



Borough of Chatham
BOROUGH HALL
54 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE
CHATHAM, NEW JERSEY 07928
973-635-0674 • www.chathamborough.org

Borough Operations COVID-19 Questions

Will there be any interruptions or changes in normal borough services?

The Borough has plans in place to ensure the continuity of all services, including redundancy in all key positions in case anyone becomes ill.

Residents can expect the mulch area and recycling center to remain open and garbage and recycling services to continue uninterrupted. Water and sewer services are not jeopardized. *Note: to protect our sewer system, never flush Lysol wipes or “flushable” wipes down the toilet. These must be disposed of in the garbage!*

Police and EMS have protocols in place to ensure capacity during a pandemic.

Borough Hall is closed to visitors in an effort to promote social distancing, but we continue to conduct business by phone and electronically. This includes Certificates of Occupancy for real estate transactions.

Is the borough going to revert to allowing single use plastic bags in the interests of hygiene?

Borough officials are taking the lead from public health professionals in implementing measures to protect the public. *There is no indication that reusable bags pose any particular contamination risk* – and in fact the virus may last longer on plastic surfaces than on cloth or woven surfaces. While person to person spread is the area of greatest concern to public health professionals, it is recommended that residents wash their bags between uses. Any grocery items that come into contact with the cash register belt or are handled by stock people, cashiers, etc. should also be washed.

Are green bags still required for garbage?

Yes, the requirement that residents use green bags are part of the Borough’s contract with its solid waste hauler, Suburban Disposal. Suburban recovers a portion of its tipping fee costs through the sale of the green bags, and renegotiation of the contract at this time would be a major undertaking. The Borough has checked with our hauler and they and the stores have extensive supplies of the

green bags. The hauler will ensure that these remain in stock. Both Kings in the Borough and Shoprite in the Township sell the bags and offer delivery services, although time slots are limited.

Can you explain the rationale behind the closing of specific parks and businesses?

Public health experts have indicated that our best chance to slow the spread of COVID-19 and avoid overwhelming the health care system is to limit person to person contact as much as possible.

We are seeking as much consistency as possible across jurisdictions and are working with the state and county towards this end.

Can you elaborate on what social distancing means? Can we meet up and socialize outdoors? Can we have friends over?

Getting together with neighbors and having kids gather is not social distancing. On the contrary, it puts the community at risk while our main objective is to flatten the curve and lessen the strain that can be placed on our medical community. Please consider your neighbors who work on the front lines - the health professionals and first responders - and do your part by staying home and keeping a safe distance from others when it's necessary to go out. To be clear, that necessary distance is six feet or more.

Is carryout food safe?

YES. The Health Department has indicated that with a respiratory virus, food is not a likely source of contamination and carryout food is safe. Avoid direct contact with delivery people and wash your hands after handling the packaging and before eating.

The Borough has designated special curb-side pickup spots for carryout food on Main Street and urges residents to help keep our restaurants in business.

What help is available for businesses or individuals whose livelihood is being hurt by this?

We will be reaching out to businesses in the community to see what can be done to assist them. In addition, the State has posted FAQs for businesses affected by the outbreak:

<https://faq.business.nj.gov/en/collections/2198378-information-for-nj-businesses-on-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

What is being done for home-bound seniors?

Seniors or people who want to volunteer to help them can contact the Senior Center 973-635-4565. In addition, there is a "Chatham COVID-19 volunteer support" group on Facebook where residents can ask for or offer help.

Seniors can visit <https://www.chathamborough.org/chatham/Government/Senior%20Services/> for online exercise videos.

Are we at risk of a food shortage?

No. Grocery stores and pharmacies remain open. There are some interruptions in the supply chain as people stock up, but the overall supply chain is intact. Please respect the quantity limits that some stores place on items that are in high demand.

What is going on with key Borough initiatives such as redevelopment?

The Governor has instructed local governments to focus on ensuring basic services and managing their response during this crisis. Therefore, redevelopment and related initiatives are on hold.

What is being done to help Borough businesses through this?

The COVID-19 closures have the potential to have a devastating effect on our local businesses. The Chatham Borough's Economic Development Advisory Committee will be discussing measures that can be taken to help our businesses.

In the meantime, residents are encouraged to help:

- Patronize our local restaurants for carryout and delivery food.
- Contact our local retailers, florists, and others - some retailers also remain open to remote shopping and can provide curbside or delivery services.
- Purchase gift cards now for future use.
- Consider remote (zoom or skype) yoga, training, and tutoring sessions with local residents who provide these services.

I have health-related questions? Who should I contact?

- The Borough's health department is the Westfield Regional Health Department, which can be contacted by e-mail or phone: 908-789-4070; health@westfieldnj.gov
- Novel Coronavirus Hotline 1-800-222-1222 Experts from the NJ Department of Health are standing by 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to help in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of coronavirus for the general public and healthcare professionals across the state.
- The State of New Jersey a Covid-19 website: <https://covid19.nj.gov/>

How do I make sure I am aware of current COVID-19 Related Issues in the Borough

- Updates, including information on the number of cases in Chatham Borough, are provided on our website (chathamborough.org) and Facebook. The Borough is also sending out

periodic COVID-19 Newsletters to residents via e-mail. To sign up for e-mails please go to: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/zmLLS38>

I have a question about Borough-related issues. Who do I contact?

- Emergencies should always be reported through the 911 system. If you are calling about an emergency related to a suspected case of COVID-19, please alert the dispatcher so that respondents can ensure they are using proper protective gear.
- To report routine infrastructure or service issues (potholes, streetlights not functioning, etc.) please use our Report a Concern function.
<https://www.chathamborough.org/chatham/Report%20a%20Concern/>
- For non-urgent police matters, the Chatham Borough Police Department has initiated a website to report non-emergency matters that does not require an immediate response, go to Police Incident Online Citizen Reporting System and follow the instructions.
<https://www.frontlinepss.com/chathamborough>
- For general questions, please e-mail the Borough Administrator and/or his assistant:

Stephen Williams - Borough Administrator
973-635-0674 x 208
Email: swilliams@chathamborough.org

Melanie Politi - Assistant to the Borough Administrator
973-635-0674 x 231
Email: mpoliti@chathamborough.org