

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



City Manager's Advisory Monday, November 30, 2020

STATEWIDE MASK ORDINANCE NOW IN EFFECT.

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>

LET THE MAGIC SHINE THROUGH: SECRET #1 – Did you know, there are 152 holiday wreaths on City lamp posts, including a new batch in the West End? It takes three DPW crews of 2 people each, a full 8-hour shift to place them all.

VINTAGE CHRISTMAS IN PORTSMOUTH – Every year since 2004 and this year, “Letting the magic shine through.” The Greater Portsmouth Chamber Collaborative reminds us we’re celebrating not just “Shop Local Saturday” but “Shop Local ALL SEASON.” Check the Vintage Christmas website for all the details, but one highlight is the **Portsmouth Historical Society’s 30th Annual Gingerbread House Contest – a free exhibit in the Discover Portsmouth Welcome Center and NEW this year, the Downtown Gingerbread Hunt.** Find the Gingerbread Houses in store windows. Get your Scavenger Hunt form stamped by the shop. Turn it in to Discover Portsmouth and be eligible for a \$100 gift card to Cure or Roundabout Diner. See details here: <https://portsmouthhistory.org/exhibitions/scavenger-hunt-stops/>

HOLIDAY ASSISTANCE

NEW! WELFARE DEPARTMENT GIFT CARD DONATIONS – Once again, the City’s Welfare Office is collecting gift cards for families who have older kids who are not typically served by other Christmas programs in town. Local agencies who provide holiday assistance do a wonderful job here in Portsmouth, but teenagers can be a difficult population to serve. To help close that gap, the Welfare Department is again collecting gift cards in small denominations for things like movie tickets, coffee houses, stores such as Old Navy, Gamestop and Kohl's. As with the donation of gift cards for school supplies in September, the gift cards **can be mailed (Ellen Tully, Welfare Department, City Hall, 1 Junkins Ave. Portsmouth NH 03801), left in the gray drop box in front of City Hall or, dropped off with the receptionist.** Please contact Ellen Tully, 610-7267, etully@cityofportsmouth.com with any questions or concerns.

Gather Food Pantry: Gather provides food to hundreds of local families, and the need is even greater this year.. 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>

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

For the City Health Officer's guidance on holiday travel:

https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sites/default/files/2020-11/Advisory%202020.11.20_0.pdf



CITYWIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOLIDAY LIGHTS CONTEST – REGISTER THRU DEC 10

Residents are invited to register to participate in the contest by completing the form on this page:

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city/press-releases/city-announces-neighborhood-holiday-lights-contest-details>

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 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>

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

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