On Friday, March 13, 2020, President Trump signed an emergency declaration over the coronavirus pandemic, unlocking certain government powers to deal with the public health challenge. In public health, these federal emergency power laws include provisions of the Public Health Service Act, the Stafford Act, the Social Security Act and other statutes.

In the face of an extreme risk of COVID-19 person-to-person transmission, the City’s State of Emergency remains in effect and until further notice.

Easthampton City Hall, the Council of Aging, our Public Schools are closed to the public beginning Monday, March 16, 2020 through Friday, March 27, 2020. This time of closure may change as city officials monitor the path of the virus.

The actions are a part of a city-wide risk-mitigation strategy to reduce the heightened regional risk of cross-contamination. We are working closely with federal, state and surrounding communities to reduce the spread of the virus further.

The Mayor’s office will send out a daily 3:00 pm, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Situation Awareness Report for the duration of the City’s State of Emergency. The report will be released over verified City Facebook pages, the City’s website www.easthamptonma.gov, and Easthampton Media.

City departments will be sending out information specifically related to their department. The Situational Awareness Reports are overviews of each day with crucial information from departments that relate to core municipal services but do not represent all updates available. Keep completely informed using these websites: www.cdc.gov and www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus

We urge all persons to continue to do their part by staying at home as much as possible during the State of Emergency. If you do go out:

- Practice social isolation—only leaving home as necessary
- Avoid large social gatherings
- Do not touch your face
- Cover coughs/sneezes with tissues, or cough/sneeze into the inner elbow
- Practice good handwashing with soap and water as often as possible
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers ONLY if soap and water are not available
**Easthampton City Hall Operations**
For municipal government continuity, core City operations and services will continue while City Hall will be closed to the public. City departments can be contacted via phone and email but their primary focus is COVID-19 related issues. The following essential personnel may be called to work or asked to work remotely during the closure: clerks, technology, finance, collections, payroll, public safety, school department staff and department heads.

**City Employee Information**
Information for City personnel will be forthcoming from City administrators via email.

**City Building Closures**
The City has determined that all rental use of City facilities, public-at-large use of the facilities, evening and community events in our facilities have been canceled, effective immediately and until further notice. In addition, the following guidance is being issued for the following:

All essential services will be closed at night and on weekends for the foreseeable future, with updated information to be provided on the City website.

**City Council**
Governor Baker issued an Executive Order regarding Open Meeting Law and COVID-19. Per his order, the City Council President is working to enable remote participation by Council, Committee and Board members for meetings essential to the operation of City business.

**Public Safety**
The Public Safety Complex lobby at 32 Payson Avenue will be an accessible area to the public. However, the public will not have access to community meeting rooms. Drug drop off, and firearms licensing processing are suspended until further notice. Public contact with Dispatch will be via the lobby phone. Additionally, the sharps dispensary container was relocated to the lobby.

**Easthampton Public Schools**
Please know that we have provided guidance below for residents, families and students, and staff to help in practicing social isolation, monitoring symptoms, and avoiding typical student events and large gatherings during this possible two-week period. The intent is to isolate and therein calm the spread of the virus. If you do not assist us in this manner, we may be staying out of school for no effective result.

**Food Support for Students**: We have worked with food services to develop breakfast and lunch brown bag options. We have prioritized the Maple Elementary School due to its status as a Community Eligibility Program. They will be able to pick up breakfast and lunch between 8:30 am and 10 am at Easthampton High School beginning on Monday. Maple families have been notified. On Monday we will finalize a plan for the remaining schools and communicate that plan to families.
Previously Scheduled Activities: It is disappointing that activities are not occurring; we hope you bear with us while we prioritize community health. We are working to reschedule things wherever possible in the coming weeks. We understand that there will be questions about AP classes, college application deadlines, prom and other special events but we cannot yet answer this at this time. The MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) has moved spring sports start to the earliest March 30, 2020.

School Employee Information

It is expected that all staff will check work email during this closure to remain informed. More information will be distributed directly to staff. Custodial staff will be asked to report to the schools to clean and disinfect using deeper disinfection equipment.

Council on Aging and Enrichment (COA)

The COA is suspending all on-site programs and services until further notice. The COA serves residents who are most at risk of contracting the virus. The closing of the building is a proactive step to protect the patrons of the COA. The staff of the COA is working and available during regular business hours to provide alternative arrangements for seniors who need access to essential services. For questions, call 413-527-6151.

Keep Informed

Please access these reliable sources of information for the coronavirus (COVID-19) throughout the State of Emergency:

- www.cdc.gov
- www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus
- www.Easthamptonma.gov
- www.epsd.us
- www.facebook.com/easthampton413
- https://www.facebook.com/easthamptonfire/
- https://www.facebook.com/EasthamptonPD/
- https://www.facebook.com/EasthamptonHealth/