



# NEEDHAM PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



## Update on COVID-19 From the Town of Needham and Needham Public Health

### *Town of Needham and Needham Public Health Close Town Buildings, Playgrounds State Orders Ban of Public Gatherings of 25+ People*

March 16, 2020 -- To practice social distancing and help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Town of Needham and Needham Public Health announced today that beginning **Tuesday, March 17, 2020** all public buildings will be closed. Playgrounds and playing fields are also closed until further notice.

Individuals needing assistance or services may call or email town departments. Staff will respond to emails and voicemails as soon as possible during normal business hours. Individuals may also be able to conduct some transactions online. Payments may be mailed or dropped in the drop box outside Town Hall.

**The Recycling and Transfer Station will remain open** under its normal business hours unless otherwise noted.

**Core public safety services like law enforcement and fire services will continue.**

Facilities that will be closed are:

- Town Hall (781-455-7500)
- Public Services Administration Building (781-455-7550)
- Rosemary Recreation Complex (781-455-7930)
- The Center at the Heights (building closed as of March 11, 2020) (781-455-7555)
- Needham Free Public Library (building closed as of March 14, 2020) (781-455-7559)

#### **Public Gatherings**

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, Governor Baker revised his order affecting public gatherings. Gatherings of 25 people or more are now prohibited. Read more [here](#).

#### **Playgrounds and Fields**

Needham Public Health has advised that all public playgrounds and fields are closed. Play structures and park furniture are not sterile surfaces nor suitable locations for social distancing. Currently, we are urging people to refrain from gathering in large groups. We understand, especially with children at home, that people want to spend time outdoors. Trails are still open for your enjoyment. You can find out more [here](#).

#### **Policing – Reporting Past Crimes and Firearm Licensing**

**The Needham Police Department will continue to respond to emergency calls for service, as well as crime in progress calls without delay. Please call 911 if you have an emergency.**

The Needham Police Department is modifying its response to non-emergency calls for the time being. This is necessary to limit public safety exposure to COVID-19 and to minimize further spreading of the disease.



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We ask for your understanding and cooperation at this time as we attempt to limit the number of people who come into the Police Lobby to report past crimes. Please call the Police Department (**781-455-7570**) to report a past crime that does not require immediate assistance.

Firearm licensing renewals will also be done by mail on a temporary basis. Please call **781-455-7570 ext. 241** with any questions you have about Firearms Licensing. We will not provide fingerprinting services for any other reason during this temporary change.

## **Information on Restaurant and Bar Closures/Modifications**

The Governor has [ordered](#) that all restaurants and bars in Massachusetts be closed for public seating beginning March 17 and effective until April 6. These establishments are prohibited from serving food or drinks on their premises but may offer to-go and delivery services. Note: grocery stores and pharmacies are not subject to this order.

## **Information for People Interested in Volunteering**

We are humbled by the kindness of our community and the desire of so many to volunteer in this time. If you would like to help, please complete this [form](#) and you will be contacted if/when additional volunteers are needed. Thank you for understanding that an organized effort is critical to ensure proper and timely care and to minimize risks for all involved. Again, thank you for offering to help our community. We are grateful for your support!

For updated information please visit the [public health website](#). You can also receive updates via the Town's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. For general questions about COVID-19, consider calling the Mass 211. You may also email [publichealthnursing@needhamma.gov](mailto:publichealthnursing@needhamma.gov) if you need to speak with a public health nurse.

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