

# Town of Franklin

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Phone: (508) 520-4949  
[www.franklinma.gov](http://www.franklinma.gov)

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

March 13, 2020

To: Town of Franklin Residents, Businesses & Visitors

From: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator  
Sara Ahern, Superintendent of Schools

Re: **Coronavirus Update**

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Based on the evolving conditions associated with the COVID-19 outbreak occurring throughout the state, in consultation with the Franklin Board of Health, town emergency management officials, we have made the decision to close the Franklin Public Schools and most town buildings, beginning today, Friday, March 13, 2020. As the situation remains fluid, we anticipate remaining closed for approximately two weeks (through March 27, 2020) resuming operations March 30th where the Town will resume business; however, this may change based on direction from state and local health officials as more information becomes available.

We realize this decision has a significant impact and far-reaching ramifications for our community and understand the disruption and uncertainty that is created for everyone. However, we believe these steps are necessary given the current realities. We encourage all families to take a step back, please follow [best hygiene and prevention practices](#) as instructed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and to be patient. We do not make this decision lightly, but making decisions to help prevent transmission of the virus is paramount.

We encourage every Franklin resident, business and visitor to follow the latest guidance from local authorities on our Coronavirus Information Portal here on the Franklin homepage. More information on each departments level of service will continue to be updated here:

<https://www.franklinma.gov/>

Effective immediately, we will be ordering the following public facility closures and restrictions:

1. **Franklin Public School District** will be closed beginning today, March 13th, 2020. The schools anticipate opening Monday, March 30th.

The FPS Administration is considering numerous factors at this time, including how to provide for continuity of services, including feeding children. Additional information will be forthcoming this afternoon and in the coming days. School based staff should not report on Monday, March 16, 2020. Additional expectations for staff will be communicated soon.

This information will be sent to families and staff via Regroup as well as posted on our webpage:

<https://www.franklinps.net/>

2. **Franklin Senior Center** will be closed to all patrons indefinitely, until further notice. The staff will be required to work a full schedule and will continue to conduct outreach and assistance to seniors in need. Staff will be readily available by telephone at 508-520-4926 [during regular business hours](#) to answer questions and offer any assistance. Franklin Senior Center staff are also spending time disinfecting the entire building during the week, as well.

As stated by the [CDC, older adults and those with serious illnesses](#) are especially at high risk to contract the virus and have greater risk of complications from the virus. Please visit the Franklin website for additional information. We are urging our senior citizen population to continue to be vigilant, avoid large gatherings, practice social distancing and good hygiene, and to stay home as much as possible to limit exposure to Coronavirus.

3. **Franklin Public Library** will be closed to all patrons indefinitely, until further notice. The staff will be required to work a full schedule and will continue to operate business via online services and will be available by phone during [modified](#) business hours at 508-520-4941.

Modified business hours will be 9AM to 5PM Monday through Saturday where staff will be available by phone. All programs at the Library are cancelled for this duration.

Any late fines will be waived through at least March 27th.

4. **Franklin Recreation Building** will be closed to all patrons indefinitely, until further notice. The staff will be required to work a full schedule and will continue to operate business via online services. The Franklin Recreation Department operates all of its [program registration online](#) and individuals may continue to sign up for programs. The Town is cancelling all recreation programs through March 30th.
5. **Municipal Building & DPW Administration Building** will remain open during regular business hours for the time being. We are working through the legal factors relating to public meetings, public hearings and our ability to continue to conduct regular business as much as possible. Public bodies, such as elected Boards, must continue to work,

unless further directed by the state. We hope to have additional information at the beginning of next week on the status.

We encourage all residents to use our online business options for permits, payments online at our online customer service center.

<https://unipaygold.unibank.com/customerinfo.aspx>

<https://franklinma.viewpointcloud.com/>

6. **Police and Fire Department** will remain open to respond to public safety related matters as they arise. Emergency dispatch has included enhanced screenings to further diagnose any calls with infectious diseases.
7. **Historical Museum** will be closed indefinitely until further notice.

Other actions taken:

- The Town of Franklin is providing weekly deep sanitization of all public facilities every weekend. This will continue until further notice.
- The Town has installed numerous hand sanitizing stations throughout our buildings and schools to help prevent the spread of this (or any) virus.
- We continue to monitor the latest information from state authorities.
- The March 21st Stormwater Forum at the Public Library will be cancelled.

The following links are resources to find out information on best practices, travel restrictions and other facts about the spread of the virus. These are the three most trusted and factual sources of information for you and your family.

Center for Disease Control -- <https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus/>

Massachusetts Department of Public Health -- [www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus](http://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus)

Town of Franklin -- <https://www.franklinma.gov/>

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