



March 17, 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update #4 Town Services

New in this update:

- **Town Office Building is CLOSED starting March 18, 2020.**
- **Tax exemption and credit application deadline extended to June 1, 2020.**
- **Support for community trash clean-up efforts (see Transfer Station).**

The Town of Bedford is committed to providing a high level of service for the community, while also prioritizing the health and safety of our employees. We are monitoring the coronavirus pandemic and utilizing information from the State of NH DHHS and the CDC. The State has made 2-1-1 available to any resident who needs information. As you will read in this update many of our services are now being conducted virtually where at all possible. Please do not come to our facilities unless necessary.

The Safety Complex is closed to visitors. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department.

The Library is closed to visitors. Items can be requested several ways as outlined below under the Library section.

The Town Office Building will be closed starting tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18, 2020 as the State is now allowing an extension to April 30, 2020 for new vehicle registrations and is encouraging renewals to be done electronically or through the mail. Employees continue to work in the office and at home to complete all aspects of official business. We would like to remind residents that there are several ways to conduct Town business without physically coming to one of our public buildings. The following bills can be paid online at <https://www.bedfordnh.org/819/Online-Bill-Payment>:

- Automobile Registrations (renewals)
- Dog Licenses
- Property Tax Bills

Additionally, the following can also be accessed online:

- Agendas and Staff Reports for upcoming board meetings at: <https://www.bedfordnh.org/agendacenter>
- Assessing records and town mapping at: <https://www.bedfordnh.org/149/Assessing>
- Vital records: <https://nh-bedford.civicplus.com/541/Vital-Records-and-Marriage-License>

- Library to checkout audiobooks, magazines, music, and movies: <https://bedfordnhlibrary.org/>
- Summer Camp Registration: <http://bedfordreonline.com/info/activities/default.aspx?type=activities>
- Draft 2020 Master Plan: https://nh-bedford.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/4406/BlueprintBedfordMasterPlan_04March2020
- Online job listings: <https://nh-bedford.civicplus.com/Jobs.aspx>

All required regulatory meetings (Planning Board, ZBA, etc.) and the Town Council meetings will go on as scheduled at this time. They can also be viewed in the following ways: on Channel 22 (Comcast); via live stream and on-demand from BCTV's website <https://www.bedfordnh.org/393/BCTV>.

Comments for items appearing on a Planning Board, Zoning Board, Conservation Commission, or Historic District Commission agenda can be made to the Planning Department at planning@bedfordnh.org prior to 4:30 PM the day of the meeting.

Comments regarding items on Town Council agendas can be sent to the Councilors at councilors2@bedfordnh.org or the Town Manager at rsawyer@bedfordnh.org by 4:30 PM the day of the meeting.

We are encouraging our own employees, as well as members of the community, to heed the CDC's guidelines to keep homes, schools, and workplaces safe. They include proper hand washing with soap and water, and staying home if you are sick.

This situation is evolving daily and information will be updated as it becomes available via this web page and our social media channels. The Town's Emergency Management team is evaluating information, keeping in touch with community and State of NH partners and will also provide updates.

Below are some additional updates and information from our Town Departments:

ASSESSING

The deadline for applying for elderly, disabled, blind property tax exemptions and veterans, all veterans, disabled veterans tax credits is extended from April 15 to June 1, 2020 for NEW applicants. This is done in compliance with State laws and administrative rule definitions as cited below:

72:33 Application for Exemption or Tax Credit. –

I. No person shall be entitled to the exemptions or tax credits provided by RSA 72:28, 28-b, 28-c, 29-a, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36-a, 37, 37-a, 37-b, 38-b, 39-b, 62, 66, and 70 unless the person has filed with the selectmen or assessors, by April 15 preceding the setting of the tax rate, a permanent application therefor, signed under penalty of perjury, on a form approved and provided by the commissioner of revenue administration, showing that the applicant is the true and lawful owner of the property on which the exemption or tax credit is claimed and that the applicant was duly qualified upon April 1 of the year in which the exemption or tax credit is first claimed, or, in the case of financial qualifications, that the applicant is duly qualified at the time of application. The form shall include the following and such other information deemed necessary by the commissioner:

I-a. If any person, otherwise qualified to receive an exemption or credit, shall satisfy the selectmen or assessors that he or she was prevented by accident, mistake, or misfortune from filing a permanent application or amended permanent application on or before April 15 of the year in which he or she desires the exemption to begin, said officials may receive the application at a later date and grant an exemption or credit for that year; but no such application shall be received or exemption or credit granted after the local tax rate has been approved for that year.

BTLA Administrative Rule Definition: Tax 102.02 "Accident, mistake or misfortune" means something outside the party's own control and not due to neglect, or something that a reasonably prudent person would not be expected to guard against or provide for.

DRA Administrative Rule Definition: Rev 401.01 "Accident, mistake, or misfortune" means something outside a person's control, or something which a reasonably prudent person would not be expected to guard against or provide for.

Anyone (**especially our seniors**) who have questions or concerns with completing their exemption or credit applications are recommended to call the department at 472-8104 and we will make arrangements to assist you. **Please do not hesitate to call!**

The office is closed to the public. Interior inspections will be temporarily suspended, however, we will be attempting to contact you via phone or email, or sending letters and/or questionnaires to be completed and mailed back to us in some cases. Exterior measurements, photos of sale properties, and properties with uncompleted building permits will continue. Hopefully we can address your issue over the phone (472-8104) or via email. Many of your questions might be able to be answered by reviewing our website where you can also find the email addresses for the staff. <https://www.bedfordnh.org/149/Assessing>

BUILDING & HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public except to conduct essential business that cannot be addressed on-line or by telephone. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department. Applications and inspections are still being completed but may be impacted as the situation develops. **Please call 472-3838** to see if we can address your issue over the phone.

- **Building, Sign, Demolition, Septic & Swimming Pool Applications** – Please submit completed permit applications, two sets of plans, plot plan and any other necessary documents to the drop box located in the main lobby of 55 Constitution Drive. These documents are also accepted via email to safety@bedfordnh.org or fax to 603-472-4565. You will be notified via phone when your permit is ready for pickup and the amount of your permit fee. Permit applications are available at <https://www.bedfordnh.org/169/Building-Code-Compliance>

- **Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Gas, Low Voltage Permit Applications** – Permit applications are to be completed & submitted at the Bedford Safety Complex. Please choose the building department option from the phone located in the main lobby to speak with a representative. A building department representative will take the information and payment may be submitted into a secure drop box in the lobby (cash & check only). A copy of the permit and receipt of payment will be mailed or emailed, depending on preference.
- **Food Service & Pool License Renewals** – Please drop off completed & SIGNED permit applications, additional documents and fees (payable by cash or check) to the drop box in the main lobby of 55 Constitution Drive. Applications can also be submitted via email at safety@bedfordnh.org, or faxed to 603-472-4565. If email or fax method is utilized please MAIL payment to The Bedford Health Department, 55 Constitution Drive, Bedford, NH 03110. Please ensure you reference your establishment license number or address with the payment. Your Food License will be mailed (if you would prefer email please include an email address). We ask you sign and return via mail, email (safety@bedfordnh.org) or fax (603-472-4565) a signed copy of your license.

DPW ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public except to conduct essential business that cannot be addressed on-line or by telephone. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department. **Please call 472-3070** to see if we can address your issue over the phone or to make an appointment to ensure that staff is available to meet with you. Issues can also be emailed to: publicworks@bedfordnh.org

DPW – HIGHWAY GARAGE

The Highway Garage is closed to the public. The Highway team continues to be ready to react to storms and is completing other work while maintaining social distances.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Our Department of Public Works Facilities Management Division has been hard at work keeping Town facilities clean and sanitary for Town employees and public visitors. Staff is following guidance from the CDC in using cleaning products formulated to fight common bacteria and viruses, including coronavirus. These proper cleaning procedures, combined with personal cough etiquette and appropriate hand washing, can reduce the spread of germs.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public except to conduct essential business that cannot be addressed on-line or by telephone. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department. The Bedford Fire Department is closely monitoring daily information from the CDC, State of NH DHHS, the State's Epidemiologist, and our medical

partners. We have made adjustments to our protocols to protect our first responders while still providing the best possible services to the community. You can contact the Fire Department for non-emergencies at 472-3219. The Fire Department will not be doing car seat inspections or physical fire permits until further notice. Fire permits are available on line at: <https://nhdflweb.sovsportsnet.net/>

PARKS & RECREATION

The office is closed to the public. The Bedford Parks & Recreation Department is will be cancelling all scheduled programs until further notice. You can contact the department by calling 472-5242 or emailing us at Recreation@Bedfordnh.org

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public except to conduct essential business that cannot be addressed on-line or by telephone. The Public Safety Complex remains available to citizens for their safety and security. The public will have access to the outer lobby of the Public Safety Complex where a telephone is available 24/7/365 to contact Police.

The Bedford Police Department is committed to providing the best possible service to the community, while also protecting our citizens and officers. Due to the recent coronavirus outbreak, the Police Department has made changes in our operational protocols to better ensure employee and public safety, but will still be responding to all life safety and priority calls for service. Non-emergencies can still be reported by calling the Police Department at 472-5113 and may be prioritized or delayed depending on the request. Some low priority calls for service may be handled by telephone with an officer. We will also be temporarily suspending fingerprinting for the foreseeable future. All community policing programs including the upcoming Citizen's Academy have been postponed until further notice. The Police Department's drug drop box remains available 24/7/365 in the outer lobby of the station to dispose of unused and unwanted prescription drugs and medications.

BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Bedford Library is closed to the public until further notice.

Requested items may be picked up in the upper level lobby Monday through Friday from 9 AM – 5 PM and on Saturday from 10 AM – 3 PM. To request an item go to the Catalog Search on the Bedford library website <https://www.bedfordnhlibrary.org/> or call the library 472-2300, or email: Reference@bedfordnh.org

The due date for all materials is extended to May 1 and fines suspended. Please do not return materials to the drop box until we reopen.

Please see our website for remote book, magazine, music, and film options: <https://bedfordnhlibrary.org/>

HUMAN RESOURCES

The office is closed to the public. You can contact the department by calling 792-1315. Welfare applications and appointments will continue to be given to those who are unable to meet their basic needs. Hopefully we can address your issue over the phone or via email. Please also visit our website:

<https://www.bedfordnh.org/813/Welfare> Job applications should be submitted online, via mail, or emailed to jobs@bedfordnh.org.

MOTOR VEHICLE and TAX OFFICE

The Motor Vehicle and Tax Office is closed to the public.

Please see instructions below for the following payment options that are available for Bedford residents to use. As always, please do not hesitate to contact the tax office at 472-3550 and MV@BedfordNH.org with specific questions regarding motor vehicles or taxes. You can also contact other members of the Finance team at 472-9869 and Finance@BedfordNH.org.

Payment Options

For Motor Vehicle Renewals:

1. **Online:** <https://www.bedfordnh.org/819/Online-Bill-Payment>

You will need your plate number, last four digits of vin number, and plate type. This information can be found on the renewal notice received in the mail. Also bear in mind that online motor vehicle renewals cost \$0.40 for echecks and credit card payments are subject to a 2.95% convenience fee with a \$1.95 minimum. If you renew online, registrations will be mailed to the address we mailed your renewal notice to.

2. **Mail In to:**

Town of Bedford
Att: Tax Office
24 North Amherst Road
Bedford, NH 03110

3. **Drop Box** in the doorway located at 24 North Amherst Road.

Please use an envelope and include your plate number on your check memo line so we can determine what you are intending to pay.

There is no ability to process NEW motor vehicle registrations online but the State has approved an extension until April 30, 2020 in concern for the health and well-being of employees, customers, and our community.

For Property Taxes:

1. **Mail In To:**

Town of Bedford
Att: Tax Office
24 North Amherst Road
Bedford, NH 03110

Please include your bill number on your check.

2. **Drop Box at the doorway** located at 24 North Amherst Rd.
3. **Pay 2019 Taxes Online**

Delinquency notices mailed on March 2nd include your property ID (parcel) and bill number. We recommend searching by parcel number with hyphen and 2019 tax year only. Leave all other fields blank.

<https://bedfordnh.munisselfservice.com/citizens/RealEstate/Default.aspx?mode=new>

4. **You cannot redeem tax liens online.** However, you can obtain the current lien redemption balance online and submit a check. Please include your bill number on your check and be sure to pay your oldest taxes first.

<https://bedfordnh.munisselfservice.com/citizens/RealEstate/Default.aspx?mode=new>

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The office is closed to the public. You can contact the department by calling 472-5243 or emailing us at planning@bedfordnh.org. Hopefully we can address your issue over the phone or via email.

Comments for items appearing on a Planning Board, Zoning Board, Conservation Commission, or Historic District Commission agenda can be made to the Planning Department at planning@bedfordnh.org prior to 4:30 PM the day of the meeting and they will be provided to the board.

All required regulatory meetings (Planning Board, ZBA, etc.) will go on as scheduled at this time. They can also be viewed in the following ways: on Channel 22 (Comcast); via live stream and on-demand from BCTV's website <https://www.bedfordnh.org/393/BCTV>. We are working on plans to allow the public to interact with these meetings electronically.

TOWN CLERK

The office is closed to the public. You can contact the office by calling 472-3550 or emailing us at townclerk@bedfordnh.org. Hopefully we can address your issue over the phone or via email and we encourage you first look on the Town website for your information www.bedfordnh.org.

TRANSFER STATION

At this time, the Transfer Station remains open with regular hours and we encourage everyone to maintain social distances and to be patient with each other.

Volunteer Clean-Up Efforts: In support of the volunteer community roadside clean-up efforts that are appearing on social media and that were requested at the Budgetary Town Meeting starting tomorrow Wednesday, March 17, 2020 we will supply trash bags at the Transfer Station outside of the municipal solid waste building in support of your efforts.

This is a great way to show community spirit and to get out of the house while also maintaining social distances and we thank the community for wanting to take this on. Please be safe along the road and where gloves and reflective or bright colored clothing.

We will also attempt to pick up the bags if you make PRIOR arrangements with our team by emailing us at publicworks@bedfordnh.org in advance of your clean-up event, but we would prefer if you disposed of the materials yourself at the Transfer Station if possible.

Coronavirus Resources:

1. State of NH COVID-19 Telephone Hotline: 2-1-1 (for additional information & assistance) is being staffed 24/7.
2. Town of Bedford Coronavirus website: <https://www.bedfordnh.org/892/Town-of-Bedford-Coronavirus-Information>
3. State of NH Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 Website: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm>
4. CDC Coronavirus Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>