



TOWN OF AUBURN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO THE RESIDENTS OF AUBURN, NH

**TOWN HALL CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC
BEGINNING TUESDAY, MARCH 24th (UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE)**

Governor Sununu issued a state of emergency for the State of New Hampshire on March 13th due to COVID-19. By March 15th, the Governor directed all schools to close and work toward a virtual environment at least until April 6th. And, on March 16th, he has prohibited public gatherings of 50 or more people, and ordered the closing of restaurants and bars to only provide take-out, drive through or delivery service of food.

Even with these initial efforts of containment, it has become clear the COVID-19 is now spreading in New Hampshire through community-based transmission of the virus, with the largest number of confirmed cases in the State being in Rockingham County.

Auburn town officials have been actively monitoring the COVID-19 situation, which is rapidly evolving at the local, state and national level. The Town is committed to the continued health and optimal safety of our residents, as well as our officials and employees, and we intend to do our part to "flatten the curve" of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To that end, in consultation with our Emergency Management Director, neighboring communities and state officials, we have decided that **effective Tuesday March 24, 2020, the Auburn Town Hall will be closed to the public until further notice.**

However, we will still be working to serve the residents of Auburn. We intend to do our best to operate as a "VIRTUAL TOWN HALL". In today's world, most of the transactions of our residents can be done online or arranged via phone, emails or drop box. Resident questions can and will be answered via phone or email. And, as a last resort, you may schedule an appointment in Town Hall with the appropriate Town personnel to complete your transaction. Appointments will be made to keep the number of people in the building as limited as possible in order to comply with CDC recommendations for social distancing.

PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES: Of course, the dedicated personnel of our Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Departments will continue to serve the residents of our Town through this crisis. That said, while these departments will generally be proceeding with a "business as usual" approach, some modifications to their typical operating procedures are necessary to ensure the safety of our first responders as well. Along these lines, we ask that you please keep all non-emergency calls to a minimum so that our emergency services personnel may devote their time to those residents in need of emergency services. **If you have non-emergency COVID-19 related questions, place call 2-1-1** (a state hotline staffed 24/7 specifically for such questions).

GRIFFIN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY: On March 16th, the Auburn Board of Library Trustees determined the Griffin Free Public Library would be closed beginning March 17th until at least April 4th.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact Library Director Kathryn Gowney at director@griffinfree.org who will continue to work from home during this time. She will be able to assist you with connecting you to the Library's wealth of online resources including eBooks, eMagazines, streaming audiobooks, movies and music.

For those of you who have physical material already checked out – please do not worry about items being overdue. Most of your items are set for automatic renewal. If you do happen to receive an automatic overdue notice in your email, please know that we do not charge overdue fines.

If your library account comes up for renewal or you need a password to login to our online resources, the Library Director will be able to assist you.

Should you need free internet access, the library Wi-Fi is accessible from the parking lot. We also have a couple of tables outside that you are welcome to use. If you need the password, please email the Library Director.

Finally, due to our small space, we are cancelling all programming for the next eight (8) weeks in compliance with the recent Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Prevention recommendation. Please bear with us as it may take a few days for our website, calendars and social media to be updated.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Non-essential Board and Committee meetings in March will be cancelled and more information will be forthcoming about meetings in April and beyond. Essential meetings are the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment and Conservation Commission will be held as scheduled. The Governor's Office has also issued formal guidance to NH municipalities making it clear that, given the emergency declaration, boards and committees have the legal ability to expand their use of teleconferencing to limit interpersonal exposure. There are no specific plans for using that technology at this time in Auburn, but we are looking into that possibility. Please check out the Town's website for an up-to-date schedule of meetings that will be taking place.

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES – EVENTS CANCELED: Until further notice, use of the training room at the Safety Complex and the Stritch Meeting Room at Town Hall will be available for essential Town meetings only. All non-essential Town board and committee meetings are highly discouraged. Private groups have not had access to these space since March 16th.

Parks and Recreation closed the Circle of Fun Playground effective March 16th following the advice of public health officials. All scheduled events and activities in March, such as Jumping Beans for two-year-olds, Tai Chi for Seniors and Teen Council, have been cancelled. Decisions on April events and beyond will be made moving forward, so please check out the Town's website for up-to-date information on recreation programs.

Finally, rest assured that we will be monitoring all local developments related to COVID-19, and as your Town officials, we are committed to timely and ongoing communications about any and all changes to our operating status, as well as any recommendations to the public from public health and other government officials. To that end, we are posting the most current information

from the federal and state governments on the homepage of the Town of Auburn website (www.auburnnh.com).

Please see the following pages for how we intend to operate our **VIRTUAL TOWN HALL**.

"HOW TO" COMPLETE TOWN HALL TRANSACTIONS

WEBSITE: The Town website address is www.auburnnh.us, and we encourage you to visit the website frequently for new information and updates.

TOWN HALL MAILING ADDRESS: Should you need to mail anything to Town Hall, the address is as follows:

Town of Auburn, PO Box 309, Auburn, NH 03032

TOWN HALL GENERAL TELEPHONE NUMBER: (603) 483-5052 (See contacts below for direct numbers and specific extensions).

TRANSACTIONS: The following is a list of the transactions most often performed for our residents in Town Hall, and directions as to how each may be accomplished until the COVID-19 crisis passes and we can safely re-open our doors:

- **Notary Services:** The Auburn Town Offices has suspended Notary Services indefinitely.
- **Renewal of Vehicle Registrations:** Should be done online via our website portal:

www.auburnnh.us and click on the orange & white "E-Reg" icon on the home page.

- **Registration and Title Transfers of a newly purchased vehicle:** On March 17th, NH Director of Motor Vehicles Elizabeth Bielecki announced for new transactions, the Governor has authorized the NHDMV to extend all temporary plates issued after March 1st until April 30, 2020. We encourage residents to delay their registration effort for new vehicles until April.

We are working on preparations for NEW registration, titles and transfers to be done in person only by appointment.

- **Copies of vital records (birth, death or marriage certificates):** Contact Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia at townclerk@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-2281.
- **Dog Licensing:** Renewals can be done online via our website portal: www.auburnnh.us and click on the blue & white "Dog Licensing" icon on the home page. Registration of new dogs will be by appointment only. Contact Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia at townclerk@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-2281.
- **Boat Registrations:** Registrations can be done by mail or by appointment only. More information can be found on the NH DMV website at: <https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/dmv/registration/boat.htm>

- **Transfer Station Permit:** Contact Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia at townclerk@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-2281.
- **Voter Registration:** Contact Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia at townclerk@townofauburnnh.com or 603-483-2281.

Questions about vehicle registrations, vital records, dog licensing, boat registrations, or marriage licenses should be directed to Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia, townclerk@townofauburnnh.com or 603-483-2281.

- **Tax Payments:** Can be made in one of two ways: (1) via mail (checks ONLY and postmark dates will be honored as the date of payment); or (2) by appointment only. Contact Tax Collector Susan Jenkins with questions, towntax@townofauburnnh.com or 603-483-2281.
- **Property Assessment Records, Deeds and Tax Maps:** Most of this material can be viewed online. **Property assessment records** can be viewed online via our web portal: www.auburnnh.us and click on the green & white "Assessment Data Review Online" icon on the home page. **Tax maps** can be viewed online via our web portal: www.auburnnh.us and click on the blue & white "CAI Technologies" icon on the home page.

Some documents, including septic plans, building permits and sales data is not available online, but most documents can be scanned and emailed. Contact Land Use Administrator Denise Royce at planning@townofauburnnh.com or 603-483-5052.

- **Filing for and renewals of Property Tax Exemptions and Credits, etc.:** Information for verification or renewal can be sent by mail or can be delivered by appointment. Questions can be directed to Land Use Administrator Denise Royce at planning@townofauburnnh.com or 603-483-5052.

The following forms should be filed with the Selectmen's Office by the following date:

Form	Deadline to File
Elderly Exemptions	April 15
Veterans Tax Credits	April 15
Tax Deferrals	April 15
Current Use Applications	April 15
Exempt Property Applications (Charitable, Religious, Educational)	April 15
Timber Intentions	None
Gravel Intentions	None

If you need application forms, questions can be directed to Land Use Administrator Denise Royce at planning@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-5052.

- **Home and Building Inspections:** As long as construction proceeds, inspections will reasonably continue. Some communities are limiting inspections to only emergencies, exterior projects or rough inspections in open structures. For Auburn, the Building Inspector will use her judgement concerning inspections into any occupied buildings, especially homes or businesses where contagious people could be. Please contact Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote at bldginsp@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-5052, ext. 3
- **Building Permits:** Permit applications can be completed and submitted online via the Town website portal: www.auburnnh.com and click on the blue, green & white "e-Permit" icon on the home page. For further information, please contact Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote at bldginsp@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-5052, ext. 3
- **Building Plan Reviews:** Will be accepted by email or mail. If necessary, we will meet individuals by appointment only to go over plan questions. Please contact Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote at bldginsp@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-5052, ext. 3
- **Burial Plot Sales or Internments:** Contact Cemetery Trustee Chair Jim Thompson at 603-483-5627
- **Burn Permits:** Burn permits are only available at this time online through the following web location: <https://nhdfweb.sovsportsnet.net/>
- **Land Use Board Submissions** (including Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment) or to review site plans, subdivision plans, etc., please contact Land Use Administrator Denise Royce at planning@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-5052.
- **Recreation Programming:** Information is available online at: <https://www.auburnnh.us/parks-and-recreation> or on Facebook at: Or contact Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance at recreation@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-5052.
- **Road Issues or Questions:** Contact Road Agent Mike Dross at 603-303-4223.
- **Wetlands Permit and Shoreland Protection Applications** for review by the Conservation Commission can be filed by mail. If you have any questions about filing contact Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia at townclerk@townofauburnnh.com or call 603-483-2281.

Appointments at Town Hall: In order to be as protective as possible of the health, safety and welfare of the public, as well as the Town Hall staff, the Board of Selectmen are directing that for the initial time of this process, no more than three members of the public will be allowed in the Town Hall for business purposes at a time. This will allow for the CDC's recommended "social distancing".

People needing to meet with any of the individuals in the Town Hall should call first to schedule an appointment with that individual. Upon your arrival in the parking lot of the Town Hall, call

that individual to let them know you have arrived. You will need to remain outside until the individual you are here to meet indicates you can come in and they open the front door for you.

If you are waiting outside instead of in your car, please practice good safety protocol and maintain a safe distance from other individuals who may also be on the site.

Walk-ups will be served, but individuals with appointments will be provided preferential service for the time of their appointment.

Like you, we are hoping these steps will only be necessary for a short period of time, and we can all return to a sense of normalcy. Until then, we all need to do what is possible to limit the potential for spreading the COVID-19 virus. As we write this, four of our Town employees are in quarantine due to potential exposure, with two of them now exhibiting virus symptoms. Town of Auburn officials will be meeting at least weekly to review the status of current situations, directives from the federal or state governments and how things are progressing in Auburn. We will work to keep the public informed as we move along.

Our central place for posting current information is on the home page of the Town of Auburn web site (www.auburnnh.us). On the left-hand side are three buttons with COVID-19 information including "COVID-19" with general information; "State Launches 2-1-1 COVID-19 Hotline" and "COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)".

In addition, a red banner across the top of the page proclaims, "Auburn Village School Griffin Free Public Library and Circle of Fun Park Closed; Other COVID-19 Information". Clicking there will bring you to the most current information from the State and locally concerning the pandemic.

Thank you for your consideration. Together, we will move through this situation.



William G. Herman, CPM
Town Administrator



Keith N. Leclair, Chairman



Michael O. Williams, Fire Chief and
Emergency Management



Todd R. Bedard, Vice Chairman



Charles R. Pelton, Chief
Auburn Police Chief



Michael J. Rolfe, Selectman
AUBURN BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Dated: March 23, 2020