An Important Message from Ashland Town Manager, Michael Herbert

Dear Ashland Residents & Friends:

I hope this email finds you and your family safe and well.

Yesterday afternoon, the Select Board and the Board of Health voted to declare a state of emergency for Ashland. This designation underscores the severity of the situation and gives us the ability to enforce business closures (per the governor's stay at home advisory) and other actions to promote the healthy and safety of our town. It also ensures that we can be reimbursed through any state and federal program designated to cover this emergency.

Please visit the Town's dedicated COVID-19 page here. Also, occasionally during the day I will post Facebook Live updates on the town's Facebook page. Please like and follow our Facebook page for those and other updates.

The time that we are in is nothing short of surreal. Please check on your friends and neighbors. The creative energy in Ashland is amazing, and it is great to see so many unique ways that the community is coming up with to connect while being physically apart. Please stay safe, sane, and healthy everyone!

Michael Herbert
Town Manager

State Information

Governor's Order Requiring Non-Essential Businesses to Close

Yesterday, Governor Charlie Baker issued an emergency order requiring all businesses and organizations that do not provide "COVID-19 Essential Services" to close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public as of Tuesday, March 24th at noon until Tuesday, April 7th at noon. These businesses are encouraged to continue operations remotely. The list leaves a great deal of interpretation, and we are working towards guidelines to make sure we are meeting
the spirit of this regulation.

CLICK HERE for a full list of "Essential Businesses"

I realize that this is a necessary, but incredible burden on businesses here in town. We are strongly advocating to our state and federal delegation to develop programs to provide some level of relief. Please take this survey to help us know what it is you need.

COVID-19 State of Emergency Details

Click the link above for updates, emergency orders, and guidance associated with the COVID-19 State of Emergency. On March 10, Governor Charlie Baker declared a state of emergency, giving the Administration more flexibility to respond to the Coronavirus outbreak. The Administration continues to take steps to limit the spread of COVID-19. CLICK HERE for more information

Resident Services

3R - Resident and Restaurant Relief Program

With the daily changes in how the Coronavirus is impacting our community and businesses we have revised the 3R (Resident and Restaurant Relief) Program, to better meet the needs of the community.

Starting Monday, March 23rd, we will be offering food delivery from participating restaurants to anyone facing a hardship due to unemployment, loss of income, or other factors contributing to a need due to the COVID-19 crisis. Please call the town's COVID-19 hotline at 508-532-7900 between the hours of 9am-12pm on Friday and Monday to order meals which will be delivered directly to your home Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 12pm-1pm. If you or anyone in your family is experiencing food insecurity please call the hotline for the 3R. This program is being funded by the Ashland Emergency Fund. It was created to help individuals and families that might find themselves struggling because of the economic impact COVID-19 is having on our community and to help support local eateries during this trying time.

Food Pantry Services

Thank you to the Ashland community for your support in stocking the shelves at the Ashland Human Services Food Pantry. However, at this time, we are taking all precautions to keep our staff and residents safe and are no longer able to take food donations into the food pantry.

The Ashland Food Pantry is asking for anyone wanting to donate to the Ashland Food Pantry to please send financial donations directly to
The Ashland Emergency Fund. These funds will allow us to not only distribute food to those in need, but address a number of other financial challenges as well. 100% of the Ashland Emergency Fund goes directly to emergency relief for Ashland residents.

Please note that the team at the food pantry continues to work hard to provide food for families. Contact the team directly if you are in need of food at 508-532-7942 or 508-532-7946 or by emailing humanservices@ashlandmass.com.

School Lunch Program - Grab & Go Meals

The Ashland Public Schools are offering all PreK-12 students the opportunity to pick up Grab and Go meals, covering breakfast and lunch for two days. The meals can be picked up from the Teacher’s Lunch Room in the rear of the Ashland High School cafeteria. Signs will be posted in the back of the building with directions. Students will need their individual pin numbers for identification. The schedule for meal pick up is as follows:

Thursday, March 19, 11 am -1 pm  
Monday, March 23, 11am -1pm  
Wednesday, March 25, 11 am -1 pm  
Friday, March 27, 11am -1pm  
Monday, March 30, 11am -1pm  
Wednesday, April 1, 11 am -1 pm  
Friday, April 3, 11 am - 1pm

Families who wish to participate should contact Lisa Beaudin, our Director of Nutrition Services at nutrition@ashland.k12.ma.us by 2:30 pm.

Many thanks to Superintendent Adams and his staff for putting this important program together.

DPW Updates

Due to the State of Massachusetts Executive Order, effective March 24th, please be advised that ALL Simple Recycling collection operations in the state are temporarily suspended. This will remain in effect until further notice. Please DO NOT leave the pink SimpleRecycling bags with textile and household goods recycling at the curb.....they WILL NOT be collected. When the collection suspension is lifted, notification will be sent.

Also effective March 18, 2020 - Waste Management is temporarily closing its residential call center in response to COVID-19. As a result Bulky Item and White Good collections scheduling will be temporarily suspended until Waste Management is able to equip its call center staff with remote access - a process which is currently underway. Please note that items already scheduled will be collected. This change will not impact regular trash and recycling collection.

I have explored the option to move up yard waste pickup, and unfortunately Waste
Management is unable to accommodate. They schedule out their services several months in advance and are already scheduled to provide services to other communities on earlier dates.

Also, there are a lot of questions regarding the orange Pay-As-You-Throw bags, specifically if do not want (or can't) go outside. Instacart gives residents an option to purchase specific bags. If you do an order, search for trash bags and scroll to the bottom. You'll see a button for "special requests". Enter your request there. Just make sure to specify how many and what size.

Fun Activites! (While still practicing social distancing)

I greatly appreciate our Recreation and Library staff coming up with innovative ways for families to entertain themselves during these stressful times. Now you can play BINGO live on Facebook with ARC Staff! We will be giving away some ARC swag...water bottles, t-shirts, lunch bags, drawstring bags and maybe even a beach towel! Swing by the Community Center to pick up a sheet of BINGO cards or download one at home. BINGO sheets are in a green bin on the bench next to the Senior Center entrance, there are plenty, please take only what you need. Use coins or game pieces to play and you can use the same card over and over again. CLICK HERE for information.

Town Meeting and Elections

Per the Town of Ashland Charter, the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for 5/6, and the Town Election scheduled for 5/19. Due to the pandemic, legislation is either passed or being considered to provide for a changing of the date for both activities. More information soon.

Business

Ashland Restaurants
Most Ashland restaurants have amended the typical way of serving patrons. Some that have not done takeout and delivery are now doing so. CLICK HERE for a list of restaurants and some updated specials and modified hours of operation.

Business Owners
We are doing our best to stay current on programs and information that is being provided to business owners in the Commonwealth. Please click here for more details on programming, funding and basic information on what is next for our business community.

Closures

Local parks and playgrounds: To make sure everyone is following state
regulations around social and physical distancing town leadership has created an order that all local parks and playgrounds are closed until further notice. Signs will be posted and violations will be considered trespassing. State parks are currently open, but we are enforcing all rules and bylaws such as illegal parking. We can’t stress enough the importance of social and physical distancing.

All town buildings remain closed.

For a full list of closures [CLICK HERE].

**Stay Informed**

**Future Updates**
Updates will be shared primarily through this medium (email newsletter), so please [sign up for updates] and encourage your friends and neighbors to do so as well.

Updates will also be shared via Twitter: @ashlandmass and @AshlandTwnMgr or the Town of Ashland's Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/TownofAshlandMA/](https://www.facebook.com/TownofAshlandMA/)

The CDC Coronavirus site is updated regularly with important information. Please bookmark it and refer to it frequently: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

The mission of the Economic Development department is to encourage, promote, and support growth and development within the town.

[sign up for emails]

[share this email]

Town of Ashland