

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



**City Manager's Advisory**  
**Wednesday, November 25, 2020**



**HAPPY THANKSGIVING, PORTSMOUTH!**

**CITY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING from Wed Nov 25 at 1 pm until Mon Nov 30 at 8 am. Please make appointments for visiting City offices and use the [online payment portal](#).**



*Alliance for the Greater Good founders Kathryn Garcia (left) and Joanne Wolfe, Julie Johnson and Lisa Vivinetto prepare to distribute donated hats, gloves and mittens.*

**THANK YOU FROM ALLIANCE FOR GREATER GOOD – 1,700 SHARE THE WARMTH HATS AND MITTENS COLLECTION FOR GATHER** -- The *Alliance for Greater Good* extends its heartfelt appreciation to the City of Portsmouth residents who donated to their **Share the Warmth** drive, which collected new hats, mittens and gloves for Gather's families. "The response from the Seacoast community was overwhelming!" said Lisa Vivinetto of the Alliance. "When we planned the project, we hoped that the generosity of Seacoast residents would enable us to provide some holiday cheer to all the families who attended Gather's Thanksgiving food distribution event on November 21, and we did it!" The donations included many beautiful hand-knit hats and mittens.

The sunny day of the distribution saw a steady stream of people, selecting hats, mittens and scarves in their favorite colors while sharing the warmth of their gratitude with Alliance co-founders Kathryn Garcia, Julie Johnson, and Joanne Wolfe. Wolfe said, "The Gather team was amazed by how many items were collected. They loved seeing the joy the event brought to families in need. We couldn't have done this without the incredible support from the many generous donations from Seacoast residents and the team at the Senior Activity Center which acted as the collection point."

For further information or to share ideas for future events, please email the *Alliance for Greater Good* at [alliance.greatergood@gmail.com](mailto:alliance.greatergood@gmail.com) and follow them on Facebook to learn about future events.  
<https://www.facebook.com/allianceforgreatergood/posts/102343255028315>

## THANKSGIVING

**Gather Food Pantry:** Gather provides food for the Thanksgiving holiday to hundreds of local families, and the need is even greater this year. Their Thanksgiving Distribution takes place on November 21. Food distribution, online grocery shopping for people who don't want to enter the shop, Meal delivery for Seniors, Meals 4 Kids, Community Fridays 9am-1pm open at Community Campus (open to anyone). Call for info 603-436-0641. The **annual Peas 'n Carrots food drive is by virtual donation this year. Online through November 30.** To make a donation and learn how far dollars raised will go in feeding the food insecure in the community, click here.  
<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/gather/pease-n-carrots-2020>

**American Legion, Thanksgiving Day Nov 26, Noon-3pm.** Thanksgiving dinner delivery within a 5-mile radius of the Legion (including Marjesson, Feaster, other housing). Also serving a take-out Thanksgiving dinner. There is no cost for take-out or delivery, but the drivers can be tipped. For delivery call the Legion at 436-7575. For takeout, call or just show up. The Legion will also have a few tables inside the Legion for up to 4 people each, first come, first served. Starting at 12 noon. Free.

**48th Annual Portsmouth Rotary Thanksgiving Dinner, Thursday, November 26.** Pickup between 11 am and 12:30 pm at St. Nicholas Greek Church, Andrew Jarvis Drive. No sit-down dinner this year due to COVID-19. For delivery or pickup, please call 603-828-4869 or email [rotarythanksgiving@gmail.com](mailto:rotarythanksgiving@gmail.com)

**Operation Blessing:** Drive up Food Pantry Wed-Fri 10am-4pm, **Thanksgiving Baskets.** Call for more info 603-430-8561.

**For the City Health Officer's guidance on Thanksgiving:**

[https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-11/Advisory%202020.11.20\\_0.pdf](https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-11/Advisory%202020.11.20_0.pdf)



**PLAID FRIDAY NOV 27 AND SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY NOV 28** – The Economic Development Department is supporting the nationwide “Plaid Friday” and “Small Business Saturday” initiatives that encourage people to shop and buy local. They note, November 28<sup>th</sup> is Small Business Saturday, created to encourage shoppers to support their local brick-and-mortar stores during the holiday season. We encourage you to shop local and shop small, whether in-person or online. November 27 is Plaid Friday, created in 2009 to celebrate the diversity and creativity of local and independent businesses. It's a way to show your support for our local economy by wearing PLAID while shopping in local independent stores, the day after Thanksgiving. Portsmouth retailers offer a variety of options to reduce risk while shopping, including online ordering, curbside pickup and following the Governor's guidelines: mask wearing, physical distancing and limiting the number of customers at one time in their shops. With dozens of lighted wreaths throughout the shopping area – including on the new light poles from the Islington Street road improvement project – and the holiday tree in Market Square, the mood in Portsmouth is festive. Vintage Christmas in Portsmouth, now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year, highlights the season from December 1 through 31.  
<http://www.vintagechristmasNH.org>



## **CITYWIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOLIDAY LIGHTS CONTEST DETAILS ANNOUNCED**

At the November 16 City Council meeting, Mayor Rick Becksted announced the return of the Neighborhood Holiday Lights Contest for 2020, to give residents a way to celebrate together this holiday season. Now the Portsmouth Citywide Neighborhood Committee is announcing the details. Residents are invited to register to participate in the contest by completing this form: <http://eepurl.com/dg7Gw> The deadline to enter is December 10, 2020. (For a printable pdf of the entry form and more information, visit <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/2020-holiday-lights-contest> Print out the form, scan it and email it to [hotline@cityofportsmouth.com](mailto:hotline@cityofportsmouth.com) or mail c/o City Manager's Office, City Hall, One Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth NH 03801. The contest is open to every Portsmouth resident. Participants can choose one of two categories for judging of their outdoor light displays:

- Classic Light Display
- Creative Light Display

Contest entries will be judged by school-aged children, who will be driven through their assigned neighborhoods (not their own) to make their choices of the best holiday lights displays. Judging will take place between December 12 and 20. The Committee will create a map of the Holiday Lights Contest entries so that residents can tour the lighted locations route by car.

The winners of the following awards will be announced by Mayor Becksted at the December 21 City Council meeting;

- Best Classic/Traditional Display – \$500 Ricci Lumber Gift Certificate
- Most Creative Display – \$500 Home Depot Gift Certificate
- Best Overall Display – \$500 Lowe's Gift Certificate
- Honorable Mentions – \$25 Gift Certificates

In addition, to the prize donors, Seacoast Media Group is an in-kind sponsor, providing publicity and advertising space for the contest.

## **ACCESS TO SENIOR CENTER AND LIBRARY REDUCED:**

**SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER:** As of Wednesday, November 25, the Senior Activity Center will pause programming, through the holidays due to widespread community transmission of COVID-19. The Center staff remain available to help the senior community connect to resources. Meals on Wheels will continue to provide the Mon-Fri home delivered meals and will still offer a holiday "grab & go meal" on December 17. RSVP by Fri, Dec 11 at 9 am to 603-610-4433.

**PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY RETURNS TO CURBSIDE AND ONLINE SERVICES -- Until further notice, the Library is not able to offer browsing, computer use, or any other services inside the building.** You can still check out materials by placing a hold for Curbside Pickup – which are now offered on demand. You can also continue to return library materials, get recommendations, attend online events, and access all online services. For more information, click here: <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/library/currentservices>

## **REMINDERS:**

**APPOINTMENTS WITH CITY OFFICES: are available to help reduce indoor mingling of households.** City offices (Tax, Assessors, City Clerk, Inspections, etc.) are staggering shifts and working remotely when they can to reduce risk. You can make an appointment at any time to meet with these offices in person.

**PAY YOUR CITY BILLS ONLINE -- The newly approved \$14.70 per \$1,000 in valuation property tax rate will be reflected in the tax bills mailed this month, with the first half due 30 days after they are mailed** and the second half due in June 2021. Again this year, the City of Portsmouth offers an online tax calculator at <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/tax/online-property-tax-calculator> for residents to use to estimate their tax bill for Fiscal Year 2021. With COVID-19 precautions still in place, **the City urges taxpayers to make their tax bill payments online, where they will receive an instant confirmation and receipt.**

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/pay-my-bill>

## ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

**For Resources and Assistance with housing, food, heat, etc. click here.**

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/covid-19-resources>

- **Housing Relief Fund**- Governor Chris Sununu authorized the expenditure of \$35 million from the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (“flex funds”) to support families or individuals in need of housing assistance as a result of COVID-19. Of the allocated \$35 million, \$20 million will be initially expended, with \$15 million being held in reserve, for rent stabilization and housing support. Both the one-time grants and the short-term rental assistance will be coupled with regional case management services to help connect households to appropriate services as defined by the household and the agency. **Program payments will be made directly to the landlord or provider, and this program will end by December 30, 2020.** For more information, visit <https://www.capnh.org>
- **Help Paying Energy Bills** – Eversource offers a COVID-19 Payment Program that gives customers up to 12 months to pay past-due balances, without down payments, fees or interest. Once enrolled the account is protected from service disconnection for the duration of the payment plan. For more information call 1-800-662-7764 or visit <https://www.eversource.com/content/nh>

**The City Health Department also offers the following COVID-19 information:**

**For answers to Portsmouth Mask Ordinance Frequently Asked Questions, click here.**

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-10/MaskOrdinanceFAQ%202020.10.05.pdf>

**For Testing FAQs click here.** <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/testing-faqs>

**For COVID-19 & Mask Facts click here.** <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city-manager/covid-19-mask-facts>

**For Ventilation FAQs click here.** <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/ventilation-faqs>

**For Daily Life During the Pandemic FAQs, click here.** <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city-manager/daily-life-during-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>

**For this week’s Regional COVID-19 Dashboard, click here.**

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-11/CovidDashboard112420.pdf>

## SEACOAST CHAMBER ALLIANCE RESOURCES:

The Seacoast Chamber Alliance is a partnership including the Greater Portsmouth Chamber Collaborative, with the Dover, Exeter, Hampton, Hampton Falls and Rochester chambers, working collaboratively with the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs to provide assistance and information for businesses as they deal with the pandemic economy.

**EMPLOYABILITY FORUM TUES DEC 8 via Zoom, 8:30-10 am** – With thousands of workers affected by the pandemic economy, the Chambers of the Seacoast Alliance host this forum to help workers understand the concept of employability and connect them with resources available to help improve their skills. To register for the free forum, click here. <https://www.dovernh.org/events/details/seacoast-chamber-alliance-employability-forum-31773>

**SUPPORT FOR SEACOAST BUSINESSES SURVEY** -- The Seacoast Chamber Alliance, as part of its partnership with the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, has put together a short survey to gauge the needs of member businesses through the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. To participate in the survey, click here. <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfZZzBocMoFa9-UMATyyV87ocJj6NxMFHLO2UzwIpmifvkjw/viewform>

**SEACOAST SAFE PLEDGE** -- One way to demonstrate your ongoing commitment to the health and safety of the community and to let people know you are taking all the recommended steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is by taking the SEACOAST SAFE Pledge- an initiative of the Seacoast Chamber Alliance. By signing the Pledge you voluntarily agree that you are:

- Following current State of NH COVID-19 Reopening Guidelines.
- Requiring employees and customers to wear face coverings indoors and in public settings where physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Arranging public spaces for physical distancing consistent with CDC guidelines.

- Having an alcohol-based hand sanitizer in high-traffic locations for employees and customers.
- Implementing workplace cleaning and disinfection practices that follow CDC guidelines including regular sanitation of high-touch surfaces.
- Not allowing employees with COVID-19 symptoms to work on-site.

For more information, click here: <https://files.constantcontact.com/c586a889001/1a80ad01-0e72-4a71-8292-4a02a7a4db5a.pdf>

**SEACOAST CHAMBER ALLIANCE WEBSITE** – The new VisitSeacoastNH.com website offers up-to-the-minute resources for businesses and visitors. <https://www.visitseacoastnh.com/>

**TESTING--** The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services provides this list as a service to the community. The Department does not endorse any particular entity for COVID-19 testing services. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/covid-testing-options.pdf>

**For all the COVID-related resources, [click here](#).**

**Governor Sununu's Emergency Order extended to January 15, 2021.**

<https://www.governor.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt336/files/documents/emergency-order-72.pdf>

The State has also made changes to the COVID guidelines to minimize redundancy in each industry sector. **Those guidelines that applied to all industry sectors have been removed from separate sector pages and now live only in the Universal Guidelines (UG) pages.** In some cases (e.g. outdoor attractions, arts, music education, funerals, and more) the sector pages have been eliminated entirely and you'll find a note at the end of the UG specific to those sectors. Click here for the details: <https://www.covidguidance.nh.gov/>

**For answers to other questions about the City's response to COVID-19, please email: [hotline@cityofportsmouth.com](mailto:hotline@cityofportsmouth.com)**

**For more information, visit [City's page on COVID-19](#)**