

Township of Byram



COVID-19 Pandemic & Continuity of Government

INTRODUCTION

The contagious virus that causes COVID-19, commonly known as novel coronavirus, continues to spread globally. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has indicated that COVID-19 is a serious health threat.

While we cannot predict when or if COVID-19 will impact Byram Township, we can anticipate that such an impact could result in high rates of employee absenteeism and an increase in demand for public safety services.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the COVID-19 Pandemic & Continuity of Government plan was developed to assist the Township in preparing, responding to and conducting essential operations during a potential coronavirus pandemic outbreak. This plan establishes the following goals:

1. Protect Employees, their families and Township residents
2. Minimize the effects served by Township employees
3. Communicate accurate information about COVID-19
4. Communicate accurate information about Township closure
5. Continue essential operations and provide primary services to the public

PLANNING

All Township emergency operations included in this plan will be carried out in accordance with the already approved Township's Emergency Operations Plan, and the Public Health Annex of the Sussex County Emergency Operations Plan.

Updates to this plan may be forthcoming due to new information learned. The need to develop additional procedures and or practices related to this plan will be communicated through this document.

Department Heads shall plan to expect for an increase in worker absentee rates due to personal illnesses, family illnesses, community mitigation efforts, quarantines, childcare issues resulting from school and daycare closures and the overall fear of risking exposure by leaving the sanctity of one's home. Where possible, employees shall be cross-trained within their department to meet the on-going challenges and demands that will impact their operations.

Goal 1: Protect Employees, their families and Township residents

In order to have the personnel resources to fulfil organizational and operational needs during an outbreak, employee protection and safety is the key objective. All other goals and objectives are predicated on successfully carrying out this core responsibility.

Objective 1.1 - Make the workplace safe to ensure the health and wellbeing to our employees and residents.

A. Supporting Initiatives:

- a. Hand sanitizers are available, and more will be ordered for offices, along with sanitizing wipes.
- b. Soap, water and paper towels are abundantly available for handwashing.
- c. Use gloves when handling mail and/or money.
- d. The Public Works Department, will continue to sanitize all surfaces throughout the week. If you observe something that needs immediate attention, please contact Mike Orgera for assistance.
- e. Signs will be posted at town hall discouraging residents with flu like symptoms from entering the building.
 - i. Residents who enter the building and show visible signs of flu like symptoms may be asked to leave.
- f. Township inspectors shall use their best judgment when entering a home. If homeowner shows visible signs of flu like symptoms, they may re-schedule the inspection.
 - i. When scheduling an inspection, questions can be asked if they have recently travelled to any of the affected countries or have been exposed or come in contact with the COVID-19 virus.
- g. Due to the severity of the virus, please notify the Administration Department (Joe Sabatini, Doris Flynn or Phil Crosson) immediately, if you, a family member or a person with whom you have close contact has:
 - i. Recently travelled to any of the affected countries.
 - ii. Been exposed or come in contact with COVID-19 virus.
- h. Until further notice, the Township is postponing attendance at conferences, seminars or other events.
- i. Department Heads shall refrain from gathering groups of employees and volunteers. Utilize conference calling and other social distancing measures.

Objective 1.2 – Establish and enact polices to limit the potential spread of illness.

A. Supporting Initiatives:

- a. Out of the abundance of caution, if you are ill, particularly if you have a fever, you are required to stay out of the office. If you come to work sick, your Supervisor may send you home.
- b. Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify the Administration Department, speak to their physician and the Sussex County Health Department before returning to work.

Objective 1.3 – Communicate and make information available to minimize exposure.

A. Supporting Initiatives

- a. Stay home when you are sick.
- b. Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Instead, use the telephone and video conferencing.
- c. If meeting face-to-face, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one yard from each other if possible.
- d. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- e. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- f. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. If you do not have a tissue available, cover your nose and mouth with your elbow to cough or sneeze.
- g. Clean and disinfect your workspace frequently.
- h. Avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands, hugs and kisses.
- i. Avoid any unnecessary travel and postpone nonessential meetings, workshops and training sessions.
- j. Do not congregate in work rooms, pantries, copier rooms or other small areas where people socialize.
- k. Bring lunch and eat at your desk, outside if weather supports, vehicle or away from others.

Goal 2: Minimize the effects served by Township employees

It is essential that we make every effort to provide the public with the services they need. This section shall outline the steps that should be taken to maintain services and mitigate further risk.

Objective 2.1 – Review Township services and identify ways to provide these services without resident interaction.

A. Supporting Initiatives:

- a. Public access to Municipal Building will be limited with access restricted to defined areas.
- b. Communicate to the public the services that we provide on a day to day basis that can be accomplished through other means. See Appendix A for list of online services.
- c. Potentially reschedule future meetings and large public gatherings. It is strongly recommended that all public gatherings with 250 people or more be postponed until further notice.
- d. Effective Monday, March 16, 2020 and continuing for an initial fourteen (14) days until March 30, 2020, out of the abundance of caution and to limit the spread of the COVID-19, all group programming and non-Township group meetings are canceled at Townhall, additionally, no new activities or meetings will be scheduled until further notice. This may be extended as circumstances dictate.

Objective 2.2 – Review Township material and supplies that may be impacted due to supply chain disruptions.

- A. Supporting Initiatives:
 - a. Encumber funds and order essential material and supplies that may be needed to protect public safety.

Goal 3: Communicate accurate information about COVID-19

It is essential that the Township communicate a concise and accurate message when disseminating information. This section shall outline the steps that should be taken to ensure residents are receiving the proper information.

Objective 3.1 - Establish a chain of command for disseminating information to the public.

- A. Supporting Initiatives:
 - a. The Township Administration will be the lead agency as it relates to disseminating information for the Township. The Township Administration will keep the Township Council and Emergency Responders advised of any residents being monitored or tested positive for COVID-19.
 - b. One concise message will be used to disseminate information. The Township Administration will post all relevant information on Township's Website homepage under News and Noteworthy, <https://www.byramtwp.org/>, information will also be posted on the Township's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/byramtownship/>. All other Departments may share the information once posted.
 - c. The Township's Nixle System will be used to send Alerts and Community Notices as needed.

Goal 4. Communicate accurate information about Township closure

It is essential that employees and residents receive timely and accurate information as it relates to the closure of Townhall and any disruption of services. This section shall outline the steps that should be taken to ensure employees and residents are receiving the proper information.

Objective 4.1 – Establish a chain of command for disseminating information to employees.

- A. Supporting Initiatives:
 - a. The Township Administration will determine if a workplace closure is needed with guidance from the Sussex County Department of Health.
 - b. The Administration Department will communicate with Department Heads, via the Township email account (cell phones as back up), the need to close Townhall. Department Heads will filter the information down to their staff members.

- c. The Administration Department will announce any closures on the Township Website, <https://www.byramtwp.org/>, and Township Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/byramtownship/>. All other Departments may share the information once posted.

Goal 5. Continue essential operations and provide primary services to the public

The initiatives for this goal are intended to address inadequate staffing due to absenteeism, establish a process for remote access to workstations, and ensure the continuity of essential operations.

Objective 5.1 – Prepare and execute personnel resource plan

B. Supporting Initiatives:

- a. The Administrator will review available personnel resources and coordinate with Department Heads to establish staffing level needs.

Objective 5.2 – Establish a process for remote access to workstations and telephones

A. Supporting Initiatives:

- a. All essential office employees will have access to their workstation through a remote access.
- b. Employees will be required to check Voicemail remotely and respond as appropriate.
- c. All other office employees shall be readily available during normal office hours if needed for assistance.

Objective 5.3 – Ensure the continuity of essential operations

A. Supporting Initiatives:

- a. The Administrator will review with Department Heads the essential operation and determine how it will be delivered.
- b. At a minimum, the following services shall be continued and/or have a contingency plan:
 - Payroll
 - Tax Collection
 - Public Safety (Police, Fire and EMS) and Dispatch Services
 - Sanitation Collection (Blue Diamond)
 - Public Works Services
 - Emergency Utility and Road Repairs
 - Sewer Operations
 - Building Cleaning and Disinfection
 - Fleet Maintenance with priority on Emergency and Essential Vehicles

- i. IT Support & Maintenance
- ii. Emergency Structural and Electrical Inspections that Effect Public Safety
- iii. Emergency Fire Prevention Inspections and Investigations that Effect Public Safety

APPENDIX A

ONLINE SERVICES

In an effort to minimize exposure to COVID-19, it is recommended that you call/email Townhall first. Many services can be provided on-line or over the phone. Below is a list of services that do not require a visit to Townhall. The list is not all encompassing, please visit <https://www.byramtwp.org/> for more information or call 973-347-2500.

Following is link to the staff directory: https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/staff_directory

Administration

Township Manager:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/township_manager

Township Council: https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_council

Residents Request: <https://www.egovlink.com/byram/action.asp>

Clerk's Office

Township Clerk/Registrar:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/township_clerk_registrar

Clerk/Registrar Forms:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/forms/#township_clerk_registrar

Finance/Tax Department

Finance/Tax Collector:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/finance_tax_assessor

Online Tax Payments: https://www.cit-e.net/byram_nj/cit-e-access/TaxBill_Std/?TID=146&TPID=13977c

Online Sewer Payments: https://www.cit-e.net/byram_nj/cit-e-access/Vital_UtiBill/?TID=146&TPID=17078

Account Lookup: <https://webportal.municipal-software.com/lookup/Byram>

Police Department

Police Department: https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/police

Police Department Website Site: <https://www.byrampd.org/>

Tax Assessment

Tax Assessor:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/tax_assessor

Tax Maps: https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/maps

Building Department

Building Department:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/building

Recreation Department

Recreation Facility Application:

https://www.byramtwp.org/useruploads/docs/Facilities_Application_revised_1292019.pdf

Recreation Finger Printing Form: <https://www.byramtwp.org/useruploads/docs/fingerprintingform2019.pdf>

Public Works

Public Works:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/department_of_public_works

Resident Requests: <https://www.egovlink.com/byram/action.asp>

Garbage & Recycling: https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/services/recycling_trash

Planning and Zoning

Planning and Zoning:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/planning_zoning

Zoning and Enforcement: <https://www.egovlink.com/byram/action.asp>

Zoning/Variance Applications:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/planning_zoning

Local Board of Health and Environmental Commission:

Board of Health:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_offices_detail/board_of_health

Environmental Commission:

https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/committees_detail/environmental_commission