

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for the Town of Ossining



March 23, 2021

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

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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 l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-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 S8617B/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. The 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 Ossining. 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 as yet unknown 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 this 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
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is currently defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is currently 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 Town Supervisor of the Town of Ossining, 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 of the Town Supervisor.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of the Town of Ossining shall be notified by email, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. The Ossining Police Department, Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corp., Ossining Volunteer Fire Department, Ossining Food Pantry, Ossining School District, Village of Ossining, Village of Briarcliff, and Briarcliff School District will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of email correspondence. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The Town Supervisor will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Town Supervisor of the Town of Ossining, 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 Town Supervisor of the Town of Ossining, their designee, or their successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

Mission Essential Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, the Town of Ossining 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 Ossining

The Town of Ossining 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 functions are prioritized according to:

- The time criticality of each essential function
- Interdependency of a one function to others
- The recovery sequence of essential functions and their vital processes

Priority 1 identifies the most essential of functions, with priority 4 identifying functions that are essential, but least among them.

The mission essential functions for the Town of Ossining have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description	Priority
Emergency Services	Provides law enforcement capability, medical support, and fire suppression services to residents and property. (These services are provided through an intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Ossining, Village of Briarcliff, and the Mid-Hudson Ambulance District.)	1
Information Technology	Provides all hardware and software for the town. Maintains the town's network and phone system. (These services are provided through an intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Ossining.)	2
Infrastructure Maintenance	Maintains town infrastructure, namely roads and access points, to allow for emergency services personnel and incoming assistance service vehicles. Coordinates with internal municipal departments and external municipal departments to maintain water, sewer, and other public works services. (Water distribution infrastructure is provided through an intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Ossining.)	3
Management and Communications	Provides information to members of the public regarding the status of above priorities, in addition to updates in progress, relevant expansion/limitation of services. Oversees reports from responding departments and offline departments to maintain essential services and assess supplemental response strategy.	4
Health and Welfare of Community	Maintains operations of town services and properties and to ensure safety standards as they relate to senior assistance, senior nutrition, public lands, and cemetery land.	5

Provide services required by law	Maintains operations as required by state, federal, or local law, including but not limited to the administration of the justice court, issuance of death certificates, issuance of birth certificates, tax collection, and issuance of permits/licenses.	6
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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	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Emergency Services (These services are provided through an intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Ossining, Village of Briarcliff, and the Mid-Hudson Ambulance District.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ossining Police Chief Ossining Volunteer Fire Department Chief Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corp. Chief Staff/Officers/Volunteers of the above 	<p>Coordination of emergency service with the necessary equipment and communication to avoid undue or further harm/damage in an emergency situation as it relates to law enforcement and hazard warnings.</p> <p>Coordination of emergency service with the necessary equipment and communication to avoid undue or further harm/damage in an emergency situation as it relates to fire risk and fire suppression.</p> <p>Coordination of emergency service with the necessary equipment and communication to avoid undue or further harm/damage in an emergency situation as it relates to medical situations.</p> <p>Emergency Services staff members carry out the instructions of the relevant chief and other commanding officers as necessary.</p>
Information Technology (These services are provided through an intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Ossining)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Services Coordinator Technical Support Specialist 	<p>The IT manager establishes all priorities for IT tasks and organizes staff.</p> <p>IT staff provides support in setting up and maintaining hardware and software, network management, and internal help desk support.</p>
Infrastructure Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Highway Superintendent Town Highway Foreman and staff 	<p>The Highway Superintendent oversees the maintenance of road, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure and coordinates directly with emergency services personnel to clear access routes.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Parks Department (additional support) • Village of Ossining Superintendent of Water • Village of Ossining Engineer 	<p>Town Highway Foreman and staff members carry out the instructions of the Highway Superintendent as necessary.</p> <p>Town Parks Department staff members provide additional support staff as necessary.</p> <p>The Village of Ossining Superintendent of Water (through an intermunicipal agreement) oversees the maintenance of infrastructure as it relates to drinking water and water for fire suppression.</p> <p>The Village of Ossining Engineer oversees the maintenance of infrastructure and public works in conjunction with the Superintendent of Water and in response to request from Highway Superintendent.</p>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Supervisor • Town Supervisor office staff 	<p>The Town Supervisor receives incoming reports from departments responding to the immediate crisis. Manages resources where appropriate and requesting assistance/resources from chain of command on behalf of the municipality.</p> <p>Town Supervisor office staff assist in the management of the response, including receiving and cataloging requests for resources from departments, residents, external service providers, and assistance efforts.</p>
Health and Welfare of Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemetery Superintendent • Parks Foreman and Staff • Senior Nutrition Site Manager • Senior Nutrition Chauffeur/Bus Driver • Senior Nutrition Food Service Staff 	<p>The Cemetery Superintendent maintains operation of the town-owned Cemeteries, including burials, site maintenance, and communications with families and funeral directors.</p> <p>The Parks Foreman and staff maintain operation of the town-owned parks and public spaces, including site maintenance and communications with park users and Supervisor’s Office.</p> <p>The Senior Nutrition Site Manager provides food distribution, manages supplies, oversees health and safety standards for food preparation and distribution, and provides social services to seniors registered with the program, including homebound and disabled seniors.</p> <p>The Senior Nutrition Chauffer/Bus Driver delivers food and/or supplies upon the direction of the Senior Nutrition Site Manager.</p> <p>The Senior Nutrition Food Service Staff prepare, store, and maintain food under the direction of the Senior Nutrition Site Manager.</p>

Services required by law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Clerk • Town Clerk's Office Staff • Tax Receiver • Tax Receiver's Office Staff • Justice Court 	<p>The Town Clerk and staff continue operations as required by law including maintenance and issuance of vital statistics as required by law.</p> <p>The Tax Receiver and staff continue tax collection and other related processes in accordance with due dates as required by law.</p> <p>The Justice Court and staff continue summary proceedings, applicable criminal cases, vehicle and traffic misdemeanors, violations, and infractions as required by law.</p>
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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 and on public transportation

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. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval and 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
 - i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff

Department heads shall report to the Town Supervisor with requests, needs, and regular reports. This correspondence can be facilitated through the use of onsite communication (when safe), emails, phone calls, texts, and/or monthly department head meetings. Department heads shall coordinate separately with their staff to maintain services, including managing incoming correspondence from residents or relevant external services.

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, the Town of Ossining 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

For those employees appearing onsite: appropriate equipment will be provided and safety checks to protect the health/safety of others onsite. Building access may be limited or a record of onsite attendance may be maintained. Sites will be appropriately maintained and secured during hours when no in-person presence can be maintained. This will be done through the combined use of technology and infrastructure, including but not limited to security systems, cameras, automatic locks, and antivirus protections.

For those employees working remotely: appropriate equipment will be provided if not privately available, including equipment to access secure network and interfaces. This may include webcams, cell phones, and home office supplies.

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 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 section as they are pertinent to protecting the health and safety of our employees and contractors.

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based upon job duties and work location
2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified in the amended law, public employers must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required type of PPE to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least six months
 - b. Public employers must be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock
 - a. PPE must be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation
 - b. Employees and contractors must have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency
 - c. The supply of PPE must be monitored to ensure integrity and to track usage rates

PPE shall ordered on behalf of all departments and will be stored at 16 Croton Avenue or other centralized locations. Departments may also coordinate for purchase of their own supplies, within reason, however department heads are encouraged to coordinate with the Supervisor's Office to determine whether requested supplies have been stockpiled. PPE shall be stored an unused, easily accessible space in a town facility, for example the McKinley Room or 3rd Floor Conference Room. Ordering, distribution, and vendor maintenance shall be coordinated through the Supervisor's Office or other applicable departments.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. Following CDC guidelines, we have established the following protocols:

- A. If employees or contractors are exposed to a known case of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
 - 1. Potentially exposed employees or contractors who do not have symptoms should remain at home or in a comparable setting and practice social distancing for the applicable period recommended pursuant to current CDC/public health guidance for the communicable disease in question.
 - a. As possible, these employees will be permitted to work remotely during this period of time if they are not ill.
 - b. Employees must inform the Town Supervisor who is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed, or their designee
 - c. See the section titled Documentation of Work Hours and Locations for additional information on contact tracing
 - 2. Provided that applicable CDC guidelines authorize doing so, provide that critical essential employees may be permitted to continue onsite work following potential exposure, provided they remain symptom-free and additional precautions are taken to protect them, other employees and contractors, and our constituency/public.
 - a. Additional precautions will include the requirement of the subject employee or contractor, as well as others working in their proximity, to wear appropriate PPE at all times to limit the potential of transmission.
 - b. In-person interactions with the subject employee or contractor will be limited as much as possible.
 - c. Work areas in which the subject employee or contractor are present will be disinfected according to current CDC/public health protocol at least every hour, as practical. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
 - d. If at any time they exhibit symptoms, refer to item B below.
 - e. The Town Supervisor or their designee, in consultation with department heads, is the decision-maker in these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed
- B. If an employee or contractor exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
 - 1. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms in the workplace should be immediately separated from other employees, customers, and visitors. They should immediately be sent home with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 - 2. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home, with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 - 3. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation per CDC/public health guidance and have consulted with a healthcare provider.
 - 4. The Town of Ossining will not require sick employees to provide a negative test result for the disease in question or healthcare provider's note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or

- return to work; unless there is a recommendation from the CDC, state, or local public health officials to do so.
5. CDC criteria for COVID-19 provides that persons exhibiting symptoms may return to work if at least 24 hours have passed since the last instance of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. If the disease in question is other than COVID-19, CDC and other public guidance shall be referenced.
 6. The Town Supervisor or their designee must be informed in these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed
- C. If an employee or contractor has tested positive for the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
1. Apply the steps identified in item B, above, as applicable.
 2. Areas occupied for prolonged periods of time by the subject employee or contractor will be closed off.
 - a. CDC guidance for COVID-19 indicates that a period of 24 hours is ideally given before cleaning, disinfecting, and reoccupation of those spaces will take place. If this time period is not possible, a period of as long as possible will be given. CDC/public health guidance for the disease in question will be followed.
 - b. Any common areas entered, surfaces touched, or equipment used shall be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
 - c. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
 3. Identification of potential employee and contractor exposures will be conducted
 - a. If an employee or contractor is confirmed to have the disease in question, the Town Supervisor or their designee should inform all contacts of their possible exposure. Confidentiality shall be maintained as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - b. Apply the steps identified in item A, above, as applicable, for all potentially exposed personnel.
 4. The Town Supervisor and their designee must be informed in these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed.

The Town of Ossining recognizes there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. We will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.
 - a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected at least hourly.
 - b. Each building has an assigned cleaner, under direct employment or contract and as such are responsible for cleaning offices, common areas. In buildings owned by the Village of Ossining, building maintenance staff is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting office spaces. In buildings

owned by the Town of Ossining, the Town will hire a contractor to provide for the cleaning and disinfecting of office spaces.

2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before being disinfected.
4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Employee and Contractor Leave

Employees will be granted leave in accordance with their collective bargaining agreements and the non-union employee handbook. Additional provisions may be enacted based upon need and the guidance and requirements in place by federal and state employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of the Town of Ossining, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by the Town of Ossining, unless required by law.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work, off-site visits. This information may be used by the Town of Ossining to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Department heads shall manage the schedule for staggered staff. They are also responsible for monitoring staff attendance. Employees shall complete a confidential health screening form upon entry to their indoor worksite. Alternatively, employees may register their attendance with onsite greeters who may confirm adherence to safety practices before allowing entry to the worksite. The information is reviewed by the Town Supervisor and relevant Supervisor's office staff, to be kept confidential for the purposed of contact tracing or upon reasonable request from the CDC, state, or local health authorities.

Housing for Essential Employees

There are circumstances within a public health emergency when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner which will help prevent the spread of the subject communicable disease to protect these employees from potential exposures, thus helping to ensure their health and safety and the continuity of the Town of Ossining's essential operations.

If such a need arises, hotel rooms are expected to be the most viable option. If hotel rooms are for some reason deemed not practical or ideal, or if there are no hotel rooms available, the Town of Ossining will coordinate with the Westchester Office of Emergency Management to help identify and arrange for these housing needs. This action will be managed by the Town Supervisor and the staff of that respective office.