An Important Message from Ashland Town Manager, Michael Herbert

Dear Ashland Residents & Friends:

Those of you who are paying attention to national statistics will see that there has been a sharp increase of Coronavirus cases across the United States and the Commonwealth. As can be expected we are starting to see that in Ashland and the region as well. This isn't a reason to cause alarm, but it is a reason to continue to stay vigilant.

Data is starting to be presented that shows that our efforts are starting to have some effect on the spread of COVID-19. While this can be encouraging, it should definitely not incite complacency, as we still have a very long ways to go. To that end, today's updates contain new town information related to grocery stores in town as well as forthcoming requirements on construction work in town.

COVID-19 is not just having physical health impacts, but its also have fiscal, mental and emotional impacts as well. If there is anything you would like to me address or cover, please feel free to let me know directly at mherbert@ashlandmass.com.

You can continue to find more "real time" updates on our social media pages like the Town's Facebook page and my Twitter feed. As we start to see the number of cases in Ashland rise, please know that it is the highest priority for myself and my staff to ensure that we are doing our absolute best to help people stay safe and stay informed.

Please remember that non-emergency COVID-19 questions can be sent to covid19@ashlandmass.com or you can call 508-532-7900 if you need more information. Or you can go to our dedicated webpage.

Michael Herbert
Town Manager

COVID-19 CASES
Local Confirmed Cases in Ashland = 25

At this point, Ashland has 25 positive confirmed cases for COVID-19. The Ashland Board of Health team and volunteer nurses are diligently working to keep our community safe at this time.

Visit our website for updated case information

The Following information as of April 6th, 2020 at 12:30 pm

Confirmed Cases Reported in MA = 12,500

Key Updates:
There were 4,492 new tests conducted for a total of 76429
There are 1337 new cases for a total of 13837
29 new deaths were reported for a total of 260

Learn More

Confirmed Cases Reported Nationwide...304,826
Total cases: 330,891
Total deaths: 8,910
Jurisdictions reporting cases: 55
(50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands)

Learn More

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LOCAL GROCERY STORE INFORMATION

There have been a lot of rumors/discussion recently about the status of grocery stores in town, particularly Market Basket. Our Board of Health Agent has provided this statement in response:

To Our Community Members:

Please be informed that the Food Inspector and I have been in contact with the grocery store managers over the past several weeks and continue to contact them to review their COVID-19 operating procedures as directed by the State. We have also provided the grocery store managers information on COVID-19 procedures to follow, including safety measures to prevent the transmission of disease.

As their customers, we suggest you continue to follow social distancing when shopping for your food, even if you are wearing a mask. Also, please wash your hands when returning home with your groceries. Please be assured the grocery stores are following the protocols and trying to make a safe shopping environment. I am confident that they understand the protocols and have a good plans in place.

Additional information on COVID-19 can be found on our Town website.

Again, we emphasize the importance of hand washing, do not touch your face, stay home if sick, social distancing, wearing a mask per CDC guidelines when out in public...
places, such as a grocery store and we recommend you limit your trips to the grocery stores.

Feel free to contact me with any questions at 508-881-0100, ext 7922.

Thank you
Mark Oram, Health Agent / Director

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION

Although construction activities are still considered "essential" under Governor Baker's recent Executive Orders. However, those orders and subsequent guidance give cities and towns to impose requirements related to public health and safety.

Per state guidance, all construction activities are required to have a health and safety plan that details how they are addressing workplace safety and COVID-19 issues. This is to be both filed and approved with the Planning/Building Department. If there are violations, the town has the ability to shut down and secure the site until compliance is reached. We will also have the ability to require the contractor to pay for a third party compliance officer that reports to the town if frequent violations occur.

We will be drafting correspondence to this effect that will go to all contractors this week, and I want to thank everyone for their forthcoming cooperation.

STATE INFORMATION & RESOURCES

New Information from Governor Baker
Governor Baker announced the following information during his press conference yesterday, April 6th.

Introducing Massachusetts State Covid-19 Relief Fund
Learn More

Update: The State received 100 new ventilators from the National Stockpile, which are now distributing among local hospitals.

Please stay home and only leave the home for essential reasons:

- When leaving the home, only one family member per household should take the trip out to the grocery store. Do not browse the stores and navigate the store purposefully, while limiting the touching of items.
- Go for a walk, but follow 6 feet social distancing when passing others.
- Absolutely no active organized sports, even if it's outside
Please stay home and only leave the home for essential reasons.

Learn More

More State Information Resources

COVID-19 State of Emergency updates Click Here
Governor Baker's State Press Releases Click Here
Mayor Walsh's City Press Releases Click Here
Senate President Spilka's Office updates Click Here

Town of Ashland Department Updates
Find updates and more information for our departments on their respective website and on their Facebook page.

Ashland Human Services Facebook
Ashland Public Library Facebook
Ashland Department of Public Works Facebook
Ashland Recreation Facebook
Ashland Senior Center Facebook

Ashland Parks and Playgrounds are Closed
All Parks and playgrounds are closed to the public. Warren Conference Center, Warren Woods, and DCR Beaches parking lots are closed. Learn More

Ashland Emergency Fund
AEF is assisting the Town of Ashland feed those in need through the town's 3R (Restaurant and Resident Relief) Program, stocking Ashland Food pantry, as well as assisting those with non-refundable costs for Ashland Public Schools Nutritional Services. Learn More

In addition, they are setting up a program with assistance from the Town's Human Services Department where any member of the Ashland Community can apply for assistance to help cover housing, car payments, taxes or utilities. Donate Now

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Board of Health Agent Volunteers
We still need some help! The Ashland Board of Health Agent seeks additional medical professionals to help track and monitor cases. This volunteer position is a work from home position and the professional must live
Thank you to the Ashland school nurses who have helped with case reviews related to COVID-19!

If you are interested in helping
Contact Mark Oram, Health Agent / Director at 508-881-0100, x 7922.

General Volunteering

We all want to commit to assisting our neighbors in this dire time of need. However, it is imperative we all continue to adhere to social and physical distancing.

Consider these safe options:

- Become a Phone Pal with Ashland Human Services
- Sew a mask for professional protective gear
- Explore more options with Volunteer Match here

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**BUSINESS INFORMATION**

Governor Baker signs legislation allowing Restaurants to sell wine and beer by take-out. Learn More

Non- Essential Businesses Closure extends to Monday, May 4th. These businesses are encouraged to continue operations remotely. Full List of Essential Businesses

For Unemployment Information Click Here or Apply Now

Families First Coronavirus Response Act Learn More or Business Guide

For more Business Resources Click Here

ABA Program Set for Virtual "Office Hour"

Wednesday, April 8, 12 to 1 pm

See Zoom call-in instructions below.

- Chuck Budd, Avidia Bank, Senior Vice President, Commercial Relationship Officer, will discuss and answer questions regarding the financing programs being rolled out by the government, including the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).
Susan Nicholl, District Liaison, Office of Senate President Karen Spilka, will listen to business owners' concerns regarding state programs, gather that information, and if she doesn't have a solution or resource, get back to them.

All ABA members who participate in this call will be entered into a drawing for a $25 gift card to one of our Ashland businesses! Join us online every Wednesday @ noon as we speak with experts, discuss the current economic situation, and share vital information.

Call-in instructions: Please call in a few minutes in advance of the meeting. Click here to join the meeting  Meeting ID: 218 446 954
If using phone and not computer mic: +1-929-436-2866# US (New York)

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.

Stay Informed

Coronavirus Updates
Hotline: 508-532-7900
Email: COVID19@ashlandmass.com
Website: ashlandmass.com/765/Coronavirus-2020

Follow us on Social Media
@ashlandmass and @AshlandTwnMgr
@TownofAshlandMA

Town Manager's Newsletter
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.

Watch the Town Manager's Updates on Facebook Live
Previous Update Videos:
Thursday, March 19th, 2020
Monday, March 23rd, 2020
Thursday, March 26th, 2020
Thursday, April 2nd, 2020
The mission of the Economic Development department is to encourage, promote, and support growth and development within the town.