

PUBLIC EMPLOYER HEALTH EMERGENCY PLAN

TOWN OF FORT EDWARD

February 28, 2021

This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A10832

Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs K and I of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part 8 of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), ad applicable.

This plan has been developed with the input of the Town of Fort Edward Highway department as required by the amended New York State Labor Law.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of us or our valued employees under the law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the agency, jurisdiction, authority, or district, as represented by the signature of the authorized individual below.

AS the authorized official of the Town of Fort Edward, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved and placed in full effect in accordance with 58617B/A10832 which amends New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs K and I of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirement.

Signed on this day:

By: Lester Losaw
Title: Town Supervisor

Signature: _____

Record of Changes

Date of Change	Description of Change	Implemented by

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Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, and Assumptions

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and dl of subdivision 2 of section 28001-1-s-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation 58617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. He plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan was developed exclusively for and is applicable to the Town of Fort Edward. This plan is pertinent to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations, and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this plan.

Situation Overview

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared a pandemic for the novel coronavirus which causes the COVID-19 severe acute respiratory syndrome. This plan has been developed in accordance with amended laws to support continued resilience for a continuation of the spread of this disease or for other infectious diseases which may emerge and cause a declaration of a public health emergency.

The health and safety of our employees and contractors is crucial to maintaining our mission essential operations. We encourage all employees and contractors to use CDC Guidance for Keeping Workplaces, Schools, Homes, and Commercial Establishments Safe.

The fundamentals of reducing the spread of infection include:

- Using hand sanitizer and washing hands with soap and water frequently, including:
 - After using the restroom
 - After returning from a public outing
 - After touching/disposing of garbage
 - After using public computers, touching public tables, and countertops, etc.
- Practice social distancing when possible
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify your supervisor immediately and go home
- If you start to experience coughing or sneezing, step away from people and food, cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm or a tissue, the latter of which should be disposed of immediately
- Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, middle, and end of each shift
- Other guidance which may be published by the CDC, the State Department of Health, or County health officials.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The plan was developed to largely reflect the circumstances of the current Coronavirus pandemic but may also be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of his plan:

- The health and safety of our employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations.
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety.
- The public and our constituency expects us to maintain a level of mission essential operations
- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them.
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement.
- The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc.), non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to the public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services.
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the governor
- Per58617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job
- PerS8671B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job.

Concept of Operations

The Supervisor of the Town of Fort Edward, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan.

Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion to the Supervisor.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of the Town of Fort Edward shall be notified by email, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Employees will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of email. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The Town Clerk will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Supervisor of the Town of Fort Edward, their designee, or their successor will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governor's office, directing the implementation of changes as necessary.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Supervisor of the Town of Fort Edward, their designee, or their successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

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MISSION ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, the Town of Fort Edward is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those functions that enable an organization to :

1. Maintain the safety of employees, contractors, and our constituency
2. Provide vital services
3. Provide services required by law
4. Sustain quality operations
5. Uphold the core values of the Town of Fort Edward

The town of Fort Edward has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to enable the organization to concentrate on providing the critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore operations. Appropriate communications with employees, contractors, our constituents, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential Function

Bookkeeping and Collection

Sanitation

Roads and Buildings

Justice Court

Codes

Animal Protections

Property Assessment

Governing

Fire Protection

Description

Balance town accounts and maintain financial accountability. Collection of taxes, town fees, and processing of bank deposits.

Office cleaning and sanitation

Snow removal, road, and property maintenance

Maintain and process court docket

Building permits and fire inspections

Capture and address matters of dangerous animals

Assessment of private property for tax purposes

Town planning and subdivision

Town fire and rescue response (contracted)

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these can be conducted remotely and do not need to be identified in this section.

Essential Function

Bookkeeping/Collection

Roads and Buildings

Justice Court

Codes

Essential Positions/Titles

Town Clerk

Supervisor's Clerk

Highway Superintendent

Highway employees

Court Justices

Justice Court Clerk

Codes Officer

Justification for each

Balances the monthly town accounting-onsite software, collects fees and taxes, and processes bank deposits

Manages snow removal, road, and property Maintenance.

Supports Highway Super Maintain and process court docket, including traffic tickets, criminal matters, small claims, and local code violation

Building Permits and inspections

Building Assessment	Assessor Clerk	Provides assessment of private property
Town Planning	Planning Board	Town Site Plans and Subdivisions
Governing	Supervisor and town Bd.	Executive branch management of daily town functions
Animal Protections	Dog Warden	Emergency response for reports of dangerous animals
Fire Protection	Fire Chief Firefighters	Fire protection must respond on-scene to provide emergency services as needed.

It is important to note that the Justice Court is a vital component of town government, with Justice Court functions budgeted and supported by the Town Board and Town Supervisor. However, we recognize that the New York State Office of Court Administration holds dominion over Justice Courts and, as such, may issue orders which suspend or alter the hours of operation or means by which Justice Courts operate; which may not fully align with this plan or other measures taken by the Town Board or Town Supervisor. As such, the Town Board, Town Supervisor, and Town Clerk will coordinate as necessary with Justice Court personnel to ensure safe and effective continuity of town Justice Court

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at work sites.

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so at the greatest extent possible.

The Town Supervisor, their designee, or successor shall identify staff who will work remotely. This identification may be done with the input of the Town Board, Town Clerk, and Justice Court. The Town Supervisor shall notify staff of the changes and will give specific instructions as necessary to support the implementation. The Town Supervisor shall direct the Town's IT Vendor to provide the hardware, software and network support as necessary to support implementation of remote work, ensuring that staff are able to access necessary files, email, and phone messages remotely.

As possible, essential staff may be assigned to work remotely for part of their work week to reduce exposures. Further, business hours and locations of Town government may be altered to best accommodate public health protective actions for employees and the public. Alterations to building access and the means by which the public interacts with the Town employees may also take place to support these protections. Protective actions may include, but are not limited to occupancy restrictions, protective barriers, and increased conduct of business by internet, phone, or other means. Protective actions will be taken in accordance with County and State Health Department, and CDC guidelines and requirements.

Working remotely requires:]
1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval assignment of remote work
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
a. Internet capable laptop
b. Necessary peripherals
c. Access to VPN and 'or secure network drives
d. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties
e. A solution for telephone communications (note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff), and access to mail and physical files.

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, Town of Fort Edward will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered.
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours.

It is expected that office hours of the Assessor and Codes Officer will be staggered, or they will be assigned work in separate work stations to minimize exposures. The Town Board, by way of the Town Supervisor, will make these and other necessary assignments.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of infectious disease is important to supporting the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE which may be needed can include:

- Masks
- Face shields
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns and aprons

Note that while cleaning supplies are not categorized as PPE, there is a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer. The Coronavirus pandemic demonstrated that supply chains were not able to keep up with increased demand for these products early in the pandemic. As such, we are including these supplies in this sections as they are pertinent to protecting the health and safety of our employees and contractors.