



City of Rochester, New Hampshire
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
31 Wakefield Street • Rochester, NH 03867
(603) 332-1167
www.RochesterNH.net



PUBLIC NOTICE

Rochester Municipal Offices Closed to the Public Effective Wednesday, March 18

In light of the current developments in dealing with the COVID-19 virus, the City of Rochester has determined it is in the best interest of both the public and City staff to close the Municipal Offices of the City of Rochester to the general public effective March 18 until April 7. The City intends to maintain essential services and will have staff working through this situation. In order to conduct City business, the public is encouraged to do the following:

As of March 18, 2020 all Municipal Offices will be closed to the General Public. Please review the information below to determine which services are still being offered.

Assessing Department

Abatements & Appeals- All abatements and appeals will follow the deadlines set forth in RSA 76:16 and 76:16-a or 76:17 (abatement application deadline March 1, appeal deadline September 1). For abatement applications that were timely filed, if an inspection is deemed necessary, it will be scheduled with the owner by our staff. Decisions regarding abatement applications will be mailed on or before July 1, 2020.

Change of Mailing Address- This form can be found online here, <https://www.rochesternh.net/assessing/pages/change-of-mailing-address-form>, and either mailed to 19 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH 03867 or emailed to Assessor@RochesterNH.net.

Current Use- Requests for Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) will need to be emailed to the above address with the following information: 1. Current Owner, 2. Physical Address, 3. Map/Lot/Block number, 4. Contract price. To obtain further information regarding a LUCT or any other current use questions please contact our office at 603-332-5109 or Assessor@RochesterNH.net.

Exemptions and Credits (Elderly, Disabled, Blind and Veteran)- The deadline for application has been extended until June 15, 2020. Copies of required documentation may be mailed to our office, at your discretion (we cannot be held responsible for any lost/returned/damaged mail). Please refer to the following websites for further information and/or contact our office at the above listed phone number or email address.

<https://www.rochesternh.net/assessing/pages/exemptions>

<https://www.rochesternh.net/assessing/pages/veteran-tax-credits>

Property Assessment Record Cards- Can be requested by contacting our office at 603-332-5109 or email Assessor@RochesterNH.net. The fee associated with processing will temporarily be waived.

Timber and Excavation Intents & Reports- All intents and reports for timber and excavation may be

mailed or emailed in to our office at the above listed addresses. Inquiries regarding these may be made by contacting the office at 603-332-5109 or email Assessing@RochesterNH.net.

Field Inspections- All field inspections will temporarily be conducted from the street only. We will not enter properties until further notice. Please refer to Abatements & Appeals above for information on abatement related inspection requests.

Our Assessing Department website, listed below, is a great resource. Please refer to it for additional information on the topics above and many more.

<https://www.rochesternh.net/assessing>

All other inquiries can be directed to the 603-332-5109 or email Assessor@RochesterNH.net.

City Clerk's Office

As of March 18, 2020 the City Clerk's office will be closed to the General Public. Please review the information below to determine which services are still being offered through our mail system and online services.

Dog Licensing – You are hereby encouraged to utilize the online portal to register your dog(s)

<https://www.rochesternh.net/dog-licensing-information>

If you are unable to utilize our online services, please mail a check or money order to the City of Rochester to 31 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH 03867. The City Clerk's office will check the mail each week for new requests. If you are unsure of the amount that you owe, please contact us at 603-332-2130 or email us at cityclerk@rochesternh.net

Vital Records Online: You are hereby encouraged to utilize the City's online portal to request vital records, which includes, Birth, Death, Divorce, and Marriage Certificates:

<https://www.rochesternh.net/city-clerk/pages/order-vital-records-online>

Vital Records Mail Orders: Vital records can be requested through the mail utilizing the address listed above.

Special Exception to the mail order process may Only Be Granted to Funeral Homes: Please call the City Clerk's office at 603-332-2130 for more information.

Marriage License: The City Clerk's Office is closed to the general public. If you are active military or have an urgent need to obtain a Marriage License, please email or call the City Clerk's Office for more information: cityclerk@rochesternh.net or 603-332-2130.

Auto Registration / Tax Office

As of March 18, 2020 the Tax Collector's office will be closed to the general public. We are encouraging customers to utilize the following options for services:

Vehicle Registration RENEWALS:

Motor vehicle registrations can be renewed online following the link on the Tax Collector's page at www.rochesternh.net. The \$1.50 vendor transaction fee for online renewals is being waived for the duration of NH's State of Emergency, credit card & ACH fees are unable to be waived.

For Vehicle Registrations with 20 day plates issued after 3/1: the NH DMV has authorized the extension of these plates to 4/30/2020.

For Water/Sewer Bills and 2019 Property Tax Payments:

Payments can be made online at <http://www.rochesternh.net> (then click on Pay Bills). If you encounter any issues please call (603) 332-1136

Payments can be made over the phone using a credit or debit card by calling (603) 332-1136

Payments can be submitted by mail addressed to "Tax Office

19 Wakefield Street

Rochester, NH 03867"

Payments can be dropped off in the night drop box outside the front of the building at 19 Wakefield Street

Interest from late payment of Water/Sewer bills mailed to customers on 3/20/2020 or later (and until further notice) will be waived.

Economic Development Department

Members of the Public in need of assistance from the Department of Economic Development may call the main line at 603-335-7522, to be directed to the appropriate staff member.

Or you may email the following staff members:

Michael Scala, Director: Michael.Scala@RochesterNH.net

Jenn Marsh, Specialist: Jennifer.Marsh@RochesterNH.net

Julian Long, Community Development: Julian.Long@RochesterNH.net

Building, Zoning & Licensing Services Department

Application Process for Permits – You are hereby encouraged to apply for permits utilizing our online services using the following link:

- <https://www.rochesternh.net/home/pages/view-permit-policy-accept>

Inspections –**Occupied Buildings**

- The Building Inspector will not be going to occupied buildings to do inspections.
- As an alternative, video feeds and/or pictures can be submitted for review and will be an acceptable means of inspection.
- To submit videos and/or pictures for review, please use the following email: codes@rochesternh.net or call our main line for help at 603-332-3508.
- We encourage you to call our office at 603-332-3508 just prior to leaving the job site to be transferred to our Building Inspector to review, or discuss by video feed the inspection required at that time.

Non-Occupied Buildings or Outdoor Inspections

- The Building Inspector will still continue to go to outdoor inspections such as those for new home construction or those with limited social interaction.
- Please call our office to schedule these inspection requests or utilize the above link which can be used to request an inspection as well.

Fire Department

In an effort to protect our first responders, we are limited entrance to the Fire Department to essential personnel only.

- If this is an emergency, please dial 911.
- If you have a general question, please call the business line 603-335-7545.

- If you are looking for a burn permit, they will be available online only until further notice at www.nhfirepermit.com

Thank you in advance for understanding and cooperating during this unprecedented time.
We will continue to respond to all emergency calls.

Planning Department

We encourage customers to call the office at 603-335-1338 or email crystal.galloway@rochesternh.net for assistance.

For questions regarding the Historic District Commission, please email michelle.mears@rochesternh.net
For questions regarding the Conservation Commission, please email seth.creighton@rochesternh.net

Police Department

The Rochester Police Department is asking that people refrain from coming to the station to report non-emergency calls. Police are asking that you report calls for service over the phone, **603-330-7128**, or by utilizing our online crime reporting <https://rochesterpd.org/online-crime-report/> in lieu of coming to the station lobby to report things in person. In addition, please access any forms online for records requests, pistol permit requests, alarm permits and parking ban waivers <https://rochesterpd.org/forms/>

Rochester Police are recommending this in an abundance of caution to help prevent the possible spread and contraction of the COVID-19 virus by limiting as much contact between people as possible. As a result, you may see some deviations from our normal practices that will be in place to protect the health and safety of those needing services. This may include, but not limited to, being asked to meet an officer outside your residence or business when they respond to a non-emergency call for service that can't be handled over the phone or online. The Citizen's Police Academy has been postponed as well as all scheduled Ward meetings. We will also be suspending applicant fingerprinting until further notice.

Our doors will still be open 24/7 and we will still be answering and responding to calls for service as usual, however would like to minimize close contact whenever possible. Any visitors who have to come to the station or have face to face contact with a City employee are asked to maintain a six (6) foot minimum distance to limit contact with individuals and surfaces.

We appreciate your understanding that the community's safety, health and welfare are our top priority. Be assured Rochester's first responders are taking many precautions with our own health and safety to ensure we may effectively address public safety needs and that we won't stop doing police work because of COVID-19. We are here to serve our community the best we can while taking appropriate measures to best protect ourselves and the people of Rochester amid this pandemic.

Rochester Public Library

The City Library will be closed until further notice. All upcoming programs and events have been cancelled. However, you can still access the online collection at www.rpl.lib.nh.us by clicking on the 'services' tab. The borrowing limit for Hoopla has been increased from 5 titles per month to 10 titles per month. Research resources are also available. To contact a librarian with a question, please email RPLReference@rochesternh.net.

Borrowing: Library books are unavailable while the building is closed. The book returns are also unavailable. If you have library items in your possession, please keep them until the library re-opens. The library is waiving all late fines associated with this closing.

Tax preparation/tax forms: The AARP tax preparation service has been suspended. Tax forms are available online at www.irs.gov. A limited number of paper tax forms are available outside the main floor entrance of the library.

2020 Census: Wireless internet access for the public is still available for a limited distance outside the library facility and can be used to fill out the 2020 Census by visiting www.census.gov.

Story Time: The spring story time program has been suspended through April 3rd. The children's librarian will decide whether the program can resume – more information will be forthcoming.

The Department of Public Works including Water Treatment, Wastewater Treatment, Utilities, Roadways, Engineering and Buildings and Grounds Divisions

The DPW Office is closed to the public. Customer Service is available via telephone at 603-332-4096 from 7:00am to 4:00pm daily. You may email the department staff directly by going to the Public Works page on the City Website www.rochesternh.net.

All DPW Permits and License Applications can be filed on line via the City of Rochester Website at www.rochesternh.net. You would click on the "Online Services" button on the home page.

All questions or concerns should be directed to 603-332-4096.

Rochester Recreation & Arena

- While we will continue to check the Recreation Office & Arena voicemails, for the most efficient communication, we kindly request that customers email us at RochesterRec@rochesternh.net
- Department Related Updates will be posted to our Facebook Page (Rochester NH Recreation & Arena) and website (www.RochesterRec.com)
- Our department is exploring ways in which we can remotely engage with our customers over the computer. We hope to offer some creative opportunities over the next 1-2 weeks that will be shared on our department Facebook and website.

Welfare Office

If you are seeking assistance from the City Welfare Department, please contact 603-332-3505 or email Welfare@RochesterNH.Net to schedule a phone assessment and appointment if necessary. Phone is preferred.

If you experiencing a homelessness situation and unable to call or email to schedule a phone assessment
****Please Go to The Front of The Building and Ring Bell For Assistance****

The Welfare Office will normally be available between the hours of 8:30AM-4:30PM Monday-Friday. *If you are experiencing a homeless situation outside of business hours and/or the Welfare Department is unavailable, please call "211" to assist with available resources.

All City offices will be staffed during normal business hours and may be reached by phone and e-mail. For a complete list of contact information for staff at the Rochester City Hall please visit our website at www.RochesterNH.net, our main line at 603-335-7500 or City Manager's office at 603-332-1167.

SAU 54 – Rochester Schools are closed from March 16 – April 3. All NH Schools, including the schools in Rochester have transitioned to remote learning until April 3, 2020. Coursework should be forwarded by your child's teacher. If you have any questions, please contact the school department at 603-332-3678.

Rochester Opera House

The Rochester Opera House has been closely monitoring advisories from NH Department of Health and Human Services, the Center for Disease Control, and other reliable government advisories. We take the health and safety of our patrons, staff, and volunteers very seriously.

We have had to make some very difficult decisions. For the health and safety of the public, we will be postponing/canceling several upcoming shows and events. In addition, the Box Office will be closed to the public until further notice. We will make updates to the website as things change.

MEETING & CONFERENCE ROOM SPACES

All use of our conference rooms and meeting spaces have been canceled until further notice. Due to the need to protect our citizens from undue exposure to the coronavirus and in order to maintain social distancing, it is the decision to not allow community use of our meeting and conference room spaces for all public and private functions that had been scheduled.

City Hall & Annex Conference Rooms:

Use of these spaces will be available for essential City meetings only. All non-essential City board and committee meetings have been postponed until further notice. Private groups will not have access to the buildings beginning March 17, 2020.

Please know that we will be monitoring all local developments related to COVID-19, and are committed to timely and ongoing communication about any and all changes to our operating status as well as any recommendations to the public from public health and other government officials. Please keep up to date on our website at www.RochesterNH.net or through our news portal at www.RochesterPortal.com. You may contact the City Manager's Office at 603-332-1167 or by emailing CityManager@RochesterNH.net.

Prevention and What to do if you Feel Sick

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have stated that seniors and those with chronic health conditions are the most at-risk for serious illness caused by the coronavirus; they urge that those in this vulnerable population take appropriate precautions to mitigate their risk of becoming sick.

- Practice social distancing (at least six feet away from others) and avoid large crowds and large-scale events.
- Families should not hold "play dates" and those in need of childcare should limit the number of families involved as much as possible.
- Seniors and those with underlying health conditions are urged not to babysit or attend gatherings with children.

As has been widely suggested, any person who believes they may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their primary care physician.

Reported symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath and respiratory illness, including pneumonia in severe cases.

If anyone displays symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever, cough or shortness of breath, they should stay home and they are advised to contact their primary care physician. According to the CDC, symptoms of the virus appear within 2-14 days of exposure.

If you feel sick, the CDC recommends:

- Call your primary care physician before visiting them in person
- Stay home and limit your contact with others
- Wear a facemask if you are sick. Masks are not recommended for widespread use by healthy people.

The CDC recommends that residents continue with good hygiene practices including:

- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds including under your fingernails. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol content) can be used when soap and water are not available.
- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing with a tissue and discard it immediately. Cough into the sleeve over your elbow instead of your hand. Wash your hands often when coughing and sneezing.
- Residents looking for more information or with questions and concerns about the virus can now call the State of NH COVID-19 hotline by dialing 2-1-1.

For more information on Coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit the following:

U.S. CDC website: www.CDC.gov

NH Department of Health & Human Services website: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm>

Homeland Security and Emergency Management:
<http://https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem/index.html>

AGAIN, NH Governor Sununu, the NH Department of Health & Human Services, and NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management have also mobilized 211NH to handle all COVID-19 related calls from NH residents.