

## Town of Acton

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Town of Acton Announces Postponement of March 31 Elections

ACTON -- Town Manager John Mangiaratti announces that the Board of Selectmen voted last night to postpone the annual town election to Tuesday, June 2.

The special election for the 37th Middlesex District seat has also been postponed to June 2 due to the ongoing outbreak of COVID-19, and the statewide stay-at-home advisory issued by Gov. Charlie Baker earlier this week.

In addition, the board previously voted to postpone the April 6 Annual Town Meeting and is awaiting additional information before setting a new date for Town Meeting. The Board also voted to work with the Board of Health to temporarily suspend the town's plastic bag ban.

The Commonwealth announced that all non-essential businesses must cease in-person operations by noon today through noon on Tuesday, April 7. Grocery stores, package

stores, restaurants serving takeout and delivery and certain other businesses are exempt from this order but are required to promote social distancing while remaining open. For more on this order, click [here](#).

Residents are encouraged to visit [actonma.gov/covid19](http://actonma.gov/covid19) for regular updates on the town's response to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency.

## **Additional Steps the Town has Taken:**

### **General Government**

- The Board of Selectmen and Board of Health issued a Declaration of Local Emergency consistent with local and state laws. To view to the declaration go to: <https://www.acton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6269/March-2020-Declaration-of-Local-Emergency>
- The Board of Selectmen and Board of Health plan to meet frequently during this time. The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled for Thursday, March 26, and the Selectmen are next scheduled to meet on Tuesday, March 31.
- The Board voted to postpone or cancel in-person board and committee meetings other than the Board of Selectmen and Board of Health until a further determination by the Board of Selectmen. Boards with time sensitive, statutory and contractual obligations may consider meeting remotely and virtually.
- The Town closed public buildings and public playgrounds. The closings will continue until such time as the Town Manager, in consultation with the chair and vice chair of the Board of Selectmen, determine the buildings and playgrounds should be re-opened.
- The Human Services and Senior Center Facility, Acton Memorial Library, West Acton Citizens Library, Recreation Offices and Town Hall will be closed to the public until further notice.
- Government operations for the Town of Acton will continue while all offices in the above mentioned buildings will be closed to the public. Residents are encouraged to utilize the Town of Acton's website, <http://www.actonma.gov>, to access Town services.
- The Finance Department published a frequently asked questions document regarding accessing finance services during the COVID-19 situation. That document is available online [here](#).

- Building inspections will continue on a limited basis. More information can be found [here](#).

## Community Resources

- A new guide to available food resources is available [here](#).
- Questions around fuel assistance eligibility and utility shut-off prevention should be directed to the Community Resources Office at 978-929-6651 or [lducharme@acton-ma.gov](mailto:lducharme@acton-ma.gov).

## Acton Nursing Services

- Appointments within the Acton Nursing Services office will be rescheduled for a later date as information and the COVID-19 situation continues to update. For concerns or questions call 978-929-6650.
- Home Health Care visits will continue with current clients as well as new clients who are referred to Acton Nursing Services. Be advised that per guidance for Home Health Agencies, all clients will receive a call prior to a home visit to assess their and any household members' health status related to COVID-19. If you are a current client of Acton Nursing Services or if anyone within your household has a fever, cough or shortness of breath, call our office number at 978-929-6650 to report these or other concerning symptoms.

## Libraries

- While the Acton Memorial Library remains temporarily closed to the public, all fines will be waived for items that become due while the building is closed. Do not return items until the library reopens.
- All physical items, including museum passes, will not be available to check out while the facility is closed. Residents are encouraged to explore the digital content available through the library. Visit [actonmemoriallibrary.org/eresources](http://actonmemoriallibrary.org/eresources) for more information on borrowing e-books, audiobooks, video and more.
- If you have questions about these services, please call 978-929-6543 and leave a message, or email us at [reference@acton-ma.gov](mailto:reference@acton-ma.gov), and a library staff member will get back to you..

## Public Safety

- We are actively practicing social distancing at the Public Safety Facility. While the building will remain open for emergencies, we ask that you call our business line

978-929-7711 for all police matters. For general questions regarding COVID-19, call the state's hotline at 211.

- We are taking more reports over the phone and if we do respond to your home we will try to keep our distance for everyone's safety.
- The MedReturn bin has been temporarily removed from the lobby of the PSF.

## **Public Works**

- The Transfer Station facility will remain open, but residents are encouraged to practice appropriate social distancing at the facility, as the virus is believed to spread when those who have the virus come into close contact, within six feet, of other people, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- The Transfer Station office building will be open for staff only as one measure to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- We would like to ask residents to delay bringing their bulky items and other materials that will require monetary transactions. We want to limit potential exposure to the public and staff that would normally have to handle these items.

## **Schools**

- Acton-Boxborough schools will offer bag lunches to individuals and families on Thursday, March 19 and Friday, March 20 for pick-up outside the main entrance of the High School. Pick up times will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Individuals picking up bag lunches should not enter the school and practice appropriate social distancing measures. All residents are welcome to pick up a meal regardless if you have a child enrolled in the school system.

## **Senior Center**

- The Senior Center will remain closed to the public until further notice.
- Meals on Wheels operations will continue along with limited meal take-out service. Call 781-221-7085 to reserve a meal.
- Seniors in need of assistance with food, grocery shopping, etc. should call the Senior Center at 978-929-6652.

## **Transportation**

- All of Acton's fixed-route services, including the Rail Shuttle and Cross-Acton Transit (CAT), will be suspended until further notice.

- Door-to-door services remain in operation; however, riders are encouraged to utilize alternative modes of transportation if possible. To schedule rides, continue using CrossTown Connect dispatch by calling 978-844-6809 during normal business hours.
- Any additional questions can be forwarded to Austin Cyganiewicz by phone at 978-929-6513 or email [acyganiewicz@actonma.gov](mailto:acyganiewicz@actonma.gov).
- The MBTA and Keolis Commuter Services (Keolis), the agency's operating partner for Commuter Rail, has announced a Reduced Service Schedule effective Tuesday, March 17. The Commuter Rail Reduced Service Schedule is available at [www.MBTA.com/coronavirus](http://www.MBTA.com/coronavirus).

## Veterans Services Office

- Urgent/emergency issues will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by calling James MacRae at 978-929- 6614.

## General Public Health Notes

- The Board of Health stated that all portable bathrooms and public bathrooms not in support of essential services shall remain closed during this public health emergency.
- The Household Hazardous Waste Day scheduled for May 9 has been postponed to a date to be determined.
- The Board of Health wants to remind residents to wash reusable bags after each use, as the virus can live within the bag.
- COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on Wednesday, March 11. Additionally, President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency on Friday, March 13, and Gov. Baker declared a State of Emergency on Tuesday, March 10.
- If anyone displays symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever, cough or shortness of breath, they should not come to work and they are advised to contact their primary care physician.
- Put distance between yourself and other people where COVID-19 has been confirmed in the surrounding communities. This is especially important for anyone over 60 years old and anyone with an underlying disease process that puts them at higher risk of getting COVID-19.

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person, including:
  - Between people who are in close contact with others (within about six feet)
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person sneezes or coughs

## Limit the Spread of COVID-19

Residents are encouraged to take the following steps to protect against COVID-19:

- Clean hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol for 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eye, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Practice social distancing between yourself and other people of at least six feet. Avoid social gatherings consisting of more than 10 people within a closed space.
- Cover your sneezes and coughs with a tissue or using the inside of your elbow, and promptly discard tissue and wash your hands.
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks.

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