancing and follow CDC rules for gathering when outside and on trails. All our properties are carry in/carry out, so please take any trash with you.
- A few things to remember while we are all out there in this together:
- ---DOGS: Town of Harpswell policy is: Dogs must be under control (voice or leash).
We are urging at this time with the increased number of dogs to please leash your dog during heavy use periods on the trails. This is not only for your safety, but other dogs, kids, elderly and any users who may be new to the trails or folks afraid of dogs.
- ---DOG WASTE: The Town trails all have green DOGPOTS that include doggie poop bags and a can to dispose of them in. PLEASE use them and DO NOT leave used bags on the trail. It is not safe for anyone to touch them to remove them at this point (other than the dog owner that already touched the bag).
- ---NAVIGATION: Town of Harpswell uses white blazes on the main trails, yellow on cut-off trails and blue on access trails. When walking the trails it is very important to the integrity of the trail to stay on the marked path.

Emergency Management:

- The Town Administrator, Deputy Town Administrator, and Emergency Management Agent have been meeting formally 2X/week for over 2 weeks, and are meeting informally every day in person. We are meeting formally with the Board of Selectmen as needed. The second floor of the Town Office, Administrative wing, has become our Emergency Operations Center. We can access telephones, desktop and laptop computers, meeting space using social distancing, work tables, and the *I am Responding* software used by all three volunteer fire companies.

- Harpswell Aging at Home (HAH) is being extremely diligent in its efforts to support others. HAH is offering To Go meals for pickup at their usual HAH luncheon locations and times. Additionally, HAH has set up phone calling plans to ensure residents do not become too isolated. HAH is actively meeting, remotely.
- The Town's website, www.harpswell.maine.gov will continue to be the primary communications tool for the Town, and will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Harpswell's Facebook page will be another valuable communication tool.
- The Town Emergency Management Agent is in regular contact with peers at the National, State, Regional, and Local levels, to ensure the most updated information is shared with residents, visitors, Town Staff, and the Town's First Responders. We are fortunate to have groups like the Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency and Maine CDC which constantly and effectively support us.

For Further Information:

- 211 Maine: Get information/answers 24/7 by dialing 211 (or 866-811-5695), texting your ZIP code to 898-211, or emailing info@211maine.org
- State of ME CDC Coronavirus website: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml>
- U.S. CDC Coronavirus website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Miscellaneous:

- These are stressful, uncertain times for all of us, for so many reasons, and we do NOT know what the future holds. We know that many will be affected economically and socially. Please know your safety and health, both physical and mental, will continue to be our utmost concern. Know that Maine Behavioral Healthcare is available 24/7 at 800-568-1112 for any mental health issues.
- Of growing concern is the number of people coming to Harpswell from out-of-state. The President's Task Force on the Coronavirus has recommended that everyone who has left the New York metro area should self-isolate for 14 days. This is a situation that we will continue to monitor.

- If you cannot find what you need here or need further assistance, you can reach out to our Emergency Management Agent, Art Howe, at 207-833-5771 X126, or ahowe@town.harpswell.me.us