

Town of York, Maine

COVID-19 After Action Report



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Context

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The Town of York was incorporated in 1652, it includes the four villages of: York Beach, Cape Neddick, York Harbor, and York Village. The town covers roughly 55 square miles (**Exhibit 1**) and is the fourth largest town in population in York County with an annual population of roughly 13,000-year-round residents and an estimated 52,000 seasonal residents.¹ With its multiple beaches, Mt. Agamenticus, the Nubble Lighthouse, and more, the Town of York boasts many attractions for locals and tourists alike.

The Town of York has a select board-manager form of government with a Town Manager hired by the Select Board. The Town of York employs roughly 100 full-time employees, 20 permanent part-time employees, and an average of 100 seasonal employees.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This After-Action Report (AAR) addresses the Town of York's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report looks at the seventeen (17) month period of January 2020 through June 2021. This time frame aligns with the first known case in the United States (US) and the ending of the State of Maine State of Civil Emergency.

This report focuses on the impact of the pandemic on the town as a whole and the town wide procedure and policy changes, as well as the town's ability to maintain continuity of operations (COOP). This report does not focus on individual department policy changes. The Town of York is unique in that the town government departments frequently work closely with private

Town of York Core Values

Honest: People on our team are honest, trustworthy and of great integrity.

Respectful: People on our team show respect for the public, officials, and co-workers at all times.

Positive: People on our team have a positive attitude and a passion for their work.

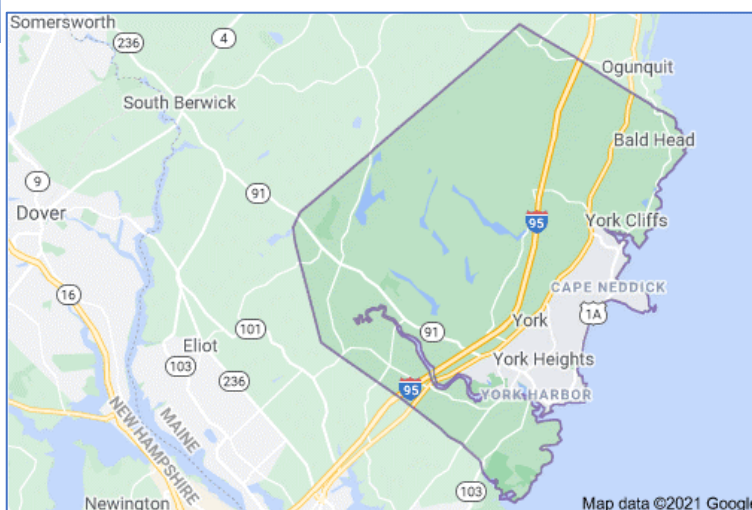
Caring: People on our team care about and show empathy for others.

Open: People on our team are open-minded and are receptive to new ideas and new ways of thinking.

Motivated: People on our team are driven, industrious and committed to team success.

Adaptable: People on our team have the aptitude to be successful in their work today and beyond.

Exhibit 1. Map of York and Surrounding Area



¹ U.S. Census Bureau (2019). *Quick Facts*. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/yorktownyorkcountymaine/PST045219>

organizations such as York Community Service Association (YCSA), York Region Chamber of Commerce (YRCC), and the York Public Library (YPL). Because of these working relationships, organizations like these may be referenced at times in this report. This report, however, will not focus on the policies and procedures of those private organizations. This report does not address actions and decisions made by any other town, county, state, or federal government organizations.

The Town of York has actively sought this review. This report will serve to identify what worked well and what needs improvement; and will help improve the town's response to future pandemics and other major disasters and incidents.

REPORT PREPARATION

During the COVID-19 pandemic the management team of the Town of York recognized the need for an emergency management position that was a neutral independent department separate from any other department within the town. The Town Manager created the Emergency Management Specialist (EMS) position. One of the first issues the EMS was tasked with was to review the town's response to the pandemic, for which this AAR was created.

Included in the AAR is a timeline (**Exhibit 2**) consisting of decisions and information released by town officials, the Governor of Maine, and the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC), as well as major events and important dates during the pandemic. Observations and recommendations will be organized into an improvement plan (IP) (**Appendix 1: Improvement Plan**) identifying specific issues, the officials needed to address each issue, and recommendations on how to address them.

The EMS consulted the following sources to formulate the AAR and accompanying IP:

- **Document Review-** Emergency Operations Plans (EOP), e-mails sent by town officials, and other official town and state documents were used to formulate this report. Also reviewed were recordings of the Select Board meetings during this time.
- **Interviews with town leaders-** The department heads of Human Resources, Code Enforcement/Local Health Officer (LHO), Public Works, Finance, Parks and Recreation, Assessing, Town Clerk, Police Chief, York Beach Fire Chief, York Village Fire Chief, Town Manager, Assessing, and Planning were all interviewed for this report. Additionally, the leaders of the following organizations were interviewed: YCSA, YRCC, YPL, York County CDC, Select Board, Budget Committee, Board of Appeals, and the Planning Board.

Interviewees were asked a series of questions that were both broad spectrum and specific to their respective departments/organizations. A list of interviewees by titles and example questions is included in **Appendix 2: Interviews**.

- **An online survey distributed to all staff members-** A survey was distributed to all town employees via e-mail in mid-July. The survey consisted of 15 questions in both multiple choice and open-ended formats. Responses were anonymous, and employees were informed that the purpose of this survey is to give them all a chance to provide feedback on their views of how the pandemic was handled in the town. The survey had roughly 50 responses with a well-rounded representation from all town departments.

The survey questions and statistical answers can be found in **Appendix 3: Employee Survey**.

- **An online survey distributed to local businesses-** A survey consisting of 5 questions was distributed by the YRCC to their Town of York members. The responses were anonymous, and participants were informed that the goal of this survey is to give businesses a chance to provide feedback on how the town responded to the pandemic in terms of its relationship with local businesses. The survey had roughly 40 responses. The survey questions and statistical answers can be found in **Appendix 4: Business Survey**.

The information gathered from these sources influenced the following sections of this report:

- **Observations-** Describes the successes and challenges throughout the pandemic. Details the communication between town officials and employees, as well as town officials and the public. Describes the observed wellbeing of town employees as a result of the pandemic.
- **Recommendations-** Summarizes significant findings both positive and negative. Identifies areas of strength that should be continued going forward, and areas of weakness that need to be improved upon.
- **Improvement Plan-** Details specific actions that can be taken to strengthen the Town of York's preparedness abilities. This section takes the generalized recommendations from the previous section of the report and becomes more specified by identifying by who, how, and a rough timeline of when an improvement will be made.
- **Conclusion-** Provides a summary of the incident and changes for the town to make as it continues to respond to the ongoing pandemic and prepare for future challenges.

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

In late December of 2019 the World Health Organization (WHO) County Office in China started documenting media reports of a “viral pneumonia” in Wuhan, China, so far reporting no deaths. By mid-January, officials determined that this viral pneumonia was being caused by a novel coronavirus, later named SARS-CoV2, causing the disease COVID-19. At this same time, officials started receiving reports of the first deaths, and that this disease is being transmitted from human-to-human. ²

By late January cases began to appear in the United States. While these cases were initially only on the western side of the country the Town of York started to prepare itself for a more localized outbreak. York's LHO quickly organized what became known as the COVID-19 Coordinated Response Team (CRT). This team consisted of leaders from all aspects of the town to include department heads, hospital representatives, school officials and local non-profits, as well as county and state officials and representatives.

March 12, 2020, brought the first confirmed case in the state of Maine, thus starting the official response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Town of York. Two days later, the York School District announced the closure of all schools and transitioned into a distance learning model. Over the next two weeks the Town Manager's office worked to identify essential functions of

² World Health Organization. (2020, June 29). Listings of WHO's response to covid-19. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news/item/29-06-2020-covidtimeline>.

each department and their respective points of contact. In conjunction with Human Resources, travel and quarantine policies were distributed to town employees, where they were reassured that should they need to quarantine they will continue to be paid and their leave would be treated as a paid leave of absence.

The Governor of Maine acted quickly, and on March 15, 2020, she declared a state of civil emergency, and continued to provide updates on mandates in the form of executive orders as the pandemic went on. All bars and restaurants were ordered to close their doors allowing take-out only, hotels and other “transient occupancy units” were ordered to close, and large group gatherings were prohibited. The Town of York followed this example and shortly after enacted their own localized declaration of civil emergency and released a town wide emergency order. With these orders the town began to shut down. A notice was sent out to town residents advising that all town offices and facilities, including the beaches, were now closed. Apart from two employees at the Center for Active Living (CAL), all town staff members were able to continue working with increased on the job safety protocols, or remotely from home.

Two months into Maine’s response to the global pandemic state and local officials began evaluating how to open services to the public, and how to do so safely. It became clear that this pandemic was going to be around for an extended period. With strict guidelines in place regarding capacities, face coverings, and social distancing businesses and organizations were able to begin conducting in person activities again. According to the Governor’s executive orders, restaurants were still unable to provide any indoor dining, therefore, the Police Chief authorized specific parking spaces to be used for curbside pick-up or outdoor dining areas.

By June, the Town of York was awarded a grant through the Keep Maine Healthy Municipal COVID-19 Awareness Campaign (**Observations: Exhibit 4**). This money assisted with providing awareness of safety protocols through signage located throughout the town, safety ambassadors that were located at major locations such as beaches, parks, and Mt. Agamenticus, and extended the budget available to obtain much needed personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies. At this same time, York Hospital, with assistance from the town and the National Guard opened a drive-thru COVID-19 testing site at their Route 1 clinic.

The status of the response to COVID-19 leveled out and remained consistent through much of the summer months and into the fall. By late October, early November increased knowledge on how the disease spreads and what is considered a risk factor allowed indoor gatherings to occur, this included opening restaurants for indoor dining. Safety requirements and restrictions fluctuated as case numbers continued to rise into the winter months, most of these changes were made at the state level so there was little decision making required by the town management team.

On December 11, 2020, the first vaccine is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for emergency use, Pfizer-BioNTech. Initial vaccines were distributed among frontline healthcare workers and residents of long-term care facilities. Once that group obtained theirs, they moved onto first responders, public safety personnel, and anyone 60 years old and above. Once those initially identified as most vulnerable, or at risk of exposure received their vaccines, the state moved into an age-based approach offering the vaccine to groups of designated ages at designated times. To assist with the vaccination roll-out, the Town of York in conjunction with

York Hospital opened a vaccine pop-up clinic at St. Christopher's Church in early February 2021 and remained there until the vaccine became widely available at doctors' offices and pharmacies.

By the end of May, all age groups eligible for a vaccine according to the FDA guidelines could sign up to receive theirs. By June with more than 50% of the general population fully vaccinated guidelines and restrictions began to ease. The Governor announced that she would not extend the Maine State of Civil Emergency, which was set to expire on June 30, 2021. At the time this report is being written, the State of Maine has no active Declaration of Civil Emergency, meaning there are no state mandates in place. The Town of York however has remained in their state of emergency and will continue to monitor the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as it continues to be a threat in the world.

Exhibit 2 details a timeline of major decisions, actions, and directives given by town officials, as well as actions from state and federal officials that may have impacted the town's decisions. This timeline also includes notifications of major events such as the first confirmed cases that had an impact on the town's response.

Exhibit 2. Timeline of Notifications, Decisions, Actions, and Directives.

Date	Notification, Decision, Action, or Directive
1/21/20	First known case in United States identified in Washington State.
2/4/20	CDC advises that person to person spread of SARS CoV-2 is confirmed.
2/25/20	CDC warns of potential for localized outbreaks across the country.
3/4/20	First meeting of Town of York COVID Response Team.
3/6/20	York School Department releases their pandemic response plan to students and staff. This plan was based on a previous outbreak of H1N1 Flu.
3/9/20	Town Manager's office notifies town employees of a confirmed case in New Hampshire. Advises that current CDC information has been placed on the Town of York website. Employees will be required to quarantine for 14 days should they be diagnosed or exposed, and this time will be treated as a paid leave of absence.
3/12/20	First known case in Maine. CDC advises that PPE availability is already a growing concern. They request that respirators be used only when reasonable concern for exposure of droplets. Currently there is no available knowledge on easily accessed testing sites.
3/13/20	Town Manager's office distributes the "Town Plan" document. This document identifies primary and secondary contact information for each department, as well as each department's daily tasks and how they may be continued should

	there be a closure of offices. Out of town work travel is hereby prohibited. Currently working from home options is at the discretion of department heads.
3/13/20	President of the United States issues a proclamation declaring a national emergency due to the Novel Coronavirus.
3/15/20	Governor of Maine declares a state of civil emergency to further protect public health.
3/15/20	York School District announces the start of a 2-week closure of all schools with classroom sessions moving to a distance learning model. Students are given a specified time to report to the school on Monday March 16 th to collect learning packets and belongings left at school. York Police Department releases a policy change locking down the building to outside visitors. Policy identifies that those who must come in are subject to screenings. Sanitization protocols are released, and officers are advised to not respond as EMS secondary to “general illness” medical calls.
3/16/20	County Commissioners of York declare existence of local disaster.
3/16/20	Student lunch pick-up and Center for Active Living take-out meals are organized to help combat food insecurities.
3/17/20	York School Department identifies students with limited access to internet and purchased “hotspot” devices to be delivered to them.
3/18/20	Governor releases Executive Order 14 limiting gatherings to no more than 10 people and requiring restaurants and bars to close all indoor facilities.
3/18/20	All Town of York offices and services are closed until March 27th. Letter is sent out to staff detailing how essential work will be conducted. Mount Agamenticus Lodge and office are closed.
3/19/20	Governor releases Executive Order 15 suspending in person instruction for grades K-12. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) releases a list of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers”.
3/23/20	A notice is sent out to town residents by the Town of York Emergency Management Director advising that all public schools, town offices, parks and recreation offices/facilities, department of public works offices/facilities, and beaches are closed. Beach closure includes in water activities. Board of

	Selectmen meetings will remain in person; however, the public will not be able to attend and will have to call in.
3/24/20	Governor releases Executive Order 19 identifying a list of businesses that are authorized to continue work in person. All other non-essential businesses that are public facing, or those that require more than 10 employees that cannot socially distance, must cease operations.
3/25/20	York School District extends remote learning through April 17 th . Chromebooks are handed out to students identified as needing access to technology.
3/31/20	Governor releases Executive Order 28 enacting a stay-at-home order; advising all residents to refrain from leaving their homes except to conduct essential activities so outlined. All Maine schools are ordered to remain closed to in-person learning through May 15 th . Stores are limited to a specified number of customers per square footage of the store and are required to offer elderly only hours.
4/2/20	York Town Manager declares a town wide Civil State of Emergency.
4/3/20	Governor releases Executive Order 34 enacting a 14-day quarantine for anyone entering Maine. Those coming from “hot spot” locations such as the cities of Chicago, Detroit, and New York as well as those coming from the states of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut are strongly advised to refrain from coming to Maine.
4/3/20	Town of York COVID Response Team identifies the need to address mental health concerns for the community and starts the weekly York Health Newsletter. York Emergency Management releases an emergency order that puts forth all the orders declared by the Governor. These include the closure of all town-owned facilities, closure of “transient occupancy units” with the exception for healthcare workers, first responders, military personnel, and those needing to remove themselves from their homes for quarantine. This order is initially set to expire on April 30 th however was extended on April 27 th to May 15 th .
4/4/20	President of the United States approves request for major disaster declaration, unlocking federal assistance for the state of Maine.

4/6/20	York School District advises that they will remain in distance learning for the remainder of the school year.
4/9/20	Protocols for town employees returning to the office are released. They stress methods to avoid overlapping of those in close contact workspaces. Protocols are tentatively set to remain until April 30 th .
4/13/20	York Board of Selectmen postpone local elections on town and school budgets to July 14 th .
4/28/20	Governor releases Executive Orders 49 and 55, which detail a “restarting plan” for Maine. In this plan a mask mandate is enacted, requiring face coverings indoors and anywhere that social distancing cannot be done. Stages of reopening are released identifying which businesses/organizations can open back up and when. The release of this order enters the state into Stage 1 of the reopening plan.
4/30/20	York Board of Selectmen extend the town emergency order that was set to expire to June 30 th . Controls on transient accommodations are removed.
5/13/20	Previous emergency order partially repealed. Beginning May 18 th , a soft opening of public properties will occur with restrictions of no public buildings/staff available. Public areas are to be used for active use only with social distancing.
5/27/20	Governor releases an extension to Executive Order 55 allowing restaurants to open with outside service only. Retail businesses can open with strict guidelines according to the restarting plan. Gatherings can now increase to groups of 50. Cloth face coverings are now required even when outside. York Police Chief authorizes town parking spaces to allow for restaurants to provide curbside pick-up or outside dining.
6/1/20	York Town Hall reopens to the public with strict distancing and masking guidelines. Sohier Park gift shop as well as all public restrooms at beaches, Mount Agamenticus and Sohier Park are open. Beach Ambassadors are assigned to 5 major areas to encourage compliance with safety guidelines; North of bathhouse on Long Sands, South of bathhouse on Long Sands, Webber Rd area of Long Sands, Short Sands, and Mount Agamenticus.

6/1/20	York Hospital with assistance from the town opens drive-thru PCR testing site at the Route 1 clinic.
6/29/20	Town of York is awarded a \$293,684 grant as part of the Keep Maine Healthy Municipal COVID-19 Awareness Campaign. Beach access restrictions are lowered to allow more uses.
7/1/20	York Hospital drive-thru testing location partners with the National Guard to provide rapid testing.
8/20/20	York School District announces a delay in the start of the school year. The year will be conducted in a hybrid schedule.
9/28/20	Town Hall releases their winter protocols of operation to the general public. Town of York is awarded \$104,248 as a second installment of the Keep Maine Healthy Municipal COVID-19 Awareness Campaign.
10/6/20	Governor releases Executive Order 14 which moves the state into stage 4 of the reopening plan. Indoor gatherings, including restaurants, are allowed. They are limited to 50% capacity or 100 persons, whichever is less.
11/4/20	Governor releases Executive Order 16 which requires face coverings no matter if physical distancing. Indoor gatherings are now limited to 50% capacity or 50 people, whichever is less. Outdoor gatherings are limited to 100 people.
11/9/20	Town Hall public access is limited, phone line set up for those with appointments to call when they arrive. Town Clerk acquires a secure drop box that is located outside for payments, applications, and ballots.
11/16/20	Town Manager's office releases the new travel policy that states that a 14-day quarantine is required for persons returning from any state other than NH or VT. Employees are required to get approval from their supervisor to travel outside of the approved states.
12/11/20	Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is approved by the FDA for emergency use for anyone 16 years old and above. This vaccine requires two doses at least 3 weeks apart.
12/15/20	First doses of Pfizer vaccine arrive, and the state enters phase 1 of the vaccination plan. Vaccines are administered among frontline healthcare workers and residents of long-term care facilities.

12/18/20	Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine is approved by the FDA for emergency use in anyone 18 years old and above. This vaccine requires two doses at least 4 weeks apart.
1/13/21	Vaccination phase 1A is updated to include first responders and public safety personnel.
1/19/21	Maine moves into vaccination phase 1B which starts with anyone age 70 and up, followed by those ages 65-69.
2/8/21	As more residents are eligible for vaccination York Hospital in conjunction with the Town of York open a vaccination clinic at St. Christopher Church.
2/27/2021	Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine is approved by the FDA for emergency use in anyone 18 years old and above. This vaccine requires only one dose.
3/3/21	Vaccines now available for residents that are 60 and older. Maine will move away from the designated phases approach and into one based on age only.
3/15/21	Town of York releases updated travel policy. MA, RI, and CT are added to the list of NH and VT as quarantine exempt states. Individuals who have completed a vaccine series and are 14 days beyond completion are exempt from the testing and quarantine requirements regardless of their state of travel.
3/23/21	Vaccines now available for residents that are 50 and older
4/7/21	Vaccines now available for residents that are 16 and older.
4/27/21	Governor releases update to public health guidance advising masks are no longer required in outdoor settings.
5/4/21	York Beaches Use Order is amended to remove high-touch amenities such as shower towers, water fountains, etc.
5/10/21	Vaccines (Pfizer only) now available for residents 12 and older.
5/24/21	Governor releases notification that all indoor and outdoor capacity limits are lifted. Following CDC guidelines, those who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to wear face coverings indoors. Schools and healthcare settings are still required. Town of York has designated that in their building's masks are still required by customers despite vaccination status.
6/30/21	Maine's State of Civil Emergency ends. The National Emergency Declaration is still in effect, with no given end date. Town of York Civil State of

Emergency is still in effect, with no given end date. York County still remains in a state of local disaster.

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS GOAL AND CORE CAPABILITIES

The National Preparedness Goal (NPG), put forth by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), identifies five mission areas; prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery, and 32 core capabilities intended to assist everyone who has a role in achieving all the elements in the goal. FEMA defines the NPG as providing “a secure and resilient nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.”³

Of the 32 core capabilities, this report will focus on five (**Exhibit 3**) that were identified as actions taken by the Town of York.

Exhibit 3. Core Capabilities

Core Capability	FEMA Definition
Planning	Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical-level approaches to meet defined objectives.
Public Information and Warning	Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate.
Operational Coordination	Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities.
Situational Awareness	Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response.
Health and Social Services	Restore and improve health and social services capabilities and networks to promote the resilience, independence, health (including behavioral health), and well-being of the whole community.

³ United States. (2020). National preparedness goal. <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/goal>

OBSERVATIONS

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

This section summarizes what was observed regarding planning, public information and warning, operational coordination, situational awareness, and health and social services.

The Town of York is in a unique situation when it comes to planning for emergencies. Not only is it frequently at risk for natural disasters due to its coastal location, but its population is constantly fluctuating, and at its highest consists of more tourists than residents. While the town itself has a relatively small population, it is a destination point for visitors from around the region because of its beaches and quaint villages; causing the population to drastically increase during the summer months. Because of this, town officials often face the problem of how to get information out to the vast majority.

While this report will identify specific challenges the town faced and areas of improvement, it is important to note areas in which the town was successful as well. Apart from two employees at the Center for Active Living who were furloughed, which was quickly shut down, all staff members were able to remain working. There were only three employees who became ill due to an exposure at work, two of which were early on during the stages of the pandemic where the world did not fully know how the virus was spread. Information was frequently changing, and town administration was not always provided with guidelines from state and federal organizations, and thus were forced to make decisions to preserve the health of the town's employees and residents on their own, and quickly.

The COVID-19 pandemic was, and still is a very fluid situation. Throughout the period that this report focuses on, town management and employees remained adaptable. This level of understanding and adaptability was a key factor in the success that the town saw in its ability to keep its employees and residents safe and well informed, as well as its ability to continue providing services to the public.

PLANNING

Pre-Disaster Planning

The Town of York does not have an emergency management department. Instead, they follow the structure that many small towns do and utilize their police department for emergency management purposes. In the Town of York, the Police Chief also serves as the Emergency Management Director.

The Town of York for years has had an Emergency Management Ordinance. This ordinance details who has the authority to declare a civil state of emergency, and who is appointed authorities during such a state. In the Town of York, the Town Manager has the authority to declare a state of emergency, giving the Emergency Management Director the authority to enact rules and regulations as they see fit to protect the health, life, and property of the people.

The Emergency Management Director in the Town of York is responsible for maintaining the town's emergency preparedness. In doing so, they maintain the town's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP consists of disaster specific annexes and checklists to aid in the preparation for and response to various incidents that may occur in the town. Each town, county,

and state maintain their own versions of an EOP encompassing all areas for which they have jurisdiction. While the York County EOP has a pandemic specific annex to their plans, the Town of York does not. The York EOP simply references the York County annex, which is too broad to provide adequate guidance for town officials. Because of the lack of a pandemic annex, there were no clear guidelines on the steps to follow and actions to take to ensure the safety of employees and residents, as well as how to maintain COOP.

This topic is further addressed in the **Recommendations** section.

Decision Making During Pandemic

While there may not have been clear guidelines prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic knocking on York's door, town officials wasted no time reacting to the news of its impending approach. The Town of York's success in their response to the pandemic comes from its leaders' abilities to work together against a common enemy. As soon as it was evident of a possible worldwide pandemic, and before cases were confirmed in the northeast, the LHO organized the COVID-19 Crisis Response Team. A group consisting of town department heads, select board members, representatives from individual schools and the superintendent's office, representatives from York Hospital, local CDC contacts, leaders of local non-profit organizations and churches, and state government contacts. This group had, and continues to have, regular meetings where they hear from local health experts and obtain guidance on how to conduct their business safely or learn what information needs to be forwarded to the public and how to do so. They also discuss any challenges that specific groups are facing as a result of the pandemic and work together to address them.

The Town Manager, together with the Emergency Management Director and the Select Board also acted quickly. In early March as confirmed cases began to appear in neighboring states the Town Manager distributed information to employees on how the town is preparing and how to keep each other safe. The Town Manager also added information from the CDC to a specified COVID-19 section of the town website to address any concerns of the public. The day after the first confirmed case in Maine, which was in Androscoggin County about an hour away from York, the Town Manager distributed the COVID-19 Leave Policy and the "COVID-19 Department Contingency Plan" which requested department heads identify key contacts for their departments as well as their essential functions and events and the plan for each should there be widespread closures. A copy of the contingency plan is in **Appendix 5: Sample Town Manager Messages, Exhibit 1**.

During non-emergent times, the Town of York takes the time to discuss decisions in advance with stakeholders and key personnel. During the initial days of the pandemic, this was not always possible, and decisions had to be made rapidly by the town leadership with the information they had focusing on the health and safety of the residents and employees of the Town of York.

Comments made in interviews indicated that at times the town could have benefited from some decisions being discussed more in-depth with key stakeholders first. While these decisions made during unprecedented circumstances were not wrong, it would be beneficial to identify what constitutes as a true emergent time constraint to ensure that well informed decisions are being made.

This topic is further addressed in the **Recommendations** section.

Resources

The Town of York was financially healthy at the beginning of the pandemic as a result of conscientious decisions made for years prior to. Because of this, the town was able to provide protection for its employees through the purchase of PPE and cleaning supplies as they became available. Generally speaking, any lack of PPE or cleaning supplies was due to a worldwide shortage of them.

Additionally, the town was awarded two installments of grant money from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). With this money, the town was able to provide additional PPE, cleaning supplies and protective barriers to their employees as well as to local organizations such as the library, the chamber of commerce, and area churches. The YRCC contracted with the Town of York to serve as a liaison between the town and local businesses. They distributed pertinent information to local businesses and assisted the Police Department and Code Enforcement/ LHO with monitoring compliance issues. In addition to providing money for protective equipment, the money from this grant assisted with providing supplies and personnel for safety education. An overview of expenses made possible through this grant can be found in **Exhibit 4**.

A common theme throughout the pandemic was confusion and misinformation. As health organizations continued to learn more about COVID-19 they updated the public on the proper precautions to take to protect themselves and those around them. These constant updates however often led to confusion by many. To help alleviate this confusion, and to make sure correct information was being disseminated and followed the Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the LHO developed the Parks Ambassador program. Park Ambassadors were located at designated spots on the beaches and at Mount Agamenticus. Their purpose was to educate the public about current policies and encourage them to follow safety and distancing guidelines, as well as to serve as an easily accessed resource for information for the public.

Information technology (IT), both in terms of access to equipment and support, was a frequent topic during interviews and in the employee survey. While many job functions in the town were able to switch to working remotely, the town did not have proper access to equipment and IT support. Currently the Town of York contracts with Logically for their IT needs. Logically provides on-site support to all town employees Tuesday, Thursday, and every other Friday, and a 24/7 support hotline. There is no Town of York employee to focus on IT needs, nor is there a representative from the contracted organization in the town every day of the work week.

The topic of available resources is discussed further in the **Recommendations** section of this report.

Exhibit 4. Keep Maine Healthy Municipal COVID-19 Awareness Campaign Grant Award.

KEEP MAINE HEALTHY GRANT ROUND #1

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
ROUND #1 GRANT SUMMARY BY PROGRAM																
	Health Officer/Code	Ambassador Program	Student Educational Packets	Playground Monitoring Cleaning	School Programs & Purchases	Chamber of Commerce	Library	First Parish Church	York Housing	York Hospital	Original Budget Round #1	Revisions Requested Round #1	Revised Round #1 Budget Approved by DHHS	Expenditures through 8/31	Balance Remaining to Spend on Round #1	
Wages:																
Town of York - Code	31,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31,000.00	4,284.00	35,284.00	20,245.98	15,038.02	
Town of York - Parks	-	60,270.00	1,250.00	25,575.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	87,095.00	(14,210.00)	72,885.00	39,757.03	33,127.97	
Town of York - School	-	-	-	-	13,661.00	-	-	-	-	-	13,661.00	-	13,661.00	4,582.49	9,078.51	
Total Wages	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 60,270.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 25,575.00	\$ 13,661.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 131,756.00	\$ (9,926.00)	\$ 121,830.00	\$ 64,585.50	\$ 57,244.50	
Materials & Supplies:																
Town of York - Health Officer	4,693.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,693.00	6,200.00	10,893.00	-	10,893.00	
Town of York - Parks	-	7,800.00	422.00	20,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,222.00	-	28,222.00	2,920.86	25,301.14	
Town of York - School	-	-	-	-	61,434.00	-	-	-	-	-	61,434.00	(38,929.00)	22,505.00	8,080.00	14,425.00	
Total Materials & Supplies	\$ 4,693.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 422.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 61,434.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 94,349.00	\$ (32,729.00)	\$ 61,620.00	\$ 11,000.86	\$ 50,619.14	
Equipment & Related:																
School - Recording & Lighting	-	-	-	-	6,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	5,754.20	245.80	
School - Marquee Sign & Installation	-	-	-	-	9,775.00	-	-	-	-	-	9,775.00	4,435.00	14,210.00	-	14,210.00	
Desks for Student Distancing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34,494.00	34,494.00	-	34,494.00	
Signboard DPW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,210.00	14,210.00	-	14,210.00	
Total Equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,775.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,775.00	\$ 53,139.00	\$ 68,914.00	\$ 5,754.20	\$ 63,159.80	
Consultants/Subrecipient Contracts:																
Chamber	-	-	-	-	-	16,500.00	-	-	-	-	16,500.00	-	16,500.00	13,985.35	2,514.65	
Library	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,500.00	-	-	-	7,500.00	-	7,500.00	6,602.73	897.27	
Churches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,200.00	-	-	6,200.00	(6,200.00)	-	-	-	
York Housing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,820.00	-	1,820.00	-	1,820.00	681.16	1,138.84	
York Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,500.00	15,500.00	-	15,500.00	12,500.00	3,000.00	
Total Consulting	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 47,520.00	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ 41,320.00	\$ 33,769.24	\$ 7,550.76	
Client Related Travel																
Town of York Health Officer - Code for AirCorps	4,284.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,284.00	(4,284.00)	-	-	-	
Total Travel	\$ 4,284.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,284.00	\$ (4,284.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total All Non Wage Expense	\$ 8,977.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 422.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 77,209.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 161,928.00	\$ 9,926.00	\$ 171,854.00	\$ 50,524.30	\$ 121,329.70	
TL Wages & Non Wages Original Bdg	\$ 39,977.00	\$ 68,070.00	\$ 1,672.00	\$ 45,575.00	\$ 90,870.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 293,684.00	\$ -	\$ 293,684.00	\$ 115,109.80	\$ 178,574.20	
Round #1 Budget Revisions from Col. N	\$ 20,410.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (14,210.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Project Budgets after Revisions	\$ 60,387.00	\$ 68,070.00	\$ 1,672.00	\$ 31,365.00	\$ 90,870.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 293,684.00	\$ -	\$ 293,684.00	\$ 115,109.80	\$ 178,574.20	

ROUND #2 GRANT

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
ROUND #2 GRANT SUMMARY BY PROGRAM																
	Health Officer/Code	Ambassador Program	Student Educational Packets	Playground Monitoring Cleaning	School Programs & Purchases	Chamber of Commerce	Library	First Parish Church	York Housing	York Hospital	Original Budget Round #1	Revisions Requested Round #1	Revised Round #1 Budget Approved by DHHS	Expenditures through 8/31	Balance Remaining to Spend on Round #1	Balance w/ Round 1 & 2
Wages:																
Town of York - Code	31,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31,000.00	4,284.00	35,284.00	20,245.98	15,038.02	15,038.02
Town of York - Parks	-	60,270.00	1,250.00	25,575.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	87,095.00	(14,210.00)	72,885.00	39,757.03	20,630.00	53,757.97
Town of York - School	-	-	-	-	13,661.00	-	-	-	-	-	13,661.00	-	13,661.00	4,582.49	9,078.51	9,078.51
Total Wages	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 60,270.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 25,575.00	\$ 13,661.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 131,756.00	\$ (9,926.00)	\$ 121,830.00	\$ 64,585.50	\$ 57,244.50	\$ 77,874.50
Materials & Supplies:																
Town of York - Health Officer	4,693.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,693.00	6,200.00	10,893.00	-	10,893.00	13,676.00
Town of York - Parks	-	7,800.00	422.00	20,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,222.00	-	28,222.00	2,920.86	25,301.14	31,601.14
Town of York - School	-	-	-	-	61,434.00	-	-	-	-	-	61,434.00	(38,929.00)	22,505.00	8,080.00	14,425.00	14,425.00
Total Materials & Supplies	\$ 4,693.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 422.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 61,434.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 94,349.00	\$ (32,729.00)	\$ 61,620.00	\$ 11,000.86	\$ 50,619.14	\$ 9,083.00
Equipment & Related:																
School - Recording & Lighting	-	-	-	-	6,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	5,754.20	245.80	245.80
School - Marquee Sign & Installation	-	-	-	-	9,775.00	-	-	-	-	-	9,775.00	4,435.00	14,210.00	-	14,210.00	14,210.00
Desks for Student Distancing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34,494.00	34,494.00	-	34,494.00	34,494.00
Telemedicine Equipment & Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,000.00	60,000.00
Signboard DPW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,210.00	14,210.00	-	14,210.00	14,210.00
Commercial Washer/Dryer for PD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,935.00	11,935.00
Electromagnetic Sprayers for Fire Dept	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,600.00	2,600.00
Total Equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,775.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,775.00	\$ 53,139.00	\$ 68,914.00	\$ 5,754.20	\$ 63,159.80	\$ 74,535.00
Consultants/Subrecipient Contracts:																
Chamber	-	-	-	-	-	16,500.00	-	-	-	-	16,500.00	-	16,500.00	13,985.35	2,514.65	2,514.65
Library	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,500.00	-	-	-	7,500.00	-	7,500.00	6,602.73	897.27	897.27
Churches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,200.00	-	-	6,200.00	(6,200.00)	-	-	-	-
York Housing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,820.00	-	1,820.00	-	1,820.00	681.16	1,138.84	1,138.84
York Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,500.00	15,500.00	-	15,500.00	12,500.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Total Consulting	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 47,520.00	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ 41,320.00	\$ 33,769.24	\$ 7,550.76	\$ -
Client Related Travel																
Town of York Health Officer - Code for AirCorps	4,284.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,284.00	(4,284.00)	-	-	-	-
Town of York - Parks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town of York - School	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Travel	\$ 4,284.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,284.00	\$ (4,284.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total All Non Wage Expense	\$ 8,977.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 422.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 77,209.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 161,928.00	\$ 9,926.00	\$ 171,854.00	\$ 50,524.30	\$ 121,329.70	\$ 83,618.00
TL Wages & Non Wages Original Bdg	\$ 39,977.00	\$ 68,070.00	\$ 1,672.00	\$ 45,575.00	\$ 90,870.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 293,684.00	\$ -	\$ 293,684.00	\$ 115,109.80	\$ 178,574.20	\$ 104,248.00
Round #1 Budget Revisions from Col. N	\$ 20,410.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (14,210.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Project Budgets after Revisions	\$ 60,387.00	\$ 68,070.00	\$ 1,672.00	\$ 31,365.00	\$ 90,870.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 293,684.00	\$ -	\$ 293,684.00	\$ 115,109.80	\$ 178,574.20	\$ 282,822.20
Round #2 Additions from Col. R	\$ 17,318.00	\$ 26,930.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 104,248.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Project Budgets w/ Round #2	\$ 77,705.00	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 1,672.00	\$ 31,365.00	\$ 150,870.00	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,820.00	\$ 15,500.00	\$ 397,932.00	\$ -	\$ 397,932.00	\$ 115,109.80	\$ 178,574.20	\$ 282,822.20

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNING

The Town of York strives to provide the delivery of coordinated, prompt, reliable, and accurate information to the whole community through multiple communication methods. Early in the development of the COVID-19 Pandemic response, town officials added an easily accessed link to COVID-19 information on the Town of York website (see **Exhibit 5**). Information was also released to the media when deemed necessary, placed on the public access channel, and posted on social media.

Exhibit 5. Town of York Webpage



The Town of York also provided a folder in their “Document Center” located on their website for COVID-19 documents. Here they provided links to various fliers, executive orders, newsletters, etc. that had information pertaining to the pandemic response. A screenshot of this folder can be viewed in **Exhibit 6**. While this was a great start to ensure the public had information from the town, the concept needed to be developed further. The Town of York lacks a formal Public Information Officer (PIO). Because of this, the information that was posted to the town website lacked a common organization, direction, or consistency. As seen in the screenshot, the documents are in no order, and the name associated with them does not always clearly identify what is in each document. It is recommended that the Town of York identify a PIO for future emergencies. More on this topic can be found in the **Recommendations** section of this report.

Exhibit 6. Town of York Document Center

Show all descriptions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Selectmen Boards, Committees & Commissions CivicPlus Testing and Troubleshooting Code Enforcement Conservation Commission Com... Covid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awards Covid documents Executive orders, etc. Main document Movies Newsletters Restaurant info. DragAndDropFiles Ellis - Short Sands Park Energy Steering Committee Finance Human Resources Invasive Plant Species Ordinances Planning Public Hearings Public Safety Referendum Documents Requests for Proposals Tax Assessor Town Clerk / Tax Collector Town Manager Town Report Welfare Assistance 	<div>1 2</div> <div>Displaying items 1 - 25 of 28</div> <table> <tr> <th>Display Name</th><th>Size (KB)</th></tr> <tr> <td>03.16.20 coronavirus-guidance 8.5x11 315PM</td><td>1014</td></tr> <tr> <td>03-23-2020 Letter to Residents</td><td>84</td></tr> <tr> <td>2019Novel Coronavirus</td><td>976</td></tr> <tr> <td>2020PHADV016UpdatedCOVID-19Guidance.3.19.20</td><td>167</td></tr> <tr> <td>20-314705-B ENG Symptoms SM Mar2 1 Twitter</td><td>520</td></tr> <tr> <td>314705-A SM COVID-19 ENG Prevention Feb13 Twitter</td><td>957</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ambers slide 1</td><td>159</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ambers slide 2</td><td>210</td></tr> <tr> <td>Beach Closure Order 2020-03-23 signed</td><td>57</td></tr> <tr> <td>Cloth Face Coverings Info</td><td>47</td></tr> <tr> <td>Common Coronaviruses vs new Coronavirus</td><td>122</td></tr> <tr> <td>Community Recognition Nomination Form</td><td>150</td></tr> <tr> <td>Coronavirus image</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr> <td>COVID Draft Proclamation and Order with Attorneys comments</td><td>241</td></tr> <tr> <td>Drive through COVID19 Testing available at 343 US Route 1 in York (002)</td><td>280</td></tr> <tr> <td>Food Delivery Service</td><td>674</td></tr> <tr> <td>Infographic-EUA</td><td>723</td></tr> <tr> <td>Key messages amended again</td><td>153</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mental Health Proclamation</td><td>52</td></tr> </table>	Display Name	Size (KB)	03.16.20 coronavirus-guidance 8.5x11 315PM	1014	03-23-2020 Letter to Residents	84	2019Novel Coronavirus	976	2020PHADV016UpdatedCOVID-19Guidance.3.19.20	167	20-314705-B ENG Symptoms SM Mar2 1 Twitter	520	314705-A SM COVID-19 ENG Prevention Feb13 Twitter	957	Ambers slide 1	159	Ambers slide 2	210	Beach Closure Order 2020-03-23 signed	57	Cloth Face Coverings Info	47	Common Coronaviruses vs new Coronavirus	122	Community Recognition Nomination Form	150	Coronavirus image	40	COVID Draft Proclamation and Order with Attorneys comments	241	Drive through COVID19 Testing available at 343 US Route 1 in York (002)	280	Food Delivery Service	674	Infographic-EUA	723	Key messages amended again	153	Mental Health Proclamation	52
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Key messages amended again	153																																								
Mental Health Proclamation	52																																								

Health Newsletters

Early into the pandemic response, the CRT identified a need to address the overall wellbeing of the citizens of York, and the services they may have difficulty accessing due to shutdowns. Because of this identified need, the York Health Task Force was organized. This task force organized weekly newsletters that were distributed to the town. They could be located online on both the Town of York website as well as the York Parks and Recreation website. Printed copies were placed in the lunches that were handed out to school children weekly. And copies were displayed and available at the food pantry located at YCSA, the York Police Department, the York Public Library, and the York Town Hall. These newsletters are further discussed in the Public Welfare section of this report, and a copy of one, as well as information on who contributed to them, can be found in **Appendix 6: Public Health Office Messages**.

Town Manager and Emergency Management Director Messages

The Town Manager in late March announced to the public that the town beaches will be closed to help limit the spread of COVID-19. In addition to this notice, the Town Manager added

general guidance on how to slow the spread and reiterated that town offices and schools are currently closed.

During the first week of April, the Town Manager declared a Civil Emergency and the Emergency Management Director released the accompanying Emergency Orders. These were both released in accordance with the Town of York's Emergency Management Ordinance.

These articles were released to the media and posted at the York Town Hall, York Police Department, York Harbor Post Office, York Beach Post Office, York Village Post Office, and Cape Neddick Post Office. These articles were also posted to the town website, social media, and were discussed at the Select Board meetings which are televised and recorded for public viewing.

Copies of these articles can be found in **Appendix 5: Sample Town Manager Messages, Exhibits 2-4.**

OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

When looking into the communication and coordination efforts of the town it is important to remember that the COVID-19 pandemic was and continues to remain a fluid situation. In the early stages information and guidelines were not made readily available to the public, or to local governments by state and federal organizations. Some of this lack of information was because so much about the disease was still unknown. The information that was coming out had to be sifted through to find key facts, and at times would become irrelevant within days of it being released. While there are in fact areas that need improvement that will be addressed in the IP of this report, it is evident through interviews that the general consensus of town employees and key stakeholders is that the Town of York management team continued to provide for their staff and residents to the best of their ability during this difficult situation.

Community Coordination

During the interview with the Town Manager, he identified that prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Town of York had no plan for how to communicate with area stakeholders and staff. Additionally, the town had no plan for how to continue providing services. Despite there being no plans in place for communication, the Town Manager and the Health Officer quickly got to work developing two main groups to communicate with stakeholders of the town as well as the surrounding area.

The first group was that of the Town Manager with surrounding Town/ City Managers. The Town Manager identified that there were two subgroups that met on a regular basis. The first was the coastal managers. This group consisted of the managers of towns/cities that had control over local beaches and harbors. The area for this group ranged from northern Massachusetts towns, through coastal New Hampshire, and up to Bar Harbor, Maine. The main topic of the coastal managers was how to cohesively manage the beaches, and whether or not to close them. All members in attendance agreed that the decision should be made together, as should one beach closed without the others closing, the problem of overcrowding would simply move to the open beach. The beaches in this area serve a large majority of the three states of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, and even states further away such as Vermont and New York. Because of this popularity, the beaches quickly become heavily trafficked, and so do the towns that encompass them. The theory was that if the beaches are closed, there is less of an attraction

for out-of-town visitors, and thus the ability to maintain crowds becomes easier. The Manager of the Town of York became the first of the managers to declare that the beaches were closed, which prompted the surrounding beach towns to quickly close their beaches thereafter. Once it was established how to manage the beaches, this groups meetings quickly diminished.

The second subgroup of managers encompassed all the towns/cities in York County. While this group had occasionally met in the past, there was no consistency to it. During the pandemic this group met weekly via Zoom. They discussed challenges they were each facing and brainstormed ideas with each other on how to address them. A positive outcome out of this learning period regarding area communication is that this group of managers now has a stronger connection and continues to meet monthly.

The second group was the COVID-19 CRT, organized by the Town of York Health Officer, which consisted of pandemic related area stakeholders. This group included Town of York department heads whose departments were affected largely by the pandemic, York School District, spokespersons for the area churches, representatives from York Hospital, DHHS representatives, CDC representatives, Select Board members, York Public Library, Chamber of Commerce, YCSA, and others who were identified as being key contacts during the pandemic. The CRT met via Zoom once a week and discussed current trends in the pandemic, and what each local group/organization can do to help limit the impacts. This group also allowed a sense of networking throughout the town that did not exist prior to the pandemic. Groups were able to discuss challenges they were having and were able to find resources outside of their own environment that they would not have thought of prior to. For example, the LHO was looking for informational banners to be made to hang at the testing, and later vaccine clinic. Parks and Recreation frequently has banners made for their events, so they were quickly able to provide this resource. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response the CRT received numerous accolades, and many interviewed for this report commented that they found the meetings to be highly beneficial and a positive resource that could be useful beyond the pandemic. It is recommended that the COVID-19 Coordinated Response Team be reevaluated to transition into a group that may continue meeting post-pandemic. More on this can be found in the **Recommendations** section of this report.

Communication With Staff

Communication with town staff primarily came from the Human Resources/ Assistant Town Manager's office via email. The volume of communication came in waves, however these waves correlate to the changes in mandates and recommendations from the state. There were as well times when communication came directly from the Town Manager to Department Heads, and they were expected to communicate with their staff individually. While not everyone was completely satisfied in the amount of communication they received, the majority of those interviewed and/or those who partook in the survey felt that the town provided them with effective communication. Very few were dissatisfied with the communication from their direct supervisors.

The communication received by staff consisted mainly of policy and procedural changes. Additionally, the town management team stressed to employees that their focus is on the safety of their employees and their families. While the town offices were initially shut down completely, it became evident that this was going to be a long-term issue and adaptations were

going to be needed to continue providing the public with services. In an email sent to all Town of York employees from the Town Manager, he stressed, “I’m less concerned with how much gets done than I am in getting something done while still being safe.” This reiterates the statements that while work still needs to get done, the ultimate priority is staff wellness.

Continuation of Town Services

While the Town of York initially closed its doors completely and work that was not able to be completed remotely stopped, the management team quickly started brainstorming how they were going to be able to provide the town’s citizens services, while keeping everyone safe.

During the initial days of the pandemic, the only departments still reporting in person to work full time were the Police Department and the Fire Department. Both departments created their own policies in attempts to limit exposure. The Fire Department required full PPE for all calls. Due to the nature of the incidents they respond to, staff was unable to stagger shifts, and/or social distance, thus PPE being an integral tool for their safety. While PPE allotments became hard to obtain, heads of the department were able to collect donations from various private entities in the area. The Police Department, while they could have, chose not to adjust shift schedules; however, they did have a contingency plan for shift adjustments should it be needed due to staffing shortages as a result of the Pandemic. Instead, they released strict distancing and cleaning guidelines to limit exposures. Officers were instructed to not intermingle unless necessary to perform their duties. They were instructed to still show a presence in the community, however in ways that do not expose them. And they were informed to switch to speaking with parties over the phone as much as possible instead of face to face, and when face to face was needed, they were encouraged to conduct this business in an outdoor, open area while distanced and masked. Officers were also given disposable hazard suits and N95 masks, should they need to be in a potentially hazardous situation to perform their job.

As work for other departments started to resume, they developed their own policies and procedures to effectively do their jobs while keeping themselves and the public safe. Within the Department of Public Works, employees were assigned to their own trucks, were dispatched from their homes, and were only handling tasks which posed a danger to the public, similar to the procedure for handling emergency situations. As work on jobs that were not a public hazard began, a document outlining safety procedures was released. This was released to both town employees and contracted workers, and all were expected to follow it while on a town sponsored jobsite.

Due to the nature of the services they provide, the York Parks and Recreation Department was unable to continue providing their usual services. The Center for Active Living was closed, and all of their events were cancelled. Summer camps for 2020 and other springtime events were also cancelled. The combination of the unknowns of the disease, and a lack of time to prepare and adjust made the possibility of adapting to safety protocols in order to be able to provide events unfeasible. While the Parks and Recreation staff quickly got to work adapting as many events as possible, there was still one underlying factor that limited them: a lack of a large indoor community space. More on this topic can be found in the **Recommendations** section of this report.

Town Hall reopened in two phases. The first was getting employees back into the office connecting with the public virtually, and the second being opening up for public access. While

using zoom, email, and telephone conversations may not be the best practice model to conduct tasks, many of the services that Town Hall provides were able to be conducted virtually, without having to have contact with the public. One exception being that of the Clerk's office. The Town of York Clerks Office has no way of accepting credit cards, thus tasks could not be conducted online. They are able to accept payments via check and applications via mail, however some of these applications can consist of tedious back and forth mailings to complete. The only task per the Town Clerk that by law has to be done in person is the registration of a new car or boat, as the state requires an in-person signature on forms that cannot be completed online. The town clerks continued to be public facing employees during the pandemic, however, had there been proper planning to provide the public with an easily accessed alternative to coming into the building, they could have been placed less at risk of exposure. Eventually, the town was able to install a secure drop box outside of Town Hall for residents to drop off forms and payments, however this did not happen until months after Town Hall opened back up to the public. More on this topic can be found in the Recommendations section of this report.

In order to ensure that visitors were adhering to the strict policies the Town of York hired door monitors for Town Hall. They began June 1, 2020 and ran until May 28, 2021. Door monitors worked Monday thru Friday in two shifts, 8am-12:30pm and 12:30pm-4:30pm. They were to monitor and restrict the number of people in and out of the building, enforce mask mandates, and ask screening questions to ensure someone who was ill or recently traveled to a "hot spot" was not entering the building.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

While department head meetings were conducted prior to the pandemic they were not consistent, nor always well attended. Monthly meetings between the Town Manager and all department heads are now being conducted via zoom. According to the interview with the Town Manager these have been well attended and aid in the situational awareness of all town employees. Many department heads were also at the CRT meetings which hosted CDC and medical professionals providing information.

Select Board Meetings

Being a select board-manager form of government means that the members of the Select Board have a significant say in the ongoings of the town. Because of this, it was important to ensure that they were made aware of how the town was handling the COVID-19 pandemic. Department heads pre-pandemic would conduct an annual review with the Town Manager, who would then pass the update along to the Select Board. During the pandemic however this was changed to being a quarterly update that the department heads provided themselves at the Select Board meetings. Implemented during the pandemic was a weekly report from Parks and Recreation and the Police departments. These reports provided a weekly briefing of what was happening in the town from the most public facing departments. These weekly reports were found to be so beneficial to the situational awareness for the Select Board that the Town Manager has decided they will continue post-pandemic.

While situational awareness according to the NPG refers to key stakeholders and decision makers, it is important to note that the Select Board meetings also provided situational awareness for the public. During the early stages of the pandemic, the Select Board quickly made the transition to hosting their meetings weekly via zoom. While there were at times technology

challenges that came about, these meetings allowed town leadership to be visible to the public. This visibility provided the public with reassurance that town business, though being conducted in unique ways, was still getting done. All Select Board meetings are recorded and made available to the public, as well as streamed, and televised live. They provided the public a chance to see that the town government is still running even if they are not open to the public and gave them the opportunity to hear how the town is addressing COVID-19.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The Town Manager early into the COVID-19 pandemic identified three main goals of the town.

- Ensure the safety of residents
- Implement and maintain proper social distancing
- Maintain a healthy work environment

Ultimately, the main goal of the town was to ensure that everyone was not only physically well, but also mentally.

Quarantine

The Town of York followed federal guidelines early requiring those who have been exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19 to quarantine. The CDC had already identified that a 14-day quarantine was sufficient to maintain the safety of the public, so the town followed those suggestions. Early on, the town had two Police Officers who were diagnosed. They were exposed at a training class during the times before safety precautions were known and widely used. Contact tracing was conducted and anyone who encountered these subjects and was considered to be exposed in accordance with CDC guidelines, was also quarantined. The town had one other instance of a work-related exposure, a firefighter was exposed to a COVID-19 positive patient and ultimately was diagnosed. This firefighter encountered one other employee who was quarantined and tested negative multiple times prior to returning to work.

The Town of York did have employees in other departments who ultimately were diagnosed with COVID-19. These subjects were not exposed at work and did not cause any additional diagnoses. Out of an abundance of caution, and in compliance with guidelines set forth by the CDC, coworkers who recently had contact with those diagnosed were also quarantined. A concern of some employees interviewed was that there was no clear determinant for what was considered an exposure, resulting in quarantine, and this was often left up to individual department heads to decipher. This concern is addressed in the **Recommendations** section of this report.

While hotels and other transient occupancy units were ordered to close during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, they were allowed to stay open to serve people who needed to quarantine. There were discussions on the town level of a need to identify a town sponsored location for residents and employees to stay, free of charge, should they be unable to quarantine at home safely. These ideas, however, never came to fruition as the need never arose.

Internal Policy Changes

The Town of York was ahead of the federal government in ensuring that town employees were able to quarantine, protecting themselves and those around them, without concern about the loss of a paycheck. In early March the Town Manager sent a notice to town employees discussing

the approaching pandemic. In this notice, the Town Manager acknowledged that should an employee need to quarantine, their time out would be treated as a paid leave of absence, and not taken from their paid time off or sick time accounts. A month later, the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) was released. This act mandated the policies the town had already enacted and added the expansion of allowing parents to take a protected leave to care for their child who's school or childcare location was closed due to COVID-19. A copy of this policy can be found in **Appendix 5: Sample Town Manager Messages, Exhibit 5.**

At the same time as the release of the FFCRA in early April, the Governor of Maine released Executive Order 34 enacting a 14-day quarantine for anyone entering Maine and requesting that those coming from designated "hot spots" such as New York City refrain from visiting the state. A policy was put in place requiring employees to follow the travel mandates put forth by the Governor. As the pandemic spread, the states in which the Governor's office deemed safe to travel to changed. Human Resources periodically sent out reminders advising which states are on the safe travel list and advised that should someone travel to a state outside of those approved that they are required to quarantine for 14-days or follow testing measures.

As the pandemic continued into the fall months and case numbers began to rise the Town of York released a formal travel policy for both emergency and non-emergency personnel. The town followed all quarantine and testing policies that the state suggested, as well as required all employees to obtain approval of their travel and potential quarantine time from their supervisor prior to leaving Maine. This approval was necessary to ensure the safety of staff members as well as to ensure adequate staffing levels. A copy of the travel policy can be found in **Appendix 7: Town Official Documents, Exhibit 3.**

As vaccines rolled out and case numbers started to dwindle, the town again followed the lead of the State of Maine and the CDC. Travel restrictions and quarantine requirements were amended for those who were considered fully vaccinated, and eventually lifted with the ending of the Maine State of Civil Emergency.

[Safety at Town Facilities](#)

The Town of York made concerted efforts to ensure that all facilities were providing a safe working environment for all staff members:

- In all facilities janitorial staff was instructed to adhere to strict nightly cleaning protocols.
- Staff members were instructed to remain in their own working environments, sanitize their areas, and wear proper PPE when interacting with the public and others.
- Some facilities continued to remain closed to the public, however those who could not, enacted strict guidelines for visitors. They had limited capacity and required visitors to adhere to social distancing measures, wear proper PPE, and answer health screening questions about recent travel or exposures. Proper accommodations were made for those who were unable to follow PPE guidelines due to health concerns.

- Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works, and some members of the Parks Department were all assigned specific guidelines pertaining to the use and sanitization of Town owned vehicles and equipment.
- The Public Works Department distributed a set of guidelines to all contracted individuals conducting work on behalf of the Town of York advising of guidelines that they are to adhere to.
- Police and Fire personnel were provided with N95 masks to wear during contacts with potential COVID-19 patients. And each department had decontamination procedures.

Employee Fatigue

Employees of the Town of York have always worked hard to provide the best service to the citizens of the town. The COVID-19 pandemic however caused various hardships on employees, leading to a level of burn-out among them. While some were able to conduct their daily tasks at home, others simply could not do so and were faced with the fear and uncertainty of potentially being exposed, and further exposing their family at home. Additionally, those coming into work every day faced further difficulties juggling work life and home life as childcare facilities and schools began to close, and they now had to figure out how to care for their children and continue to show up to work.

Employees working from home also faced their own struggles. Like those still leaving home for work, those working from home struggled with childcare. While they were physically able to be home with their children, they had to balance home schooling/ caring for their children with completing their tasks of a normal 8-hour workday. Many working from home also found it quickly became difficult to stop working at the end of the day, leading to tensions in their private lives.

Many employees, due to widespread lockdowns, were forced to postpone and/or cancel vacations. This coupled with longer days during unprecedented and stressful times left little to no chance for them to recharge. Many of the conditions employees faced were inescapable due to the nature of the worldwide emergency.

Town management throughout the pandemic made sure to reiterate to staff that their first concern was the welfare of employees and their family. They recognized the hard work everyone was putting in adapting to a new work environment, schedules, and safety protocols. The town also made sure to mention the appreciation of their public safety staff members, acknowledging that they were on the front lines of the fight against the pandemic and provided them with a one-time stipend to reiterate such.

More on the topic of combating employee fatigue can be found in the **Recommendations** section of this report.

Public Welfare

As stated previously, one of the three main goals of the town during the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic was to ensure the safety of the residents. In addition to the information that was distributed by the Town Manager's office in regard to making residents aware of safety precautions suggested by the CDC, various town departments began to evaluate how they can better assist the community during these trying times.

The Center for Active Living (CAL) services individuals in the community age 50 and over. This age group was one that was identified as being most at risk for severe complications due to COVID-19. One of the programs that CAL offers is home cooked meals to senior citizens. During the stay-at-home order, staff members adapted to be able to continue providing these meals and other services. To-go meals were delivered by volunteer personnel, and eventually a drive-thru service was set up. Activity packets such as puzzles and exercise programs were organized and delivered upon request, and staff worked to make cloth face coverings to distribute. During the initial days of the pandemic there was a concern for the mental well-being of those who live alone and are now unable to partake in their social activities due to widespread lockdowns. Staff members and volunteers of CAL worked to frequently call their members, checking in to see if they needed anything and provided general socialization and friendly conversation.

Staff members of the York Parks and Recreation department were integral to providing a sense of “normalcy” for the public in times of extreme uncertainty. While some may not recognize recreation and social engagement as being essential, it was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic that a lack of recreation and socialization can lead to significant mental health concerns. Additionally, these activities have shown to reduce stress, which was at an all-time high for many during the pandemic. The Parks and Recreation department consistently adapted to both the changing restrictions due to the pandemic and the changing seasons to provide safe and quality programs of engagement for the citizens of York, both young and old. During the interview with the Director of York Parks and Recreation it was identified that the department was limited on services they could offer due to the lack of sufficient community space within the town. This topic is discussed more in the **Recommendations** section.

Identified by the CRT as being a need, the York Health Task Force (YHTF) was formed. This task force released a weekly newsletter beginning in early April. An excerpt from the first release details the purpose:

This weekly newsletter aims to compile information and resources from multiple community partners and organizations, to better help the people of York during these unprecedented times. Members in our community are facing challenges like unemployment, food insecurity, distance learning, loss of childcare, lack of socialization and isolation, unsafe home environment due to abuse and substance misuse, and increased severity of preexisting medical conditions. We also have our first responders and medical providers that are balancing their work with fear of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 to their families, many are working additional hours and doing so with limited access to PPE.

A task force was formed in hopes of creating action steps to help our community, resulting in the idea of this newsletter. Members of this group represent academics, fitness & health, housing, mental health support, medical services, crisis management, library services, nature & outdoor conservation, mentorship, Town General Assistance, and more.

An example of this newsletter as well as a list of contributors can be found in **Appendix 6: Public Health Office Messages.**

As previously mentioned in this report, organizations such as YCSA and YPL will not be analyzed as they are not run by the town. It is important however to still recognize that they and other organizations throughout the Town of York assisted in providing important services to better the welfare of the York community members.

Recommendations

This section discusses broader concerns and opportunities for improvement identified under the **Observations** section including:

- Pre-Disaster Planning
- Decision Making During an Emergency
- Resource Availability
- Public Information
- Community Coordination
- Continuation of Town Services
- Health and Social Services for Employees
- Employee Fatigue
- Public Welfare

These topics, as well as additional smaller specific concerns, are further addressed in the **Improvement Plan**, with detailed suggestions for moving forward.

PRE-DISASTER PLANNING

Issue: The Town of York maintains an EOP consisting of nineteen (19) hazard specific annexes, identified by Maine Emergency Management Agency as being potential threats to the Town of York. While there is a pandemic specific annex, it is broad, having been produced for the York County EOP, and provides little to no guidance for the town on how to continue business operations. Additionally, many key stakeholders for the town were unaware that there was an existing pandemic annex within the York EOP, and furthermore if they did know of its existence, they were unfamiliar with its contents.

Recommendation: Using the phases format of the York County Pandemic Annex, the Emergency Management Specialist in conjunction with the Emergency Management Director of the Town of York will develop a York specific Pandemic Annex to the York EOP. This annex will describe specific expectations of each department within the town, propose ways to continue operations, and detail when activities need to be curtailed, and offices closed in alliance with specific phases. Town decision makers and key stakeholders must understand what is expected of them during a time of emergency. While they may have access to plans for review, exercises are an important method to ensure players understand their roles well. The Town of York should develop a schedule of training exercises for various hazardous events to identify key players in each event, as well as any holes in the preparedness plans.

DECISION MAKING DURING AN EMERGENCY

Issue: With the declaration of a Civil Emergency the guidelines allowing for quick decisions to be made were enabled. Making decisions in an emergent fashion at times led to processes being skipped over. These steps that were skipped were often ones that allowed key stakeholders and the public to be included in the discussion of the decision being made. Having transparency with decisions being made has been a common practice of the Town of York.

Recommendation: Decision makers must recognize the need for transparency within the local government. While the Town of York frequently practices transparency during non-emergent times, they must continue to practice this during a time of emergency. This level of transparency

extends not only to the public, but to staff as well. While this recommendation does not aim to limit the decision maker's ability to quickly make decisions, it does bring to light the concern of those who are affected by the decisions being made to feel as though they are left in the dark. It is recommended that a process is developed to document and distribute a brief explanation behind decisions and/or policy changes along with them. This can be done in many formats, for example a FAQ section of an informational release.

RESOURCES

Issue: Technology became a critical resource during the pandemic. Those with office roles were able to work remotely from home, and with services such as Zoom, committees and boards were able to continue their meetings, while still involving the public. While eventually many services were able to continue to be provided with the assistance of technology, there were plenty of issues that came with that. For example, running all public meetings via Zoom required a level of IT support that does town does not have, therefore, only certain groups were able to conduct their meetings this way.

As employees transitioned to a work from home model, they found themselves lacking IT services, both in terms of support and physical equipment, and the town struggled to find a way to conduct board and committee meetings effectively. In terms of physical equipment, while many were able to obtain a town issued computer or phone, others were not. Many mentioned during interviews and surveys that they were using personal phones to conduct town business on a daily basis and found this to lead to difficulties, as well as concerns over security.

The struggles with having to transition to working from home were exacerbated by the fact that the Town of York does not have a full-time town-employed IT specialist. The town contracts their IT needs out to a private company who while provides a 24/7 assistance line, does not have a staff member within the town more than 2, sometimes 3 days a week. Additional concerns with contracted IT support are that the hired company decides which qualifications are acceptable for employment, not the town, and that they have a high turnover rate where new employees are unfamiliar with ongoing projects.

Recommendation: Efforts should be made to ensure that every employee who can perform their duties remotely has the tools to do so. This may not mean two sets of equipment but adapting equipment being used to be conducive with an adaptable working environment. For example, when assigning employees utilize laptops instead of desktops which allow for the opportunity to be taken home when needed. Special attention should be made to recognize and remedy any security concerns, such as those accessing the VPN remotely doing so securely.

The town should conduct an IT needs assessment to evaluate the necessity of a full-time, town-employed IT specialist. This assessment should interview staff directly to gain their personal insight on technology needs and frustrations. This assessment should evaluate other IT needs such as ones needed to run and manage public meetings, phone systems, the town website, etc. It should then review the existing equipment and services and compare it to the level the assessment feels are necessary and consider if the current IT services can support these identified needs.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Issue: During the height of the pandemic there was a high demand for information. Because of this demand, news outlets and social media were flooded with information, and while some of it was truthful and informational, much of it was not. Town officials attempted to keep their staff and residents well informed, however they too struggled with keeping up with the influx of information. While each town department was doing the best they could to understand and enforce changing policies and mandates, there was no designated point of contact for information. There also was no consistency in when or where information would be reported, making it difficult for those searching for answers to find them.

Recommendation: People correlate the effectiveness of a response to an emergency with how much access they have to pertinent information. To assist with this access, a public information officer needs to be identified. During a state of emergency within the town, as described in the Town of York Emergency Management Ordinance, the Emergency Management Director is given an increased amount of authority on town activities. Because of this increased authority during a state of emergency the Emergency Management Director becomes the key contact person thus, it should be the Emergency Management Director, or their designee who serves as the PIO. This appointed person should be clearly identified to both the public and staff as the contact person to obtain information related to the declared emergency.

The PIO shall identify when and where they will provide consistent updates tailored to both the public and staff, and they should ensure that all pertinent information is made readily available in an organized manner on the town website. The rate of occurrence of the updates will be dependent upon the event. Even if there is limited information to provide an update, it is important for the public and for employees to know that they are being provided with the most up-to-date information. There may be exceptions to these planned updates for time sensitive events such as a mandate made by a higher-level agency that goes into effect before the next briefing. These briefings shall be conducted and posted in a manner that reaches the broader demographics of the town.

COMMUNITY COORIDNATION

Issue: Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic there was no plan in place for the town to be able to communicate with local leaders in the surrounding community. Leaders of local groups and organizations and business owners not only need to be informed to better assist their own members, staff, and customers, but they can also aid the town. Early into the pandemic, weeks before any cases were anywhere near Maine, the Town of York Local Health Officer organized the Covid-19 Coordinated Response Team. As mentioned in the **Observations** section of this report, the CRT meet weekly, and consisted of leaders from various organizations throughout the town. This group proved to not only be a consistent source of information for area leaders, but also proved to be beneficial to those in charge of leading the fight against COVID-19 within the town. This group gave way to a sense of networking, allowing group members to have access to resources and skills that they were not aware existed prior to being a part of this group.

Recommendation: With evidence that the CRT has proven to be a highly beneficial tool to both town officials and local area leaders, it is recommended that a similar group be organized to continue as a permanent resource within the town. The LHO and EMS will evaluate the current team members and identify who shall remain, be removed, and be added to ensure that the group going forward covers a large spectrum of organizations while maintaining numbers small enough

that allow for productive meetings. As emergency events arise, others with specific skills/knowledge related to the emergency at hand may be added to the meetings on a temporary basis. This new group shall be identified as the Town of York Community Resource Team. Meetings of the new CRT will be conducted bi-annually and as needed during moments of natural or manmade disasters.

CONTINUATION OF TOWN SERVICES

Issue: A concern during the COVID-19 pandemic was how to continue providing town services while also keeping employees and the public safe. During the initial weeks of the response, the way to do this was to have employees working from home. Town Clerks however had to remain public facing and risk exposure due to a lack of online services, and an inability to accept credit cards. While the department did manage to adapt processes to allow for mail in services or utilizing the drop box eventually installed outside Town Hall, these adaptations made each process more complicated to complete than it was pre-pandemic.

Recommendation: To ensure that there will be no disruption in services provided should Town Hall have to close to the public for any reason, all services provided by the Town Clerks/Tax Collectors office will be made accessible online. The Town of York will utilize a combination of existing and new programs to be able to accept online payments, and schedule appointments should there be a need to limit Town Hall foot traffic.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Issue: During the early stages of the pandemic there was a constant fear of being exposed to the virus. Furthermore, the guidelines for what was considered an exposure were unclear. Employees identified in both one-on-one interviews and surveys that they felt they had little to no information on what was considered an exposure, and when to self-monitor, isolate, or quarantine. They also felt that there were unclear guidelines on when an employee was safe to return to work, and any restrictions they must follow upon return.

Recommendation: To ensure that the process for determining an exposure, and/or need for quarantine are consistent, and to ensure that all employees know and understand the parameters, a policy should be released by the Human Resources Director detailing such. This policy will provide the qualifications for exposure, self-monitor, isolation, and quarantine set forth by the CDC. This policy should be released in conjunction with those that detail the leave policy of the town during the state of emergency. This policy will be strictly for the time frame of the current COVID-19 pandemic, however, may be used as a guideline for similar emergencies in the future.

EMPLOYEE FATIGUE

Issue: Employee fatigue is not a new development as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially within the emergency services departments where employee burn-out is common. It was however, exacerbated due to the pandemic. Employees of all departments were facing challenging times. Some, because of the nature of their job could not work from home. Those employees faced the stresses of a potential exposure every day they came to work, and the fear of becoming ill, and/or bringing the disease home and exposing their loved ones. Those jobs whose physical location was adaptable found themselves experiencing new stresses of trying to work from home, where they may not have had all the necessary tools and resources, they had access

to in their town office. Employees with children battled with the stresses of finding childcare as schools and daycares closed, some having to become impromptu teachers. And all town employees felt the stresses of community closures, postponed or cancelled vacations, longer workdays, and the fears that came with the many the unknowns of COVID-19.

Recommendation: Workplace recognition has shown to increase employee engagement and productivity and provide employees with a sense of accomplishment and feeling of being valued by their employer. Where employee fatigue is a concern not only during emergent times but also during times of normalcy, it is recommended that the Town of York develop a program to show recognition and appreciation for all the hard work employees do every day. The details of the program can be modified dependent upon what the town management team wishes to provide, however it should be open to all employees. Selections for recognition should be on a preset timeframe, whether that be monthly, quarterly, biannually, or annually, and rewards possibilities should be identified prior to the start of the program. Rewards can be monetary such as a gift card to a local restaurant/business of the employee's choosing, or it could be a reward of additional paid time off. Submissions for recipients, who could be either an individual or a group, should be submitted by both peers and supervisors during the designated timeframe. These submissions will be reviewed by an appointed committee of fellow employees to determine the ultimate recipient.

PUBLIC WELFARE

Issue: During the first few weeks and months of the pandemic, the focus of public welfare was on the protection of people against COVID-19. In order to do this, lockdowns and stay at home orders were put into place; businesses, restaurants, concert venues, public parks, gyms, and various other organizations that benefit mental wellbeing were forced to close their doors, this included services such as parks and recreation programs offered by the town. While closures were necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19, there were unexpected negative outcomes from restricting social interactions. The stressors of the unknowns of COVID-19, the fears of the known, and the inability to partake in physically and mentally challenging activities as well as social activities that used to bring joy, brought on a lot of mental health struggles for the community.

Many experiencing these mental health struggles had never experienced them before, and where unsure where to turn to for assistance. While York Health Task Force was developed to combat this growing concern, this organization was only temporary, and while it released valuable information, the team was not one that could be easily contacted or deployed to assist with a mental health crisis. Many mental health concerns are witnessed and dealt with by responding members of the police, fire, code, and general assistance departments, yet these employees are not formally trained to provide in the field assistance, they can only provide referrals for people to contact outside organizations. This process puts the responsibility to contact these organizations on the person experiencing a mental health crisis. Additionally, this does not provide an opportunity for follow up to verify the person got the help they needed.

Understanding the impact being unable to get outside and be active had on mental health, the beaches and parks eventually opened for public use safely as the use of masks and social distancing became the norm, however many structured events were still unable to take place due to the lack of space within the Town of York to host them. Some of these programs include

enrichment camps, organized sports for children and adults, sit down meal programs, and elderly exercise programs. These programs during non-emergent times were offered utilizing small community rooms in buildings throughout the town, school gymnasiums, or at the Center for Active Living, none of which were either large enough to continue offering the programs utilizing masking and social distancing, or simply remained closed, such as in the case of the schools.

Recommendation: As the concern for the public's mental health grows, and as first responders continually see underlying mental health issues as a contributing factor to a plethora of issues that they are tasked with addressing, it is recommended that the Town of York work towards forming a formal mental health team, and/or task force. It is suggested that this team have representatives from local mental health organizations, and that they be available to be deployed on a rotating basis 24/7. This representative should quickly respond to a location along with or to meet with a representative from the Town of York requesting department when that town employee identifies a need for mental health assistance. This program would provide citizens with an instant contact resulting in the potential for a crisis resolution. These newly formed connections can then lead to a longer-term contact who can then work with the citizen going forward to address their mental health needs.

Physical activity and social engagement have proven to be beneficial to mental health. The Town of York through the Parks and Recreation Department offers many town sponsored programs for physical activity, social engagement, and enrichment. While the department adapted to the changing times due to the COVID-19 pandemic the best they could, they were ultimately unable to provide many needed programs because of a lack of space. In a 2017 study that was done by the University of New Hampshire, a large multigenerational community center was not only recommended, but favored by survey participants. The town has already identified this as a need prior to the pandemic, and this was exacerbated as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. It is recommended that the Town of York not only continue the work on establishing a large multigenerational community center but move it forward in the town plan to occur as soon as possible.

Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan (IP) found in the chart in **Appendix 1: Improvement Plan** identifies specific actions that can be taken to help expand upon the town's existing preparedness priorities and skills. This plan also identifies areas of concern that were noted as a result of the pandemic. All recommendations are specific, achievable, and relevant. Some recommendations may have potential restrictions, for which those have been identified in the IP chart.

The Town of York is not bound to make the changes recommended in the IP; however they are greatly suggested. A suggested timeline for completion and department to make the change is given with each category. Enacting these improvements will lead to better preparedness, response, and recovery for future emergencies.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic was and still is an unprecedented time that few who are alive today have ever experienced before. With information and knowledge of the virus changing frequently town officials were kept on their toes finding ways to adapt to ensure that they were keeping their staff and the public safe, as well as maintaining town operations.

The Town of York prior to the pandemic was a well-functioning body of government and there is no doubt that this led to many successes during the pandemic. Prior to this event the town was in a stable financial position and had a well-developed leadership between the Town Manager, Emergency Management Director, and the Select Board.

A common theme that was found during this evaluation of the town's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was the lack of communication between departments prior to this time. Each individual department functions very well on its own, however they rarely communicate with each other. When times of emergency strike, it is more than likely that multiple departments are going to be affected. It is the hope that by enacting the recommendations of town wide organization and response put forth by this report, the town will seamlessly be able to transition from a state of normalcy, to state of emergency, and back, all while protecting its employees, residents, and still providing the public with services.

While there is always room for improvement, and recommendations for that are brought forward in this report, they should not be taken as a sign of failure within the town. With the constantly changing information, and lack of guidance from higher levels of government, the Town of York responded to the best of their abilities. The town requesting this inquiry and report is a sign of a willingness and quest to constantly be improving and providing the best services and environment for both employees and citizens alike.

Appendix 1: Improvement Plan

Area of Improvement	Recommendation	Department	Start	End	Other (dependencies, resources, budget)
Planning- The Town of York does not have a specific Pandemic Annex to the EOP.	Utilize the phases format of the York County Pandemic Annex to formulate a Town of York Pandemic Annex.	Emergency Management	Nov 2021	Jun 2022	
Awareness- Department heads were unaware of their roles during a pandemic.	<p>Ensure department heads receive a copy of all annexes in which a response from their department will be warranted.</p> <p>Situational exercises should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure all relevant parties are aware of and understand their roles.</p>	Department Directors	Nov 2021	Ongoing	Availability of funding and staff time for exercises.
Decision Making- Due to the emergent nature of the pandemic, decisions were made quickly, causing a lack of transparency.	While decisions may still be made urgently as needed during times of emergency, adequate documentation and explanation of decisions being made should be made available to all stakeholders.	<p>Emergency Management</p> <p>Town Manager</p>	Nov 2021	Ongoing	

Business Liaison- Businesses felt as though they were being expected to follow special guidelines by the state/town, however felt they did not have a proper contact source for clarification.	Identify which hazards identified in the EOP will result in the need for a business liaison. Identify for each of those hazards who will serve as the point of contact.	Emergency Management Department Directors	Nov 2021	Jul 2022	Availability of staff to designate
IT Assessment- The Town of York uses a contracted company for their IT needs. IT needs outpaced the rate at which the contracted company could respond.	The town shall conduct a needs assessment for the Town of York to determine if an in-house IT specialist is needed.	IT	Jul 2022	Jul 2023	Budgetary restrictions
IT Equipment- During the pandemic many employees felt they did not have the equipment necessary to complete their daily tasks that they may have had access to in the office.	An assessment of individual employee need should be assessed, and equipment necessary for them to work remotely should be purchase.	IT	Nov 2021	Jan 2022	Budgetary restrictions Availability of equipment to be purchased
Work From Home Policy- Working from	A user agreement should be developed outlining	HR	Nov 2021	Mar 2022	

home required employees to take town owned equipment home. There is no user agreement between the employee and the town for the use of the equipment outside of the office.	expectations and rules. This will ensure that town owned equipment is being used for town business only, as well as protecting the safety of the information that may be stored and/or access using said equipment.				
Public Information Officer- Residents and media lacked a single source of information. Information was being given by multiple town representatives in a variety of formats that were not always consistent in design or timing of release.	A PIO shall be identified and serve as the single source of information in regard to emergencies unless otherwise identified by them.	Town Manager	Nov 2021	Jun 2022	Training of employee to be designated
Employee Briefings- Employees felt as though they were being provided with little information during the state of emergency. When they were provided with	The Emergency Management Director should provide employees with clear and consistent information/guidance. Employees should be aware of the schedule of when they will be receiving this	Emergency Management Director	Nov 2021	Ongoing	

information it was not consistent, and they were unsure who to go to with further questions.	information. Employees should be given guidance on who to contact with questions.				
Community Coordination- When a major catastrophic event occurs, resources from all over town are needed. There is no common group that encompasses all public and private sectors in the Town of York.	Utilizing the COVID-19 CRT as a guideline, a community group, to be renamed, the York Community Resource Team will be organized to combat common needs throughout the town.	Emergency Management Director	Nov 2021	Ongoing	
Online Services- Town Clerks were forced to remain public facing employees due to a lack of online services. Citizens had to go into Town Hall to complete required tasks that other towns have online. Citizens could not make appointments to conduct in person tasks and were forced to wait in lines	Expanding upon services that are already offered on the town website, provide links to complete all necessary paperwork, and/or payments. Must provide the ability for payment by credit card. To allow organized access to in person services in partnership with online services citizens should be given the opportunity to	Town Clerk IT	Nov 2021	Ongoing	Program restrictions IT services

outdoors, or in their cars.	make an appointment to go into Town Hall.				
Quarantine Concerns- Employees were unaware what designated an exposure or not, thus were unsure when to quarantine vs. self-monitor.	Clear guidelines that designate the need for a quarantine in accordance with information released by the CDC should be available to all employees. This is related only to a pandemic/ illness related emergency.	HR	Nov 2021	Ongoing	Dependent upon information being made available from CDC.
Employee Fatigue- Employees were being asked to be adaptable to the changing times while facing challenges both in the workplace and at home. Many felt their consistent dedication to their work went unnoticed/ unappreciated.	With this being a concern both during emergent times and not, the town shall develop an employee recognition program.	HR	Nov 2021	Ongoing	Budget for incentives
First Responder Assistance- First responders face	Professional/peer assistance programs should be developed for first	Police Fire	Jul 2022	Ongoing	Availability of programs/professionals

difficulties due to the nature of their jobs without being involved in a worldwide pandemic. Many suffer from workplace burnout because of this.	responders. These programs should be in addition to town sponsored Employee Assistance Programs. They should be tailored specifically to address the challenges first responders face.				Training of peer counselors Budget for programs
Community Center- Enrichment and physical activities held for groups of all ages were unable to be conducted due to a lack of space to allow for safety guidelines.	The Town of York shall conduct a needs assessment and put forth to town voters for approval of a multi-generational community center to be built.	Parks and Recreation Planning Town Manager	Jul 2022	Ongoing	Budget Voter buy-in
Access to Mental Health- Mental health struggles increased during the pandemic and access to resources became sparse with offices closing and going remote.	Partner with a local mental health organization to provide 24/7 access to resources. This partner will be available to respond to cases that get called into police, fire, code, or general assistance organizations that they deem may be better handled by a mental health professional.	Police Fire Code GA	Jul 2022	Ongoing	Budget Willingness of partner organizations

Appendix 2: Interviews

Interview Process

Key stakeholders in the town to interview were identified for the EMS by the Town Manager's Office. Each interviewee was given a brief description of the purpose of the interviews and the process for this AAR. Interviewees were encouraged to be open and honest on not only the facts of events that transpired, but their own opinions, and to not shy from sharing their thoughts and ideas for how things could have gone smoother.

Interviews were conducted in various formats. Most were conducted in person in the interviewee's office or a neutral location. Email, telephone, and Zoom correspondence also contributed to the interview process.

While topics of conversation were adjusted to accommodate the various working environments of each department interviewed these general questions were asked of all interviewees:

- How were your department's daily tasks effected in the initial response?
- Did you have concerns over closure of offices, limitations of work being done online, equipment that was not available, or your ability to continue your daily operations?
 - When closures did happen, were there tasks that were not able to be completed due to safety concerns? If so, what were they?
- During the initial response, think of the changes you made. Which were successful? Which were not? Which ones could have been successful but need more planning?
- Were you missing any equipment, tools, or supplies needed to safely complete your daily tasks?
- What concerns do you have for future incidents?
- What recommendations do you have for future incidents?
- What were common concerns that your staff voiced? Both in terms of working environment and ability to complete their jobs due to external conflicts such as childcare when/if schools closed.
- Were there any changes or decisions that should have been made by Town Management that were not? And were there changes or decisions made by the town (not including those made at the recommendation of a higher federal/state organization) that should not have been?

List of Interviewees, by Title

Town of York

Assessing

- Tax Assessor

Clerk's Office

- Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Code Enforcement

- Director
- Local Health Officer

Finance

- Director

Fire

- York Beach Fire Chief
- York Village Fire Chief

Human Resources

- Director

Parks and Recreation

- Director

Planning

- Director

Police

- Chief
- Deputy Chief

Public Works

- Director

School Department

- Business Administrator

Town Manager's Office

- Town Manager
- Assistant Town Manager

Town of York Boards and Committees

Board of Appeals

- Chair

Budget Committee

- Chair
- Board Member

Planning Board

- Chair

Select Board

- Chair

Liaisons and Partners

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

- York District Public Health Liaison

York Community Service Association

- Executive Director

York County Emergency Management Agency

- Director
- Deputy Director

York Public Library

- Executive Director

York Region Chamber of Commerce

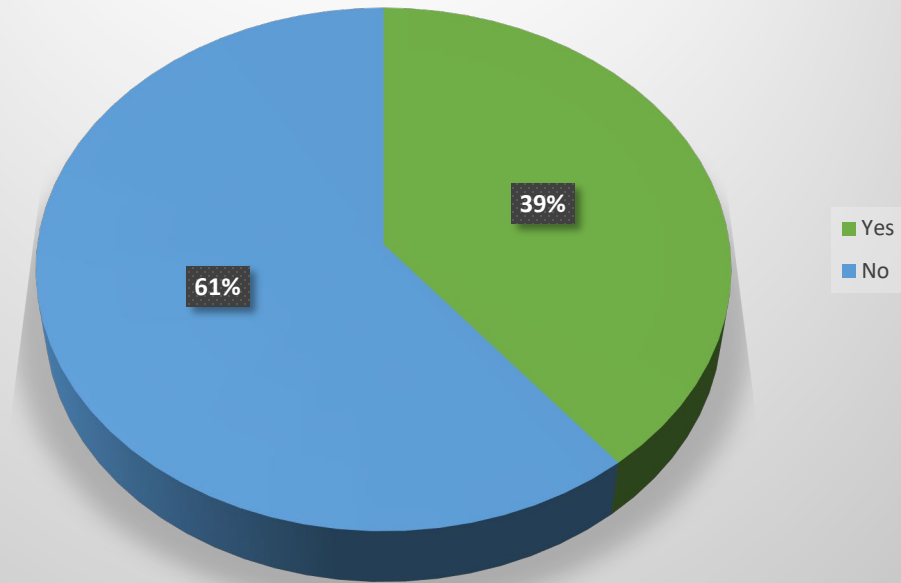
- Executive Director
- Business Manager

York Water District

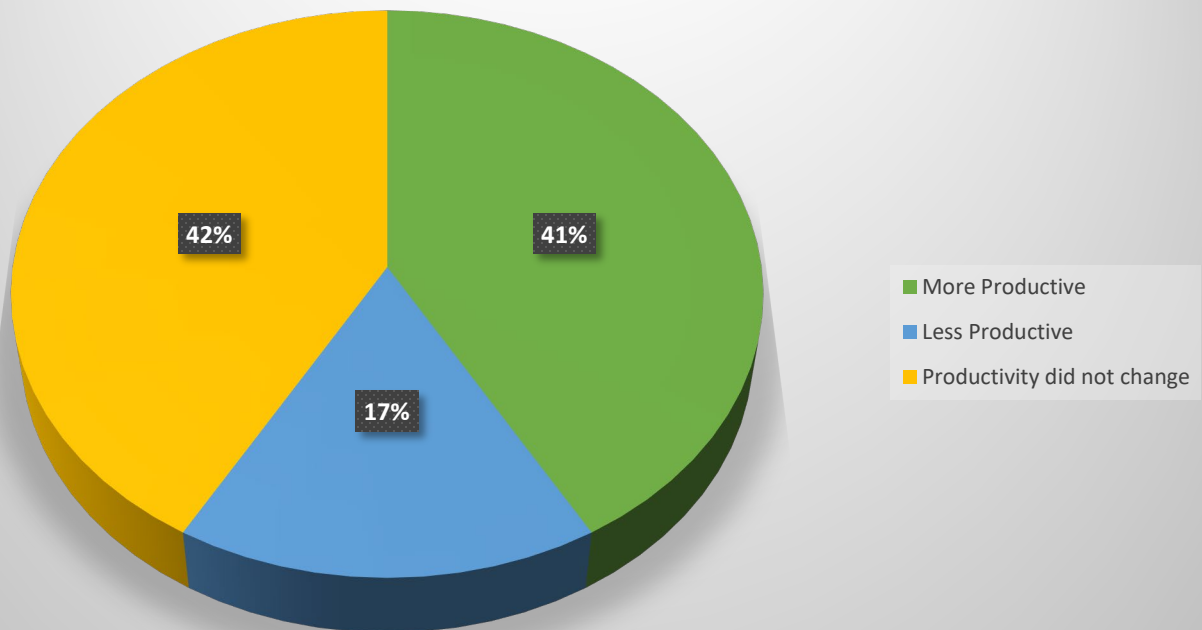
- Superintendent

Appendix 3: Employee Survey Questions and Responses

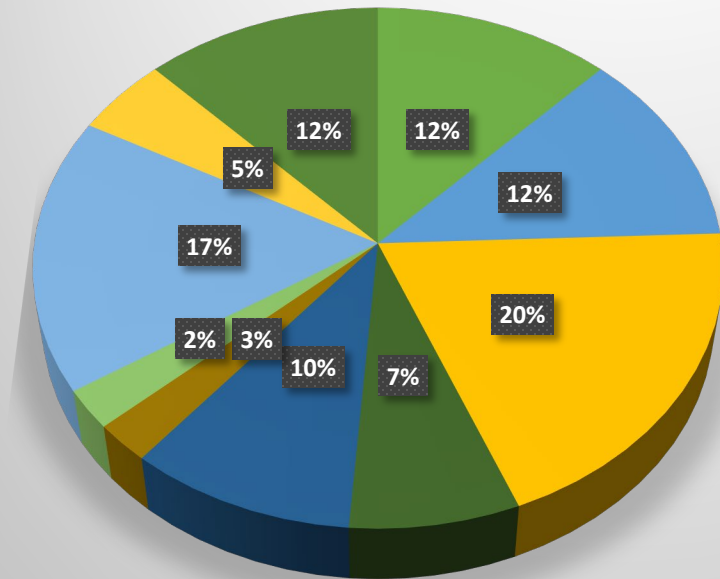
Did you work from home at any point during the pandemic?



If yes to Question 1, how was your productivity affected by working remotely?

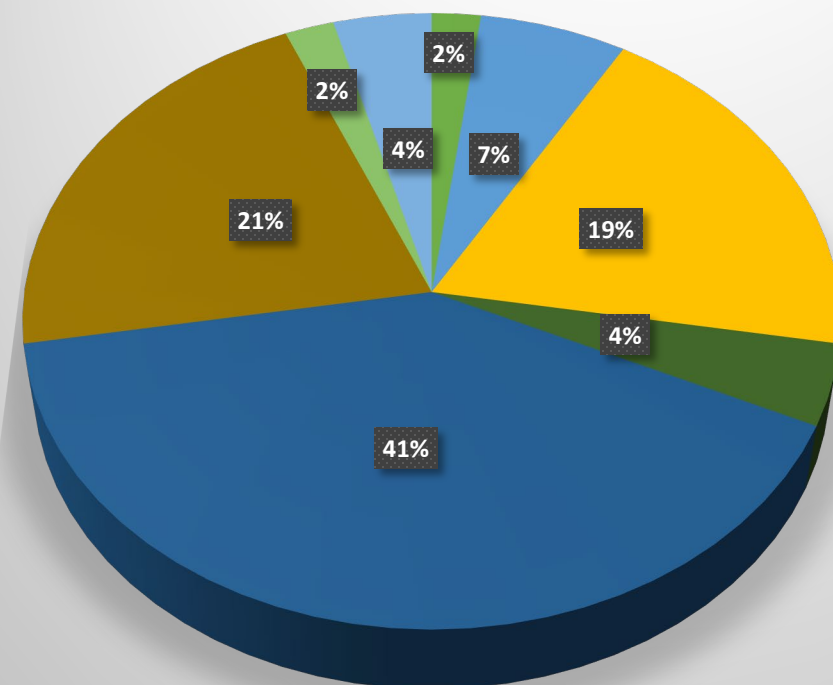


If yes to Question 1, what had the greatest impact on your ability to successfully work from home? Select all that apply.



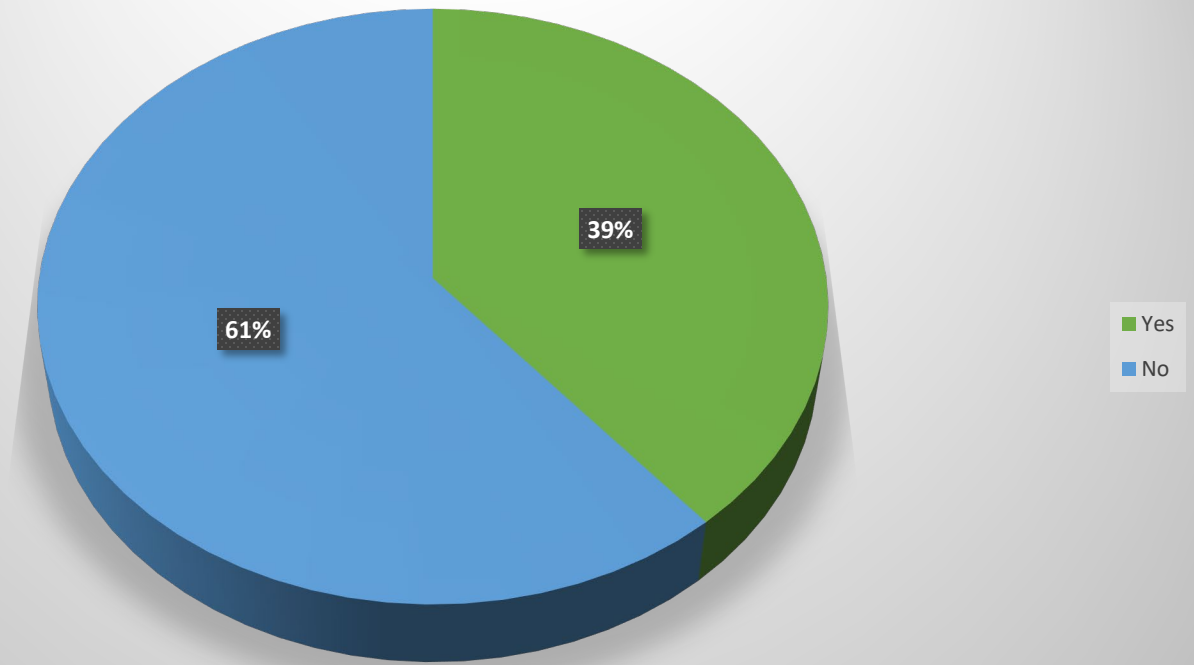
- Internet Connectivity
- Social Isolation
- Physical Workspace
- Distractions at Home
- Communication Issues Between Staff
- Childcare Concerns
- Sick or Caring for Someone Who Was Sick
- Lack of Access to Tools/Information Needed for Job
- Keeping a Regular Schedule
- Other

If yes to Question 1, which of the following did you use while working remotely? Select all that apply.

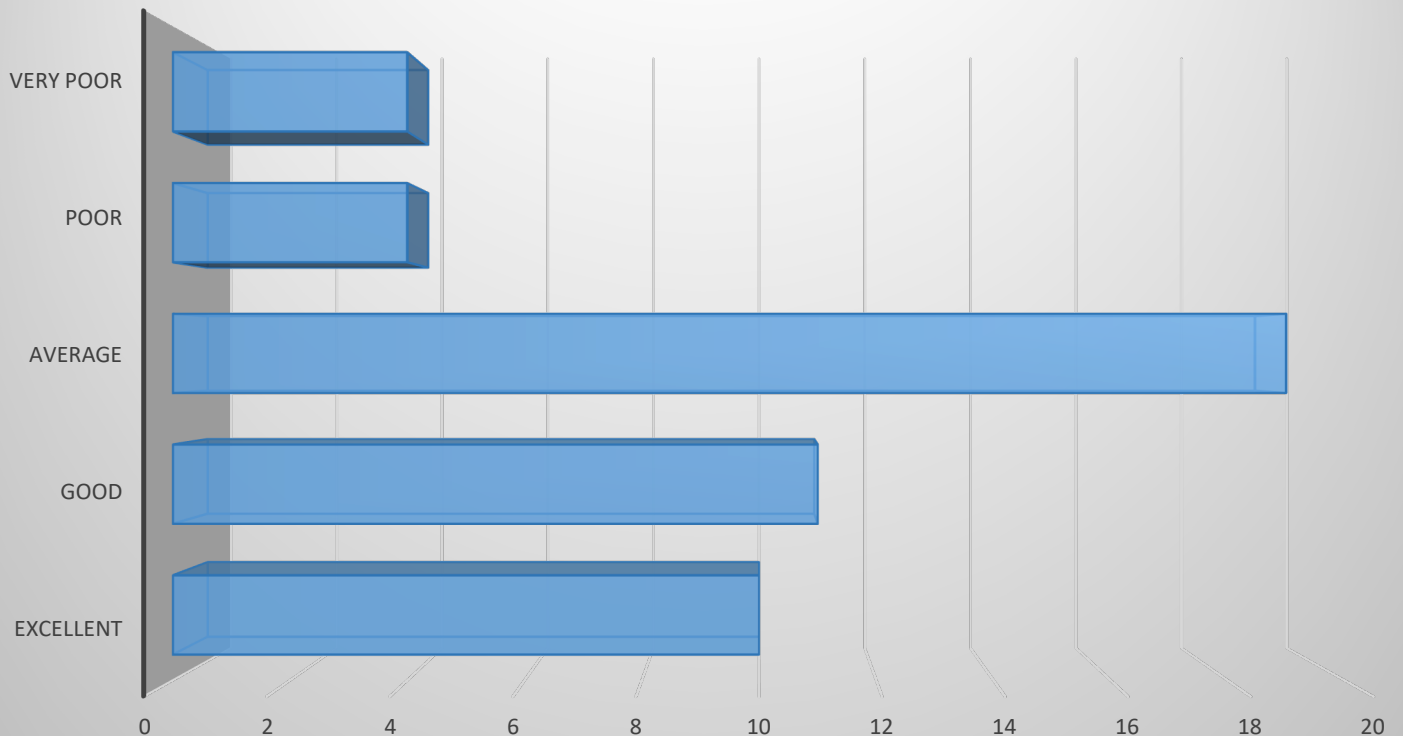


- Personal Desktop Computer
- Personal Laptop
- Personal Phone
- Town-Owned Desktop Computer
- Town-Owned Laptop
- Town-Owned Phone
- Personal Printer
- Town-Owned Printer

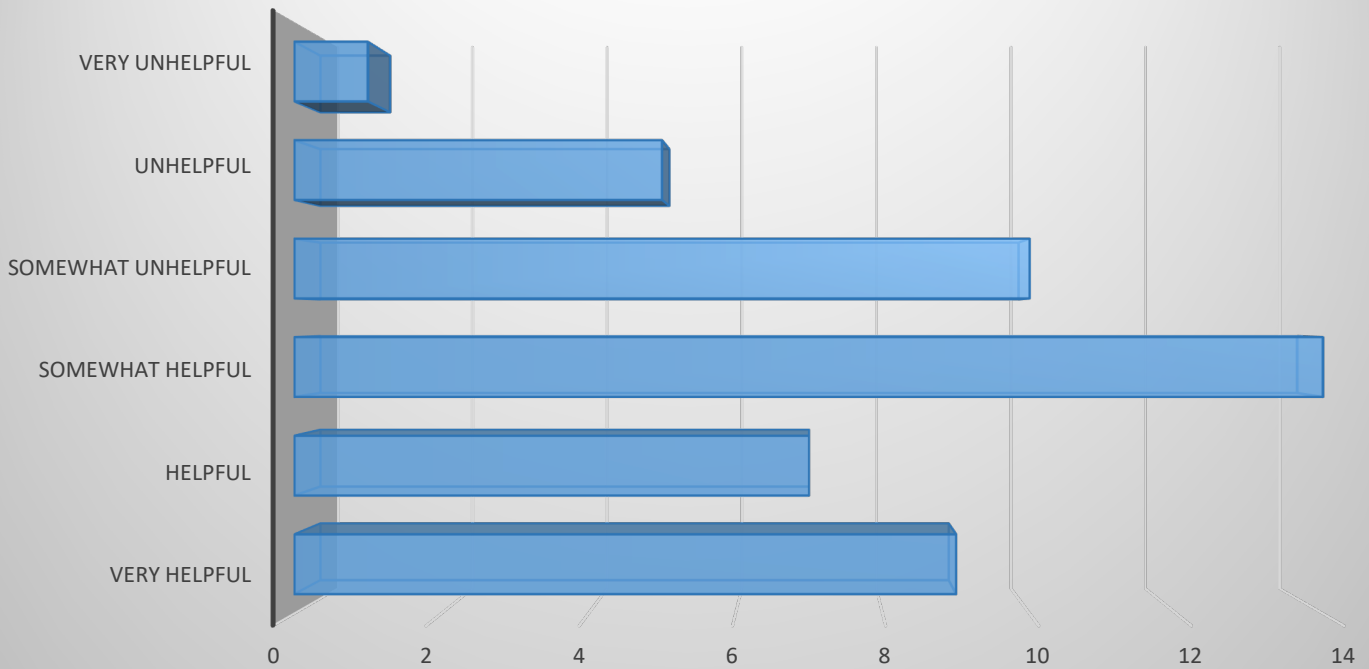
Can you continue to work from home today?



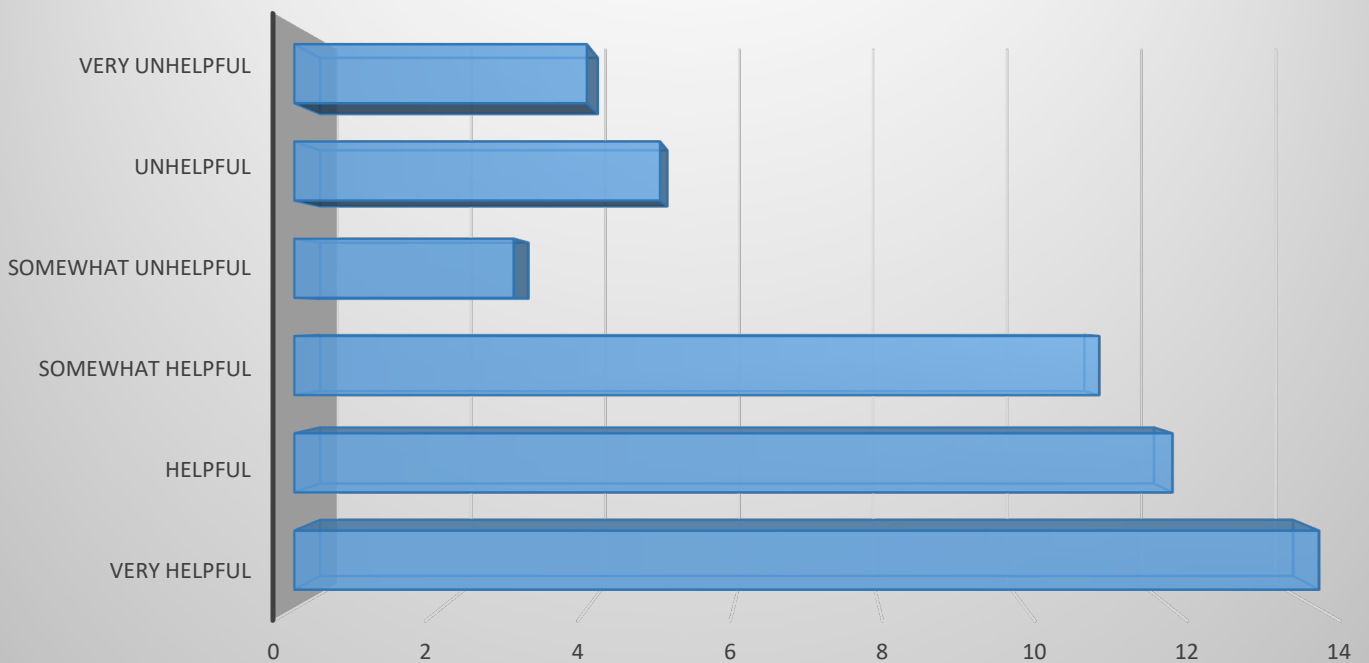
How would you rate the Town's communication with you about decisions that impacted your role as an employee?



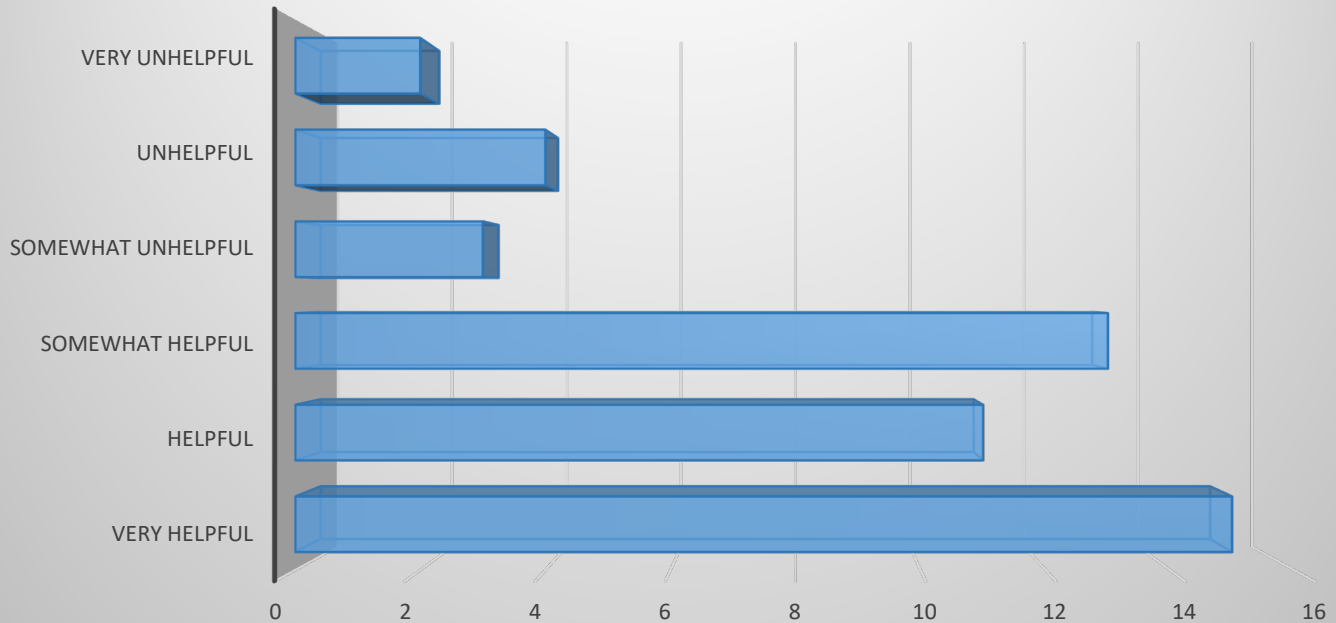
How would you rate the helpfulness of the communication you received from the Town Manager?



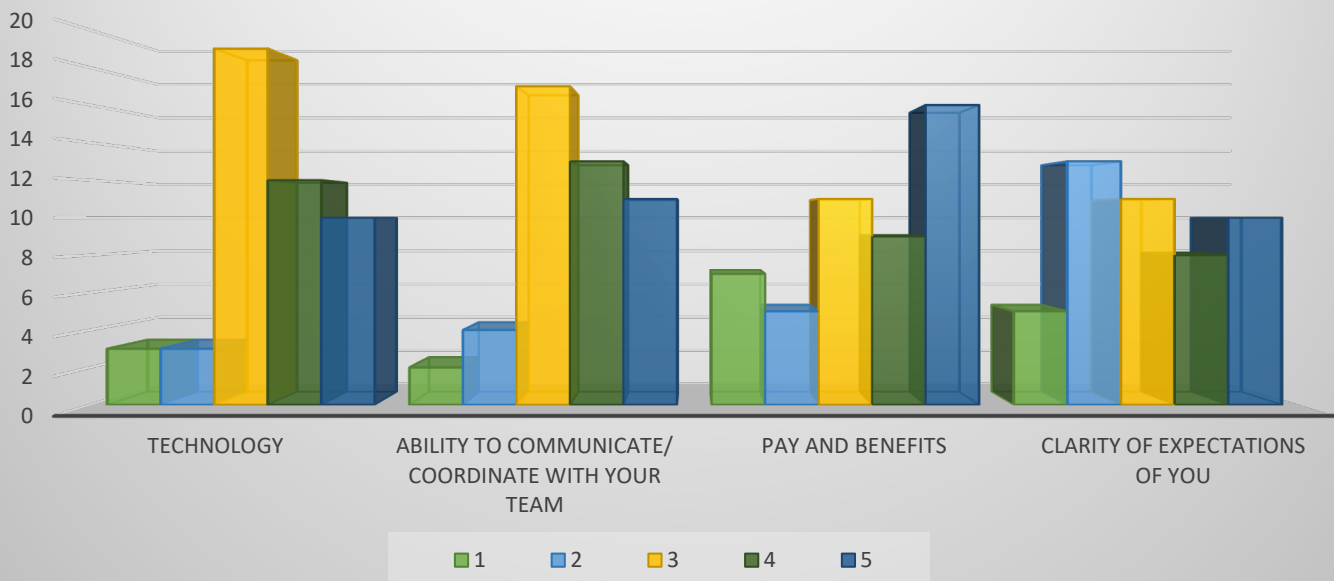
How would you rate the helpfulness of the communication you received from your Department Head?



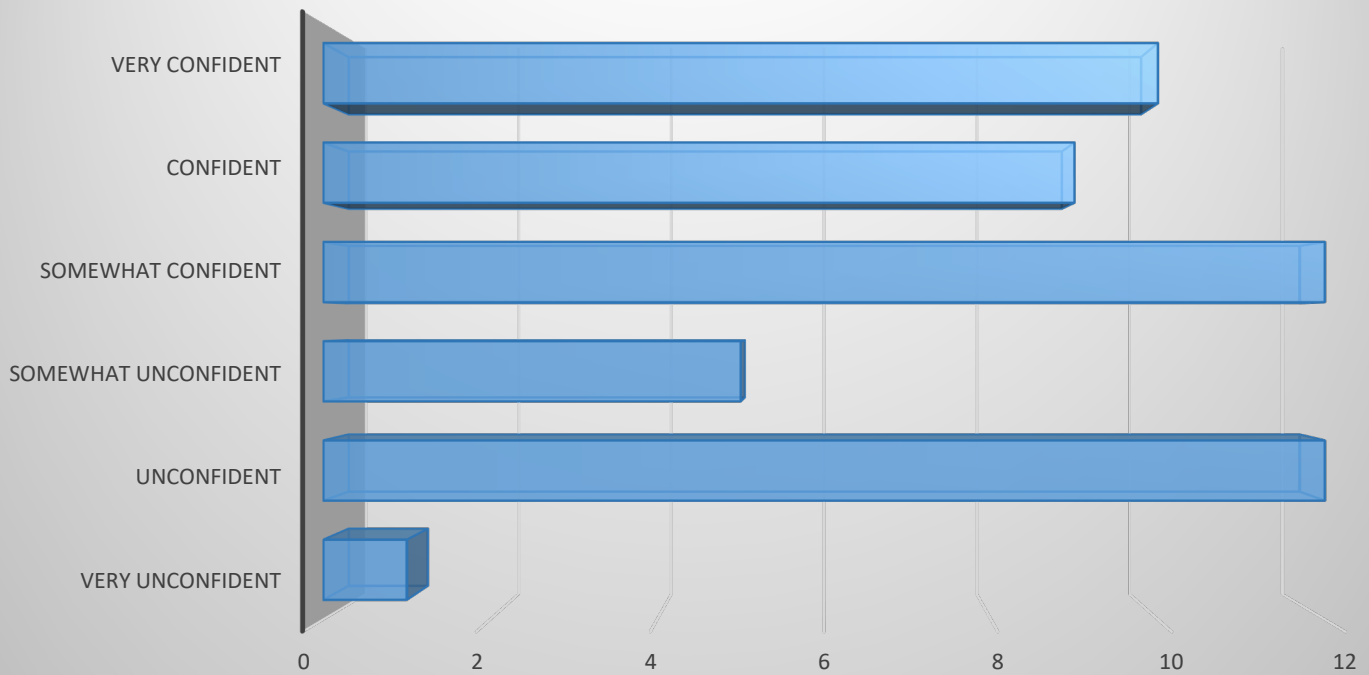
How would you rate the helpfulness of the communication you received from your Direct Supervisor?



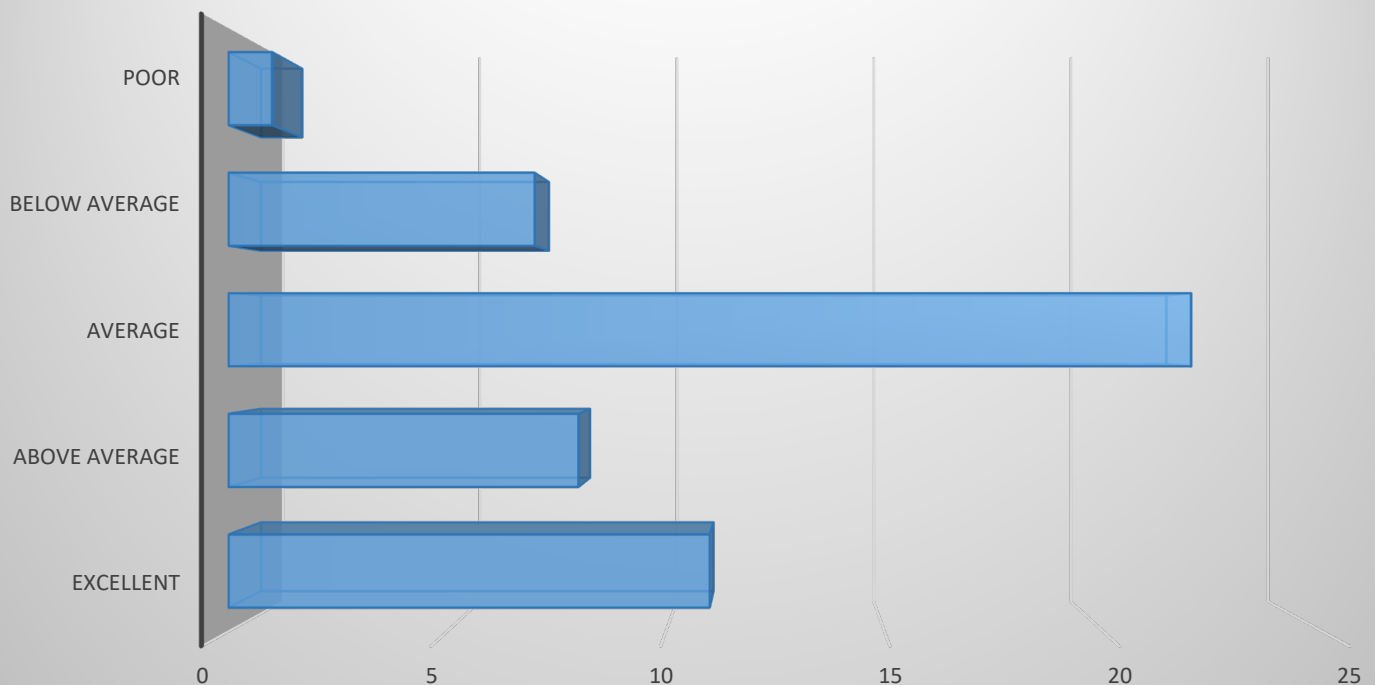
How would you rate the Town's pandemic response in the following areas in terms of the impact on your ability to do your work? 1 = Worst possible response, 5 = Best possible response.



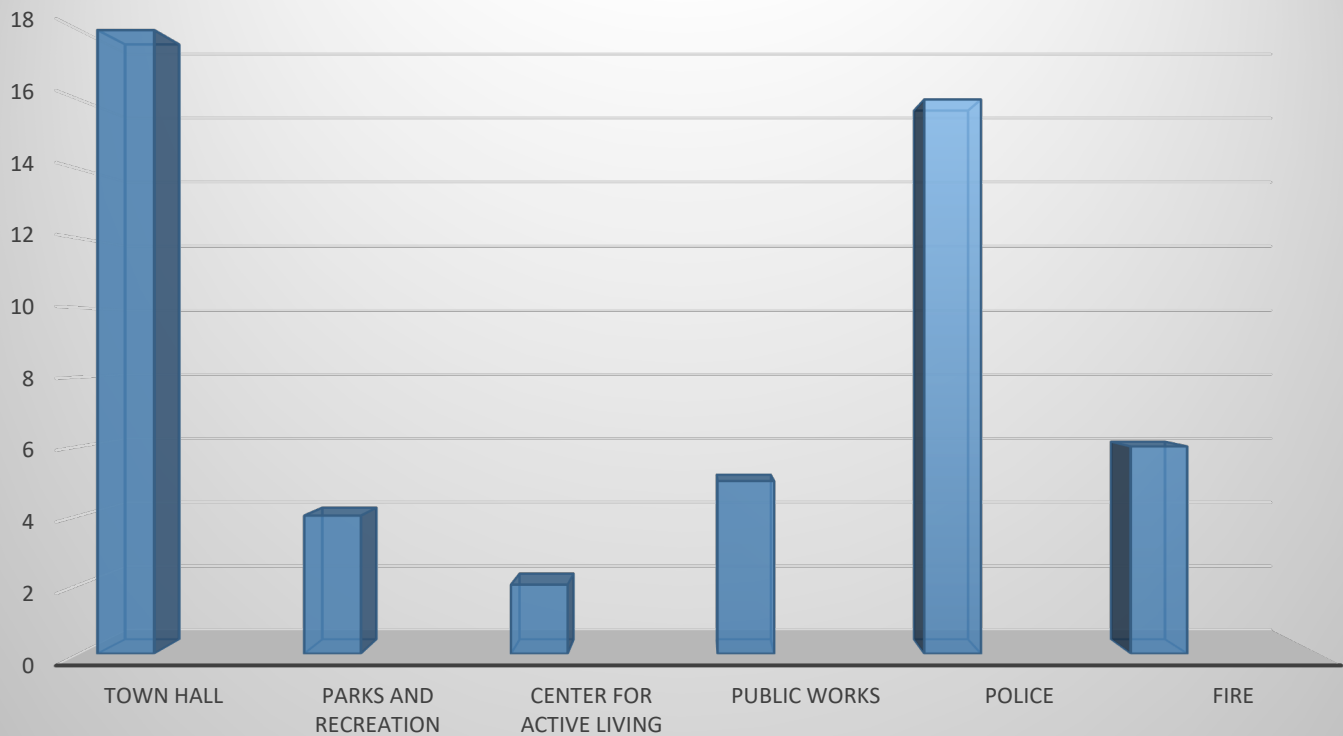
How confident were you in the Town's leadership to make the right choices through the pandemic?



How would you rate the Town's overall response to the pandemic?



Participant Departments



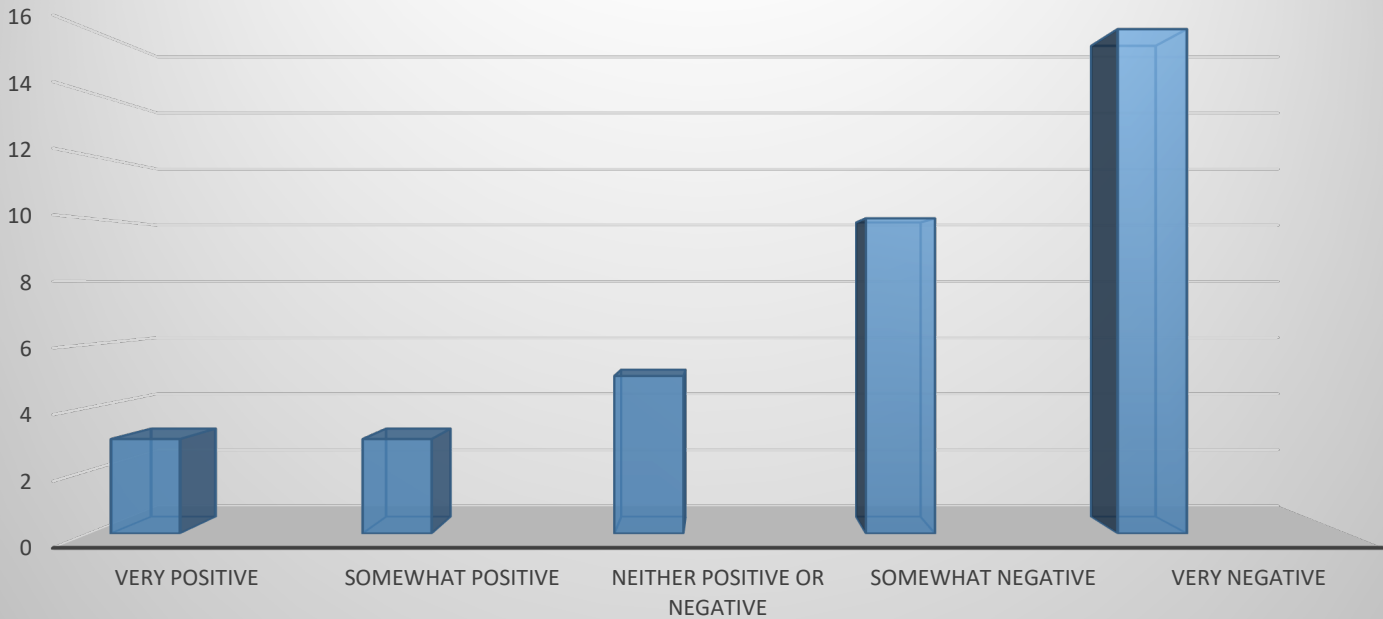
Participants of the survey were also given two open ended questions. In order to encourage participation, individuals were informed that their responses to the survey would be anonymous. To ensure the anonymity of these responses, specific answers to these two questions will not be provided. Instead, a list of common answers will be provided.

- Is there anything else you would like to share about the Town's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - More communication on the reasoning behind policy change decisions and restrictions for both town staff and residents.
 - Need for hazard pay for employees unable to work from home.
 - Need for clear policies for determining exposure and rules for returning to work post exposure/diagnoses.
 - No clear source for standardized information.
 - Town Management clearly had a concern for the well-being of staff.
 - Need to recognize the uniqueness of each department when releasing town wide policies, they may need to be customized to better address the duties of various departments.
- If a similar crisis were to happen in the future, what would you change about the way the town responds?
 - Compensate employees that are unable to work from home.

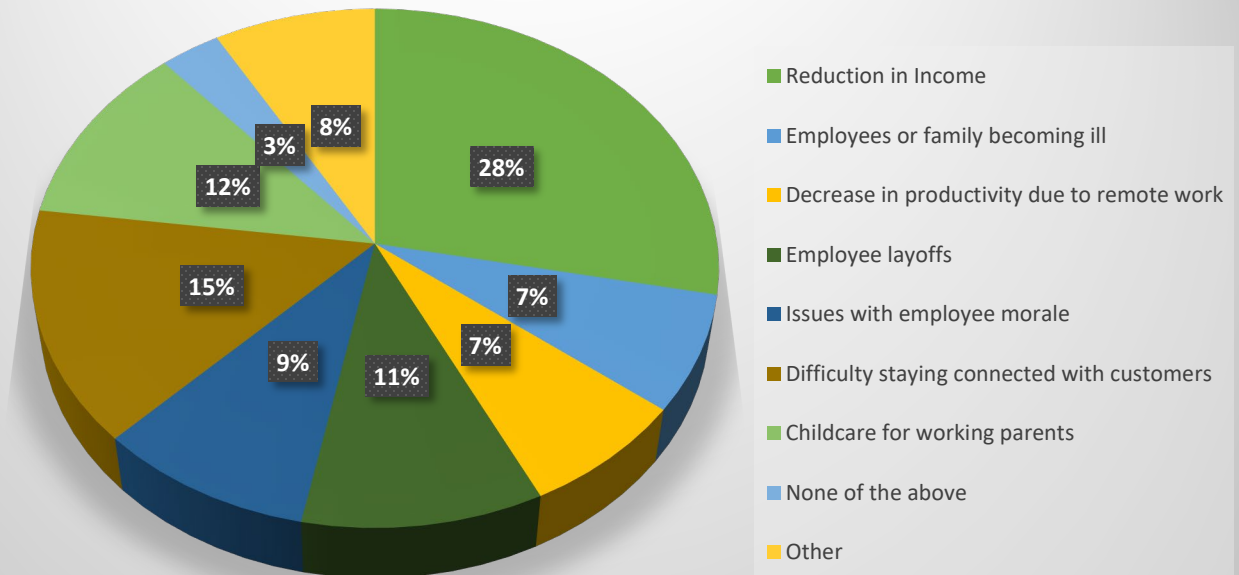
- Better planning to ensure continuity of operations. Clear plans with guidelines to follow should an event result in the disruption of normal daily activities.
- Organized, clear, concise, and frequent communication with employees.
- Enforcing policies set in place by Town Management.
- More IT to assist staff working from home and ensuring the ability for city services to continue remotely.

Appendix 4: Business Survey Questions and Responses

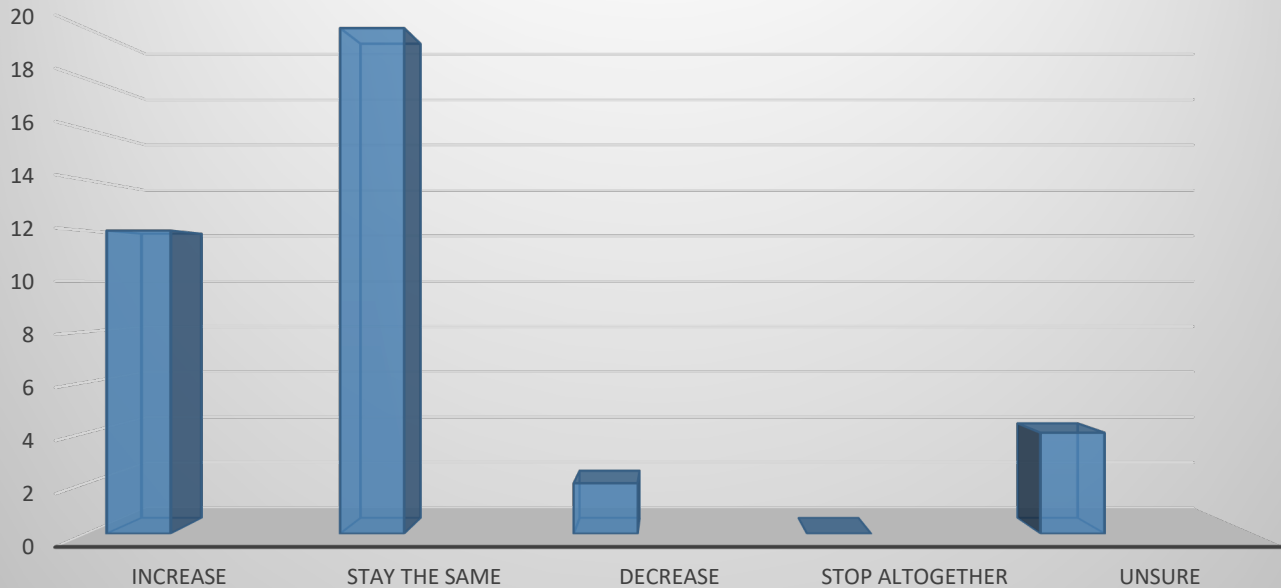
Has the COVID-19 pandemic had a positive or negative impact on your overall business operations?



What challenges has your organization experienced as a result of COVID-19? Select all that apply.



In light of current events, how do you foresee your level of engagement with the town changing in the future?



Participants of the survey were also given two open ended questions. In order to encourage participation, individuals were informed that their responses to the survey would be anonymous. To ensure the anonymity of these responses, specific answers to these two questions will not be provided. Instead, a list of common answers will be provided.

- How can the Town of York be a better partner to your organization during future crises?
 - More flexibility, communication, and discretion for business owners who are willing to and attempting to implement all necessary safety measures.
 - Appointment of a person(s) to be a liaison between local businesses and local government.
 - Create policies that all businesses must agree to and oblige by in order to operate.
 - Be more proactive with the state, demand answers and guidelines from them.
 - Clear, specific, and concise guidelines for businesses of all kinds to follow.
 - Either more appointment availability or understanding of limited appointments when trying to obtain a specific inspection/permit within a required timeframe.
- Do you have any other feedback to share with the Town Management team?
 - Incorporate technology to better promote town services during a lockdown, e.g. ability to accept credit cards/online payments and online appointment scheduling for all offices.
 - Considering the uncertainty of the event, the town and the community responded well.

- Find a way to get the community to band together, promote more of a message of helping one another through a common difficult time.
- Develop a forum or means of communication strictly for the businesses to be able to communicate with members of the select board as well as town management.
- The Town of York was consistent with remote meetings and access to them and was very responsive.

Appendix 5: Town Manager Messages

Exhibit 1: Contingency Plan Email to Department Heads on March 9, 2020

Department Contingency Plan for COVID-19

1. How many employees do you have in your Department? _____

Can any of these employees work from home?
Yes
No
2. What is your protocol for contact your employees if needed? _____
3. For those employees who can work from home do they have the proper equipment to do that. (ex. Laptop, cell phone)
Yes
No
4. In the event of an outbreak in the community how many staff do you need in order to continue to operate your department?

Number of Staff _____
5. In the event that you are out of work who is responsible for the Department? _____
6. What are your Department's highest priorities or tasks in the next 8 weeks?

7. Can these tasks be rescheduled or deferred to a later date?

Yes (please identify which ones)

No
8. If not how will these functions be accomplished?

Hi Everyone

As you are all aware the COVID-19 or Coronavirus has been spreading throughout the US and has recently reached our boarder with New Hampshire. Attached you will find a Department Contingency Plan Form that we are asking all Department Heads to fill out for their departments. This form will ask you how many employees you have in your department, if any of your employees have the capacity to work from home, what are your critical functions, and your plan for those functions should we face a shut down.

Please complete the form and return it to Kathryn who will compile the information and create a document that everyone will have access to, from both the office and home.

We are encouraging staff to continue to follow the recommendations of the CDC and wash hands, wipe down high traffic areas, and stay home if they are not feeling well. Department Heads reserve the right to send an employee home with pay if they are ill with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

In the event that we have a staff member who is diagnosed with COVID-19, has been exposed to the virus, or must stay home to care for a household member we will require that they not return to work before the 14 day recommended self-quarantine has passed and they have been medically cleared. We will be treating this as a paid leave of absence and employees will not be charged sick leave or vacation time. Employees will need to provide medical documentation to Human Resources that they have diagnosed with, exposed to, or are caring for someone who has been diagnosed.

Employees who are affected by the COVID-19 virus should notify their supervisor immediately so that we can put a plan in place for that employee. Please remember that as Department Heads we are responsible for the safety and privacy of our employees and are subject to the laws of HIPPA. If an employee reports a diagnosis to you this is to remain confidential.

All other illnesses (flu, cold, allergies, etc...) will be subject to our sick time policy.

We would encourage you to evaluate any upcoming group meetings, trainings, or conferences that you and your staff have scheduled and determine if they are essential or could possibly be rescheduled for a later date. This is not required at this time and we will leave it to you and your staff to make that decision.

Below are some additional resources that the CDC has provided. While the risk to the general public remains low, we want to be prepared and make sure we have the appropriate policies in place for our staff. We will continue to be in contact with our local health officials and the CDC to ensure that we have the most up to date information to help aid us in making any decisions.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

9. If we experience a high level of absenteeism or a shut down of operations what are the essential everyday functions of your department that must continue?

Essential Functions:

10. Are there any time sensitive or critical projects, meetings, public hearings or trainings coming up in the next 60 days?

Yes: (Please list)

No

11. Can these events be rescheduled?

Yes

No

12. If they can not be rescheduled what is needed to ensure those events continue in the event of a shutdown?

13. Other Comments:

Exhibit 2: Beach Closure March 23, 2020



Town of York
186 York Street
York, Maine 03909-1314

YORK BEACHES CLOSED

Effective at noon on March 23, 2020, the following beaches are closed to the public:

Cape Neddick Beach

Short Sands Beach

Long Sands Beach

Harbor Beach

These beaches shall remain closed indefinitely, with an expectation of lifting the closure when the public health emergency is under control.

I have made this decision in response to the Governor's **Proclamation of State of Civil Emergency to Further Protect Public Health**, triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, and because of reports of many people congregating on the beach when the overall directive from State and Federal government officials is that people should be staying home and practicing safe social distancing.

Authority to make this closure is contained in §10-A of the Town's **Beach Ordinance**, approved by the voters of the Town of York.

The York Police Department is empowered to enforce this closure.


Stephen H. Burns
Town Manager

Town Manager/
Selectmen
(207)463-1001

Town Clerk/
Tax Collector
(207)463-1103

Finance/
Treasurer
(207)463-1104

Code Enforcement
(207)463-1102

Planning
(207)463-1007

Assessor
(207)463-1005

Police Department
(207)463-1031

Dispatch
(207)464-4444

York Beach Fire
Department
(207)463-1114

York Village Fire
Department
(207)463-1015

Public Works
(207)463-1011

Harbor Master
(207)463-1000

Senior Center
(207)463-1036

Parks and
Recreation
(207)463-1040

Fire
(207)463-1000
(207)463-1019

www.yorkmaine.org

Exhibit 3: Declaration of Civil Emergency and Emergency Order April 3, 2020

Officer's Return

**TOWN OF YORK
DECLARATION OF CIVIL EMERGENCY AND EMERGENCY ORDER
TOWN OF YORK, MAINE APRIL 3, 2020**

County of York, SS.

I certify that I have notified the residents of YORK of the above-referenced Declaration of Civil Emergency and Emergency Order by posting a copy of the same at:

York Town Hall, York, Maine.

York Police Building, York, Maine.

York Harbor Post Office, York Harbor, Maine.


York Beach Post Office, York Beach, Maine.

York Village Post Office, York, Maine.

Cape Neddick Post Office, Cape Neddick, Maine.

A conspicuous public place within York on **April 3, 2020**.

Dated at York this 3rd of April, Two Thousand Twenty:


Charles J. Szeniaewski, Police Chief
Emergency Management Director
April 3, 2020

**Declaration of Civil Emergency
And
Emergency Order
for the
Town of York, Maine**



Part 1: Emergency Proclamation

WHEREAS, the World is in the midst of a global pandemic of Novel Coronavirus Disease, known as COVID-19, which is causing serious illnesses and deaths worldwide, and specifically in the United States of America, the State of Maine, and the Town of York, Maine; and

WHEREAS, the risk of community spread of COVID-19 seriously impacts the life, health, and safety of the public, and public health is imperiled by the person-to-person spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States issued a Proclamation Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, the Governor of the State of Maine issued a Proclamation of State of Civil Emergency to Further Protect Public Health relating to the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the County Commissioners of York County, Maine, declared the existence of a local disaster because of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2020, the Governor of the State of Maine issued Executive Order 14 FY 19/20, An Order to Protect Public Health, that was in effect until March 31st, though now extended to April 30th; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, the Governor of the State of Maine issued Executive Order 19 FY 19/20, An Order Regarding Essential Businesses and Operations, that is in effect until April 8, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2020, the Town Select Board ordered the Town Manager, Police Chief, and Health Officer to draft an Emergency Proclamation and Related Orders for a stay-at-home order to assist with COVID-19 disease prevention, flattening the curve of the virus and allowing our health care system and first responders to deliver services in a staggered, non-critical effort; and

Declaration of Civil Emergency and Emergency Orders for the Town of York, Maine

Page 1 of 5

WHEREAS, on March 31, 2020, the Governor of the State of Maine issued Executive Order 28 FY 19/20, An Order Regarding Further Restrictions on Public Contact and Movement, Schools, Vehicle Travel and Retail Business Restrictions, which expanded the State's response to the public health emergency, including a stay-at-home order for residents and other such measures that remain in effect until April 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the actions contemplated in this Emergency Proclamation and the resultant Emergency Orders are not taken lightly, given the importance of the rights and interests of local landowners and visitors, who the Town considers to be integral members of the community, and who have assisted in making the Town what it is today and what it will continue to be going forward;

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in me in Section 5, Emergency Proclamation, of the Town of York's Emergency Management Ordinance, enacted by the voters of the Town and most recently amended on May 16, 2015, and other State statutes and common law authority to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare in the event of an emergency, and after consultation with the Board of Selectmen, I declare an emergency exists in the Town of York, Maine.



Stephen H. Burns
Town Manager
April 2, 2020

Part 2: Emergency Order

FURTHER, following consultation with the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen, and pursuant to the authority granted to the Emergency Management Director in Section 6, Emergency Powers and Duties, of the Town of York's Emergency Management Ordinance, I hereby enact the following Emergency Order:

1. USE OF TOWN PROPERTIES AND FACILITIES

The following shall remain closed for the duration of this Emergency Order:

- a) Sohier Park;
- b) Mount Agamenticus;
- c) Harbor Beach Road;
- d) York Community Garden;
- e) Cliff Walk;
- f) Fishermen's Walk;
- g) Wiggley Bridge and causeway;
- h) Strawberry Island;
- i) The boat launch ramp on the York River under the Rt. 103 bridge;
- j) The boat launch on the York River as Scotland Bridge; and
- k) All Town and School playgrounds, athletic fields, tennis courts and basketball courts.

NOTE: all public beaches are already closed by Order of the Town Manager.

2. OCCUPANCY OF TRANSIENT-OCCUPANCY UNITS

Transient occupancy units in hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, inns, fractional share developments and short-term rentals (all terms as defined in the York Zoning Ordinance) shall remain vacant for the duration of this Emergency Order, except as follows:

- a. Any transient occupancy unit occupied at the time and date on which this Emergency Order first take effect, as defined below, may remain occupied for not more than an additional five days. By the end of that five-day period, the unit must be vacated for the duration of time of this Emergency Order;
- b. A transient occupancy unit may be occupied by medical/healthcare professionals or first responders utilizing these units while serving York or a neighboring community which borders York.

Declaration of Civil Emergency and Emergency Orders for the Town of York, Maine

Page 3 of 5

- c. A transient occupancy unit may be occupied by active duty military and their family, or workers of those essential services as defined in the Governor's Executive Order 19 FY 19/20.
- d. A transient occupancy unit may be occupied by a person or household looking to remove themselves from a household which has a person testing positive for COVID-19, or for the safety of the home.
- e. A transient occupancy unit may be occupied by a person or household as emergency shelter through the Town's General Assistance program, or other such means through the York Community Services Association or Caring Unlimited.

3. CAMPGROUNDS

There shall be no transient or seasonal occupancy at campgrounds for the duration of this Emergency Order.

4. SEASONAL HOMES

The Town recommends, on the strongest possible terms, that owners of seasonal homes and their invitees remain in the location of their primary residence and/or the dwelling unit they currently occupy, from the date of this Emergency Order until April 30, 2020, or when the Governor terminates the current state of emergency, whichever occurs first.

If owners and invitees of a seasonal home move into their unit during the effective period of this Emergency Order, they are strongly encouraged to self-quarantine in that unit for at least 14 days from the date of arrival.

5. ENFORCEMENT

Any person, firm or corporation found to have violated any provisions of Sections One through Three of this Emergency Order in a court with jurisdiction to act on a complaint from the Town shall be subject to a civil penalty of \$100.00 for the first offense, \$150.00 for the second offense, and \$250.00 for the third and subsequent offenses.

Declaration of Civil Emergency and Emergency Orders for the Town of York, Maine

Page 4 of 5

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Emergency Order shall take effect at 12:00 o'clock noon on Friday, April 3rd and shall extend until 11:59 PM on April 30, 2020, unless extended or sooner revoked.


Charles Szeniewski, Police Chief
Emergency Management Director
April 2, 2020

Exhibit 4: Town of York Emergency Management Ordinance

Emergency Management Ordinance



Town of York, Maine

Most Recently Amended: May 22, 2021

Prior Dates of Amendment: **May 16, 2015**

May 19, 2012

Date of Original Enactment: May 22, 2004

ENACTMENT BY THE LEGISLATIVE BODY

Date of the vote to amend this Ordinance: May 22, 2021.

Certified by the Town Clerk:

(signature)

on

(date)

Emergency Management Ordinance

Section 1. Title and Authority

This ordinance shall be known and may be cited and referred to as the Town of York's Emergency Management Ordinance. It is authorized by 37B M.R.S. 781 – 834 as may be amended.

Section 2. Purpose

- A. The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish a municipal Emergency Management Office, compliant with Title 37-B MRS §781, and to put in place the organizational controls appropriate for the municipality to plan and react so as to protect public health, safety and welfare during emergencies.
- B. The Office will be the coordinating agency for all activity in connection with civil emergency preparedness and response.
- C. This ordinance will not relieve any town department of its normal legal responsibilities or authority nor will it adversely affect the work of any volunteer agency organized for relief in disaster emergencies.
- D. This ordinance shall be administered in conjunction with the appropriate elements of the Emergency Plan.

Section 3. Definitions

- A. "Emergency Management" means the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions, other than functions for which military forces are primarily responsible, to minimize and repair injury and damage resulting from disasters or catastrophes caused by enemy attacks, sabotage, riots or other hostile action, or by fire, flood, earthquake or other natural or man-made causes. These functions include without limitation, fire fighting, police, medical, health, emergency welfare, rescue, engineering, warning and communications services; evacuation of persons from stricken areas; economic stabilization; allocation of critical materials in short supply; emergency transportation; existing or properly assigned functions of infrastructure protection; other related to civilian protection and additional activities necessary to the preparation for the carrying out of these functions.
- B. "Disaster" means the occurrence of widespread or severe damage, injury or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or man-made cause, including, but not limited to, fire, flood, earthquake, windstorm, wave action, oil spill, or other water contamination requiring emergency action to avert danger or damage, epidemic, air contamination, hazardous materials incident, blight, drought, critical material

shortage and explosion; said occurrence(s) being of significant scope as to exceed the normal ability of the town's resources to mitigate, respond to or recover from.

- C. "Emergency" means any event which threatens to or actually inflicts damage to people or property and which requires immediate action to mitigate, prevent, control, contain or from which normal recovery is beyond the scope of the normal resources of the town.
- D. "Emergency Preparedness Forces" shall mean the employees, equipment and facilities of all town departments, boards, and agencies; in addition, the term includes all volunteer personnel, equipment and facilities contributed by or obtained from volunteer persons or agencies.
- E. "Emergency Preparedness Volunteer" shall mean any person duly registered, identified, and appointed by the Town of York's Emergency Management Director.
- F. "Director" shall mean the Town of York's Emergency Management Director.
- G. "Office" shall mean the Town of York's Emergency Management Office.
- H. "Emergency Plan" shall mean the Town of York's Emergency Plan.
- I. "Declared Emergency" shall mean an emergency which has been declared in either of two manners. It can be locally declared pursuant to this Ordinance. Alternatively, it can be declared by the Governor of the State of Maine pursuant to Title 37-B MRS §742. When an emergency is declared by both levels of government, the Declared Emergency shall begin on the earlier of the declaration dates and shall end at the later of the termination dates.

Section 4. Organization and Operation

- A. Emergency Management Director. There shall be an Emergency Management Director (Director) appointed to organize and manage the Office, as required by Title 37-B MRS §782. The Director shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen per Title 37-B MRS §782.1. The duration of this appointment shall be a 3-year term.
- B. Organization. The Director is hereby authorized to organize the Office utilizing to the fullest extent possible the existing departments and agencies of the town. In preparation for and during declared emergencies, the Office may utilize any and all Town facilities, personnel and resources to best protect public health, safety and welfare.
- C. Operation. The Director shall be the executive head of the Office. The Director shall head the Office and shall work under the general supervision of the Town Manager with the concurrence of the Board of Selectmen.

- D. Administration. The Director shall administer the Office in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance, the provisions of the Emergency Plan and any other related policies adopted by the Board of Selectmen and the provisions of any applicable state and federal laws and rules which may apply in a particular emergency situation.

Section 5. Locally Declared Emergency.

- A. Declaration. Whenever a local disaster exists or appears imminent, the Town Manager, or in the event of his or her absence, the Chairperson of the Town of York's Board of Selectmen shall, by proclamation, declare that fact and that an emergency exists in the Town of York. A copy of the proclamation shall be posted in the same manner as a warrant calling a town meeting, with the return to be made by the person posting it and a copy of the proclamation provided to the Town Clerk who shall retain it as a permanent record of the Town.
- B. Termination. Whenever the Town Manager, or in the event of her or his absence, the Chair of the Board of Selectmen, is satisfied that a local emergency or disaster no longer exists, she or he shall terminate the emergency proclamation by posting another proclamation so stating. The proclamation shall be posted in the same manner as the original one with a copy to the Town Clerk. Local representatives of the news media shall be advised of the termination of the emergency as soon as is practical.

Section 6. Powers and Duties During a Declared Emergency

During the period of a Declared Emergency, the Director shall have the following authority:

- A. Promulgate Regulations. The Director may promulgate such regulations as deemed necessary to protect life and property and preserve critical resources. Such regulations may include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. Regulations prohibiting or restricting the movement of vehicles in order to facilitate the work of Emergency Preparedness forces or to facilitate the mass movement of persons from critical areas within the Town.
 2. Regulations pertaining to the movement of persons deemed vulnerable to disaster or at risk.
 3. Such other regulations as may be necessary to preserve public health and safety.
- B. Obtain Vital Supplies, Materials, Equipment. The Director may obtain vital supplies, materials, equipment and other such products as deemed necessary. Such purchases shall be charged to operating budgets of participating departments.

Affected Departments may approach the Board of Selectmen to seek reimbursement from contingency fund accounts as limited in Section 7.

- C. Obtain Assistance. The Director may require emergency services of any Town Officer or employee. If regular Town forces are deemed inadequate, the Director may hire people, accept and appoint volunteers, and may retain the services of people, businesses or organizations. Any such actions shall be considered temporary, and no person hired by the Director shall be considered a permanent or full-time employee of the Town. All duly authorized persons rendering emergency services shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities provided by law. Associated costs shall be charged to operating budgets of participating departments. Affected Departments may approach the Board of Selectmen to seek reimbursement from contingency if necessary.
- D. Purchasing Policies. During the Declared Emergency, for emergency work such as stabilization, creation of immediate protective measures, debris clean-up and other such matters but not permanent repairs and mitigation improvements, this Ordinance shall apply and other purchasing policies shall be suspended.

Section 7. Financial Authority

- A. During Declared Emergency. During the period of a Declared Emergency, the Director may spend or commit to spend Town funds as needed to respond to the emergency and minimize impacts or potential impacts, as provided in Section 6 above, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1. Only emergency work such as stabilization, creation of immediate protective measures, debris clean-up and other such matters shall be authorized pursuant to this authority. Permanent repairs and improvements to mitigate future impacts are not authorized by this spending authority.
 - 2. Emergency spending by any Department relating to the Emergency shall be considered to have been authorized by the Director. It shall be the responsibility of the Department Head to report all such spending to the Director as quickly as possible.
 - 3. In no case shall the total amount spent by the Director pursuant to Section 6 exceed the balance of the voter-approved supplementary contingency budget.
 - 4. Emergency spending authority of the Director ends when the period of a Declared Emergency ends.
- B. Record-Keeping. During and after a Declared Emergency, all Department Heads which participate in the emergency response shall keep records of the amount and value of staff time, vehicle use, expenses and other such matters. The format and content of record-keeping shall be dictated by the Director. The purpose of this action is to facilitate possible applications for external financial assistance.

- C. Post-Emergency. When a Declared Emergency ends, or 30 days after the date of disaster declaration, whichever occurs earlier, all decisions about spending related to the emergency which are not funded through approved operating budgets shall be brought to the Board of Selectmen for action.
- D. External Financial Assistance. All decisions about external financial assistance, including the initial decision whether or not to seek such assistance, shall be the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen. External financial assistance shall include, but not be limited to, FEMA assistance. Any request to the Board shall include a description of the process and identify risks involved.
- E. Local Spending Authority.
 - 1. Operating Budgets. To the extent expenses during and after an emergency can be charged to approved operating budgets, they shall be. Typically this will include costs of fuel, labor, and other costs which occur regardless of the emergency.
 - 2. Supplementary Contingency. The Board of Selectmen may vote to utilize funds available in Supplementary Contingency. The authorizing warrant article sets the amount and means of utilization.
 - 3. Restricted Fund Balance. A designated portion of the Town's fund balance could be set aside to pay for storm- or emergency-related expenses. In the event this has been authorized by voters, this funding shall be available for the Town's emergency response, subject to prior approval of the Board of Selectmen.
 - 4. Special Budget Referendum. In the event the Board of Selectmen believes there is a need for more funding to properly respond to an emergency, it may call for a Special Budget Referendum in accordance with the Town of York Home Rule Charter. This would be likely if costs are likely to exceed the amount of Supplementary Contingency and external financial assistance.

Section 8. Duties of the Director

The Director shall be responsible to the Town Manager in regards to all phases of Emergency Preparedness activity. The Director shall be responsible for planning, coordinating and operating the Emergency Preparedness activity within the Town. The Director shall maintain liaison with county, state and federal authorities and the authorities of nearby municipalities to insure the most effective response to an emergency. The duties of the Director shall include but not be limited to the following:

- A. Coordinating the recruitment of volunteer personnel and agencies to augment the personnel and facilities of the Town for response in an emergency.
- B. Development of plans for the immediate use of all the facilities, equipment, manpower and other resources of the Town for the purpose of minimizing or preventing damage to persons and property; and protecting and restoring to usefulness government services and public utilizes necessary for the public health, safety and welfare.
- C. Negotiating and concluding voluntary agreements with owners or persons in control of buildings or other property for Emergency Preparedness purposes and identifying suitable buildings for use as public shelters.
- D. Through use of educational programs, informing the Town's population about Emergency Preparedness matters and advising as to what actions should be taken during an emergency to protect life and property.
- E. From time to time, conducting public practice alerts and drills to familiarize the Town's population with emergency response procedures.
- F. Assuming such authority and conducting such activity as the Town Manager or the Board of Selectmen may direct to promote and better execute Emergency Preparedness activities.
- G. In the event the Town seeks external financial assistance, the Director shall be responsible for coordinating the actions of all Town officials in the application process, subsequently for monitoring and ensuring compliance with all requirements of the funding entity, and providing monthly updates to the Board of Selectmen.

Section 9. Emergency Plan

An Emergency Plan shall be adopted annually by the Board of Selectmen. An initial draft Plan shall be prepared by the Director and the Town Manager. The Board of Selectmen may amend this Plan prior to adoption. The Plan shall complement this Ordinance and shall provide the framework within which Emergency Response activities shall happen.

Section 10. Violations

It shall be a violation of this ordinance for any person to obstruct, hinder or delay any member of the Emergency Preparedness Forces as herein defined in the enforcement of any provision of this ordinance or any regulation promulgated under its authority. Any person, firm or corporation found to have violated any provision of

this ordinance or any regulation promulgated under its authority in a court with jurisdiction to act on a complaint from the Town shall be subject to a civil penalty of \$100.00 for the first offense, \$150.00 for the second offense, and \$250.00 for the third and subsequent offenses.

Section 11. Waiver/Payment of Fines

Any person charged with a violation of this Ordinance, shall be allowed to waive such violation and tender to the Town of York the fine amount if paid within 20 days of issuance of the summons. If the waiver fine is paid, no appearance before a District Court Judge or other judicial officer shall be required. If the offender pays the waiver fine, the matter will be closed in the York Police Records system and listed as a prior offense for future violations.

If the offender chooses not to pay the waiver fine, he/she shall appear in court on the specified date to answer for the ordinance violation. If the offender is found to have committed the offense in court, fines, applicable court fees, attorney's fees, and prosecution costs may apply.

Section 12. Severability

Should any provision of this ordinance be declared invalid for any reason by a court with jurisdiction to do so, such a declaration shall not affect the validity of other provisions of this ordinance or the ordinance as a whole it being the legislative intent that the provisions of this ordinance shall be severable and shall remain valid notwithstanding such a judicial declaration against one provision.

Section 13. Conflicting Ordinances, Orders, Policies and Regulations

At all times during declared periods of emergency, the provisions of this ordinance shall supersede all existing ordinances, orders, policies and regulations insofar as the later may be inconsistent therewith.

Section 14. Effective Date

- A. This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon this passage by the voters at an annual or special town meeting in the Town of York.
- B. When this Ordinance is amended, revised provisions shall apply only to emergencies that begin after the amendment is enacted by voters.

Exhibit 5: COVID-19 Leave Policy Enacted March 13, 2020

COVID-19 Leave Policy

In the wake of the COVID-19 virus the Town of York remains committed to supporting our employees and providing them a safe and healthy environment. The following policy has been put in place regarding leave time for employees effected by COVID-19.

- If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 we will require that you stay out of work for at least the CDC recommended 14-day period. During the time period that you are out you will continue to receive your salary and not be charged sick or vacation time. We will require medical documentation stating that the reason for your absence is due to COVID-19. You will also be required to provide a return to work note from your medical provider.
- If you have been exposed to or need to take care of a household member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 we will require that you self- quarantine for the recommended 14 day period. During the time period that you are out you will continue to receive your salary and not be charged sick or vacation time. We will require medical documentation from either your medical provider or the medical provider of your household member stating that the reason for your absence is due to COVID-19. You will also be required to provide a return to work note from your medical provider.
- If you are sent home by your supervisor for exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 you will be paid your wages and not be charged sick or vacation time. If you are then diagnosed we will require that you stay out of work for at least the CDC recommended 14-day period. During the time period that you are out you will continue to receive your salary and not be charged sick or vacation time. We will require medical documentation stating that the reason for your absence is due to COVID-19. You will also be required to provide a return to work note from your medical provider. If you are not diagnosed with COVID-19 our sick and vacation time policy would then apply for any additional time that you are out of work.
- If the Town chooses to close offices and facilities, you will continue to receive your salary and you will not be charged sick or vacation time.
- If you choose to take yourself out of work without medical documentation of COVID-19 or you are out of work for other health related reasons our current sick and/or vacation time policy would apply.
- Work from home options are at the discretion of the Department Head.

If you are to be out of work due to the COVID-19 please notify your supervisor immediately. Any medical documentation can be sent directly to Human Resources. Please contact Kathryn with any questions.

Thank You,

Exhibit 6: Notice to Residents from Town Manager



Chief Charles J. Szeniewski
EMA Director

Amber Harrison
Health Officer



Stephen H. Burns, Town Manager

Board of Selectmen
Todd A. Frederick, Chair
Robert E. Palmer Jr., Vice Chair
Elizabeth D. Blanchard
Michael L. Estes
Marilyn McLaughlin

March 23, 2020

Dear Residents,

This is a difficult time for our families, our friends, our neighborhoods and our communities. As a Town, now is the time to come together, and look out for one another. We want to explain what the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic means for you and your family, and how you help stop the spread of the virus in York.

We're urging people to exercise caution and take care of themselves. There are simple things everyone can do that will make a big difference:



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid shaking hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes into a tissue and discard, if not into your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Please remember what **social distancing** involves: avoid crowds of any kind and keep a distance of at least 6 feet from other people when you're out.
- If you think you are sick, call your primary care physician or 211 to get information on your signs and symptoms. We're asking people to call first, before going to the emergency rooms so our ERs don't get overwhelmed.
- We're also asking people not to call 911 unless they have a medical emergency. Please call 363-1000 for Town of York specific information or email covid@yorkmaine.org. Call 207-363-1031 for assistance after hours.

What we want people to remember is that it's not just about keeping yourself healthy. By taking these precautions, you're also helping to keep our entire town healthy. And most importantly, you're helping to keep the most vulnerable people in our community safe: especially the elderly, and people with underlying medical issues.

In York, we're taking this situation extremely seriously. York Public Schools, Town offices, Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works are closed. Student meal pick up locations are at the York Police Station, York Public Library between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. To order meals please contact Whitney Thorton at 207-363-5554. For those in need of meals, seniors, residents, etc., please contact YCSA at 207-363-5504 ext. 2. We are following Governor Mills' statewide emergency order prohibiting gatherings of more than 10 people and prohibiting on-premises consumption of food or drink at bars and restaurants.

This is a rapidly evolving situation, and circumstances and emergency orders may change. **We will continue to update residents through social media, facebook, Town website and Channel 1302.**

I thank everyone who's helping us: the first responders and medical professionals, the families and neighbors, the teachers, the community leaders, and all who are showing what it means to be a community prepared. We're doing all we can to keep York healthy and safe. On behalf of the town we love, thank you for doing your part.

Appendix 6: Public Health Office Messages



YORK, 1652
INC. AGAMENTICUS, 1641
GORGEANA, 1642
YORK, MAINE

Friday, May 8, 2020

York Health

NEWSLETTER

Hello York!

We're thrilled by the community's feedback on the newsletter and want to continue hearing your ideas for improving and highlighting local resources. As you can imagine, this newsletter takes many hours, collaboration and hard work, so we're excited to introduce our new source of energy and help. Emma, a York local and graduating senior at Wheaton College will be interning with us. *Welcome Emma!*

If you'd like to contribute to a future newsletter or have questions on content, please contact Liz Cooper at lcooper@yorkmaine.org. To contact Amber Harrison, our Local Health Officer (LHO), email aharrison@yorkmaine.org.

Newsletters can also be found on York Parks & Recreation's website (www.yorkparksandrec.org), the Town of York website (www.yorkmaine.org) and on the public access channel 1302.

REMINDER!! Email [Serving Our Seniors at sosyorkmaine@gmail.com](mailto:SosYorkMaine@gmail.com) to be added to our electronic distribution list. That means you can have these newsletters automatically sent right to your inbox. ***Note you do NOT have to be a senior to take advantage of this opportunity!**

Keep your eyes open for a new newsletter every Friday!
Stay Safe. Stay Healthy. Stay Home.

Sincerely, the **York Health Task Force**



1 in 4 are affected by mental illness

8.6 million adults have suicidal thoughts

1 in 30 experience PTSD

People of color have less access to care

Children with anxiety disorders least likely to receive treatment

Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness

What's Inside

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Got Sleep??	p 8
Harpoon @ Home	p 6
Motivation	p 5
Nature Corner	p 3
Nutrition Know-How	p 7
Volunteering—YCSA	p 10

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Compassion Fatigue

"Compassion Fatigue is a state experienced by those helping people or animals in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper."

Dr. Charles Figley
Professor, Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair
Director, Tulane Traumatology Institute
Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

Compassion Fatigue is Real

"Caring too much can hurt. When caregivers focus on others without practicing self-care, destructive behaviors can surface." (Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project)

Compassion fatigue, also known as second-hand shock and secondary stress reaction, describes a type of stress that results from helping those who are traumatized or under significant emotional duress. Compassion fatigue can affect a wide range of professions but tends to be most common among professionals who regularly work in a helping or healing capacity.

The onset of compassion fatigue can be sudden and can "take a physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional toll on those who experience it." (GoodTherapy) Some common symptoms of compassion fatigue include chronic physical and emotional exhaustion, irritability, difficulty sleeping, headaches, substance abuse and poor job satisfaction.

Prevention Is Possible

As found on the website www.giftfromwithin.org, Dr. Angela Panos shared her approach to preventing CF.

Remember your ABCs: Awareness, Balance/Boundaries and Connections.

Awareness allows you to know the signs, the types of cases or individuals that trigger compassion fatigue. Be aware of the changes in CF symptoms. Pay special attention to sleep problems, especially if you have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.

Balance and boundaries help you remember that you are entitled to a personal life. Maintain boundaries to protect your time. Taking care of oneself requires taking breaks and vacations. Keep yourself strong with exercise, yoga and nutrition. Don't forget to include time for fun activities. Art and music are particularly helpful in restoring the soul.

Connections could have different meanings. It can come through connecting to a supportive, caring coworker, a friend or member of your family. Some prefer the comfort of a furry friend. Others may connect with their faith-based community.

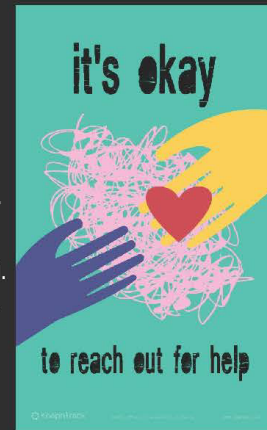
Living by the ABCs allows for resilience. It allows you to have a sense of purpose. It allows you to develop spiritual/cultural beliefs and practice healthy rituals. In doing so, you'll find the time to celebrate small victories and have predictable routines. Most importantly, it will provide you with the ability to have strong, positive relationships with others, helping you face traumatic events in your professional and personal life.

<https://www.campusafetytmagazine.com/blogs/compassion-fatigue-who-is-helping-you/2/>

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/compassion-fatigue>

<https://compassionfatigue.org/>

<https://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/prvntcf.html>





Nature Corner: *Up Close Loop*

In the first issue of this newsletter, we talked a little bit about Sit Spots, which offer us a simple way to feel connected to nature by sitting in one spot in our yard or neighborhood and taking time to observe the things around us, over time. What have you noticed over the course of the last few weeks? Did anything surprise you? This week, we're going to practice our nature observation skills by taking even more of an *Up Close Look*

Choose an area outside (you can do this exercise within your current Sit Spot, or choose somewhere new) and either in your mind, or with a physical marker like string or a ruler, roughly measure out a 2'x2' square. This doesn't have to be precise, as you can see from the photo! Take a few minutes to focus on just this small area; really get up close. What do you see? Remember that space is three-dimensional; are you under a tree? Look up! Find 3-5 things within this space that you find interesting. Take photos, sketch, or journal your findings. Revisit this tiny version of a Sit Spot another day, or even in different weather, and make note of anything new. Are your *interesting things* still there? Have they changed? Track your findings over time. Getting up close to nature in this way allows us time to slow down, and perhaps better understand the truly varied community that we live in.



1. Someone's snack leftovers (there is a bird feeder nearby)
2. Japanese Maple starting to leaf out
3. Red Oak leaf
4. White Violets





Time to Volunteer?



American
Red Cross

Under normal circumstances, most would agree that volunteering is a win/win enterprise. One gives time and effort and in return might gain new friends, experience and even confidence in a new area. Typically, volunteering leads to a feeling of satisfaction and a warm heart. But what can someone do during a pandemic, when oddly, we tend to have more time on our hands and a longing to contribute somehow to our community?

As it turns out, there are still a few volunteer opportunities out there and most are really needing help from someone like you. Some have been created specifically in response to COVID-19 and others, despite the pandemic, must go on as they always do. For example, the Red Cross must keep Blood Services operating. The demand for blood and blood products never stops and there are two related top priority volunteer opportunities right now. One is COVID-19 specific, to support safety and wellness at donation locations, and the other is ongoing.

Blood Donor Screener

COVID period specific

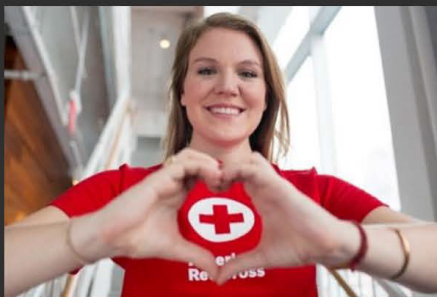
Variable; based on availability, average shift is 5-6 hours (Fixed Donation Sites in Portland, Auburn & Bangor along with mobile drives)

The American Red Cross has implemented a Blood Donor Screener position in the interest of safety during the COVID-19 outbreak. Specifically, you will ensure people entering blood drives have a healthy temperature. Greet donors and model excellent customer service behaviors. Manage donor flow at temp taking station to ensure only donors passing temp screen are permitted access. Explain purpose of temperature screen to donors and ensure they understand reason for deferral if applicable. You will need to adhere to the safety protocols established

Blood Donor Ambassador

Variable; based on availability, average shift is 5-6 hours (Fixed Donation Sites in Portland, Auburn & Bangor along with mobile drives)

In this role you provide excellent and enthusiastic customer service to enhance the blood donor experience. Engaging with blood donors you promote blood donation and set the stage for a long-term commitment to regular blood donations. Duties include: welcoming and greeting donors when they arrive for their donation and/or providing them with snacks and conversation after their donation – all while creating a favorable impression of the Red Cross and the blood donation process and sharing the Red Cross story.



Provided by Paula Coyle, American Red Cross



Moving Forward While Staying Put

"Mister, how do I get motivated?" As a school counselor I've been asked this question more times than I can count but especially over the past few weeks as Covid-19 has forced us into remote learning. This question, "How do I motivate myself?" is one we have all asked ourselves because it is a natural human instinct. If I can just find the trailhead marked Motivation, the path to the top of the mountain will unfold in front of me. However, time and time again we find this is a misguided starting point. Rather than focus on motivation as a place to begin, we realize instead that motivation comes as a product of the journey.

In his well-known 2014 commencement address at the University of Texas, Navy Seal William McRaven's thesis was, "If you want to change the world, start by making your bed." As the speech progresses, McRaven makes the point that by starting the day with this one small, familiar task one then will decide to do the next thing, and then the next thing until their progress snowballs into monumental accomplishments with great impact – a changed world. McRaven does not say read a book of quotes until you find the perfect one to motivate you, then make your bed. No. Simply, make your bed.

What McRaven is speaking to is the power not of motivation but of something much more powerful: momentum. While motivation may ebb and flow with our emotions, momentum is a physical law of our universe. As Isaac Newton's First Law of Motion reminds us, an object in motion tends to stay in motion. Flustered by physics? Take, instead, the phrase, "Keep the ball rolling." This phrase, dating back William Henry Harrison's 1840 presidential campaign practice of pushing a 10-foot-wide ball filled with campaign slogans through small towns is easy to understand. Once you get this massive thing rolling, it will be impossible to stop.

Psychologists like Stanford University's BJ Fogg point to the importance of creating huge change from small beginnings. Fogg implores us to begin with tiny habits, baby steps, that eventually lead to huge results. Want to get stronger? Start with two push-ups every time you use the bathroom. You'd like to read more? Read a page after every snack or meal. Contrast that with the January resolutions we make to go to the gym for two hours a day or read a book a week. Rather than feeling defeated and frustrated as your motivation wanes, tiny habits start momentum; quick wins build the feeling of success and self-efficacy and before you know it you're doing more and more.

With my students, I talk often of the J-Curve our emotions follow on the path to success. When we first take on big changes, start studying or begin working on a big project, our emotions drop as we begin and realize the enormity of a task ahead of us. If we persist, our emotions even out and quickly rise on the far side of the J as our sense of mastery kicks in. Too often, though, we feel defeated and bail. Quick wins, tiny habits, routine, and accountability partners shorten the front end of our J and quickly get us through the bottom and on to the rapid rise.

So, back to the question "Mister, how do I find motivation"? Don't look for it! Look, instead, for momentum. Start with quick wins. Make your bed. Take a shower. Read one page. Walk two minutes. Take three deep breaths. Whether you are trying to recover from a devastating loss, struggling with your well-being or mental health or simply want to get back engaged in your classes, start with that one thing you'll do every day. As your momentum builds, you won't even be thinking about motivation ... but you will have found it.

Matthew Miltenberg is a professional school counselor at Poudre High School in Fort Collins, Colorado. In addition to working with students and families in Colorado, Matt has worked with remote learning students in Brazil, Honduras, China and other countries throughout the world.

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Provided by Lisa Robertson of York Adult Education





Harpoon @ Home: Family Workout

Warm up

3 rounds:
5 cat and cow
10 jumping jacks
20 high knees
30 bunny hops

Workout:

4 rounds of:
:40-seconds of lateral hops over a chalk line or broomstick
:50-seconds of sit ups
1:00 min of running

* The great thing about doing movements in a specified time domain is that 13-year-old kids can work alongside their 8-year-old sibling and complete the movements at the same time. One might move faster than the other, but they are doing it all together!



*Harpoon @ Home is generously designed
exclusively for the York community by
Maddie Senkosky, CrossFit Harpoon owner*





Nutrition Know-How

Nutrition is always a popular topic, but so much of it can be overwhelming! We often read about making better choices to meet our “macros,” but what does that even mean?

What falls in this group, and how can we break it down?

Let's make this as simple as possible. Macronutrients consist of three groups:

- Proteins
- Carbohydrates
- Fats

These are all of the things we see on a food label! I will say this, and I will reiterate its importance: All are important and all do a specific job. They thrive off one another. “Fat” is a very frowned upon word and has gotten a bad rap in the past, but it's just as important as the other two macronutrients. No, it doesn't not make you fat.... An excess of calories does.

All of these “macros” create calories.

- Proteins = 4 calories PER GRAM
- Carbohydrates = 4 calories PER GRAM
- Fats = 9 calories PER GRAM

We will have a math problem at the end of this.

Primary Protein Options: Meats, Poultry, Fish, Yogurt, Eggs

Primary Carbohydrate Options: Fruits, Veggies, Grains, Oats, Beans

Primary Fat Options: Nuts, Coconut/Olive Oils, Avocado

Yes, some foods contain combinations of all or some macros! Think about oats and beans for example. Both contain carbohydrates and protein, so it's important to understand how to break that down.

So, let's break it down, shall we?

1 cup of quick oats contains:

- 54g of Carbohydrates
- 6g of Fat
- 10g of Protein

How many calories are in this?



Next week will feature a “This or that” snacking section. Food & emotions are tightly tied for many, so don't let this pandemic get you off track or feeling guilty!



**A Nutrition Overview from CrossFit Harpoon
Head Coach Conner Andrews**



Manage Stress with Better Sleep

Stress can impact your life in many ways, including negatively affecting the quality of your sleep. It makes sense: you lie in bed, worrying and feeling anxious, which makes it almost impossible to relax and quiet your mind enough to fall asleep. It's no wonder people use the phrase "losing sleep over something." That's also why people who suffer from chronic stress day in and day out sleep less, have poorer sleep quality and find it harder to function well during the day.

Unfortunately, this cycle will only continue to worsen if you don't sleep enough at night because your body boosts its levels of stress hormones. The brain chemicals connected with deep sleep are the same ones that tell the body to stop the production of stress hormones. When you don't sleep well, your body keeps pumping out those hormones. The next day, you feel more stressed, the following night you find it harder to fall asleep, and so on. Even worse, stress hormones peak in the afternoon and early evening just when you should be relaxing and preparing for slumber.



The more exhausted you feel, the less you're able to focus at work and home, leading to more stress. You're also likelier to snap at your friends and family, causing stress over relationships. More downsides to all this stress? People who have high, prolonged levels of stress have higher risk of heart disease, depression, high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, stomach issues and more. They are also more likely to grind or clench their teeth, which can lead to dental problems.

Sleep is a remarkably productive and critical part of life; it's the time when the brain and body recharge for another day. Yet, most of us simply aren't getting enough sleep. Stress, everyday demands and yes, your smartphone are likely culprits negatively impacting your sleep. Sleep is a critical part of managing stress and making healthy choices. Get a restful night's sleep with these tips.

- Eat meals at the same time each day and at least two to three hours before bedtime.
- Limit naps to 30 minutes at least six to eight hours before bedtime.
- Stay active. 20 to 30 minutes most days, at least four to six hours before bedtime.
- Limit your caffeine intake and avoid it in the afternoon. Also avoid stimulants such as decongestants and nicotine.
- Go to bed at the same time every night and get up about the same time every morning even on weekends.
- Try deep breathing exercises.
- Jot down your to do list for the next day or what is on your mind. Studies show this will ease your mind and allow you to rest easier.

A healthy amount of sleep for most adults is seven to eight hours a night. If self-care techniques don't help, talk to your health care provider. Sleep problems are treatable. Reference: www.sleep.org and www.mayoclinic.org
York's local Sleep Center <https://www.yorkhospital.com/services/sleep-center-health/>

Provided by Amber Harrison, Local Health Officer
via <https://www.yorkcountymaine.gov/cac> & <http://www.cacmaine.org/>



Domestic Violence

Hello Community Members,

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, it feels important to reach out to the community and let folks know how we are operating under these new and ever-evolving circumstances. First and foremost, we at Caring Unlimited want to assure you that we are still here for you. Anyone experiencing or struggling with Domestic or Intimate Partner Violence does not have to have to go through it alone. **Advocates are still available 24-hours a day to provide free and confidential services. All of our core services are still available, they just have been adapted to meet current safety protocols.** We are still offering support through the helpline, emergency shelter, support groups, comprehensive safety planning, one-on-one advocacy and court advocacy. **We have also recently launched a secure, confidential, live chat feature on Monday afternoons from 1:00—5:00 p.m. that is accessible through our website.** This new feature was designed with the knowledge and understanding that for someone still in an unsafe home, calling the Helpline is not always possible, and this chat feature offers a more discrete way to receive help and connect with services.

This pandemic has created many new challenges for us as a community (e.g., social distancing, temporary closure of our resource center, the suspension of in-person advocacy and support groups). We want to recognize that those who are living with or have lived with Domestic Violence are no stranger to the isolation we are now all experiencing. Those on the front lines of anti-Domestic Violence work want to acknowledge that Domestic Violence is also a worldwide epidemic and one that we are tirelessly working to solve. While we have come up against this new barrier (COVID-19), our mission, our goals and our services have remained unchanged. We are here for you. If you need to connect, for yourself or on behalf of a loved one or friend, please reach out to us in whatever way feels safest, by phone, email, Facebook or chat.

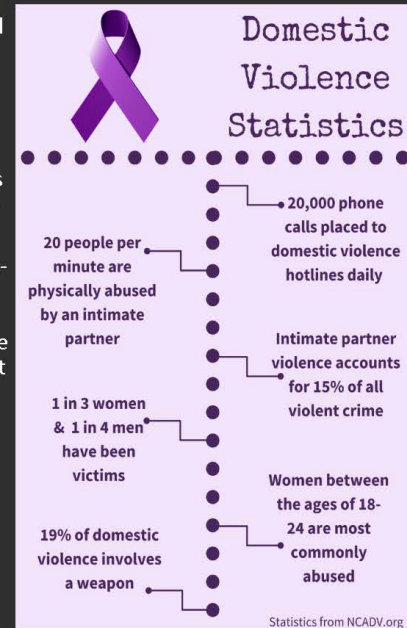
We Are Here, and You Are Not Alone

24-Hour Confidential Helpline: 1-800-239-7298

Website: <https://www.caring-unlimited.org/>

Live Chat: <https://www.caring-unlimited.org/helpline> (Monday's 1:00-5:00 p.m.)

Connect With Us On Facebook



York Police Department

Main Line: 363-4444

Emergency Line: 911





Volunteering During COVID-19 Pandemic

As the Executive Director of a non-profit in York, how to harness all the community good will that these circumstances have created is definitely "tricky." The Stay at Home Orders that are in place now seems to make volunteering a challenge. This is true for more traditional ways to volunteer but these are untraditional times. If we look at "staying home" as a form of volunteering then we are all doing a lot volunteering. When you think about it, this is the most important volunteer work that we all can be doing. When you stay home, you are helping me stay safe; and when I stay home, I am helping you stay safe. Voila... volunteering is happening everywhere.



Financial donations to a non-profit, that you trust and believe in, is another important way to volunteer. Like most small businesses, non-profits are taking some financial hits right now, so sending a donation is a great way to help.

YCSA has over 70 volunteers, and right now we are running our organization on a skeleton crew. Many of our volunteers work at our Thrift Store. We all knew that closing the store would have a big impact on our volunteers, as well as on the whole group. The Food Pantry had to cut back drastically as well. For some, it felt too risky right at the get go. Others stepped back as the epidemic grew. Most organizations have had to learn how to operate with a smaller staff, but that doesn't mean we can't wait for everyone be get back on-board.

Easy ways to volunteer now? Stay in touch with your family, friends and neighbors. Maybe talk for a little bit longer. If you have not tried Zoom yet, give it a try! It is fun. Checking on each other is an important way to volunteer. Bake some cookies and drop them off on a friend's doorstep. Just give them a call and tell them to check their front door.

Bring lunch to our fire departments, or the police station or any of our first responders. Say thank you to the folks who are still working to help us all out. Support local restaurants. Write a thank you note to the Town Manager, our Board of Selectmen, our Public Health Officer or anyone that you know is working in town government right now. This is a difficult time to be doing these jobs. They are all working very hard to make the very best decisions. Volunteering is offering support, so do what you can. A little gesture or a grand gesture, it all feels good!

Michelle Surdoval, Executive Director
York Community Service Association (YCSA)
207-363-5504
msurdoval@ycsame.org
www.ycsame.org





Who is on the York Health Task Force?

This Group is continually evolving, but here are a few of the core members that help produce this weekly newsletter and we want to say thank you...

Thank You!

- Liz Cooper, lcooper@yorkmaine.org, Special Events Coordinator of York Parks & Recreation
- Naomi Densmore, ndensmore@yorkmaine.org, Mt. Agamenticus Outreach and Education Coordinator
- Emma Ford, ford_emma@wheatoncollege.edu, Wheaton College Senior & Town of York Intern
- Kate Ford, KFord@yorkhospital.com, York Hospital Volunteer Coordinator
- Dan Gardoqui, leadwithnature@gmail.com, Founder/President of Lead with Nature
- Amber Harrison, aharrison@yorkmaine.org, Dir. of Code Enforcement & Local Health Officer
- Adam Hartwig, adam.hartwig@maine.gov, Maine CDC- York District Public Health Liaison
- Sarah Kern, sarah@thecenterforwildlife.org, Community Engagement Specialist, Center for Wildlife
- Mathew Kiernan, mkiernan@yorkschoools.org, YMS School Counselor, Grades 6 and 8
- John Lizanecz, jlizanecz@yorkpolice.org, Lieutenant on the York Police Department
- Julie Lizanecz, jlizanecz@yorkschoools.org, Village Elementary School Nurse & York Hospital ER Nurse
- Estelle Margarones, estelle@firstparishyork.net, Reverend of First Parish Congregational Church, UCC
- Sally Manninen, SManninen@yorkhospital.com, Director of Choose To Be Healthy Coalition & Community Health
- Megan McCue, megan@caring-unlimited.org, Caring Unlimited Outreach Advocate
- Sara Morrison, saramorrisonteach@hotmail.com, Founder and Director of Coach to Empower
- Margaret Norbert, mnorbert@sweetser.org, Clinical Director of Sweetzer
- Lisa Robertson, lrobertson@yorkschoools.org, York Adult Education
- Sophie Smith, ssmith@york.lib.me.us, York Public Library
- Michelle Surdoval, msurdoval@ycsame.org, Director of York Community Service Association
- Mary Testa, mtesta@yorkschoools.org, York High School Counselor



Appendix 7: Town Official Documents

Exhibit 1: Public Works COVID-19 Guidelines

York DPW

COVID-19 Employee Health, protection, guidance and procedures

The following applies to both town employees and contracted staff working on behalf of the town.

These Guidelines and Procedures MUST be implemented at all times at all facilities and on all work sites. All project sites MUST disseminate these guidelines to all employees and workers.

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[Self-certify prior to shift](#)

[General On-the-Job Guidance to Prevent Exposure & Limit the Transmission of the Virus](#)

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[Hand Sanitizer Use](#)

[Contacts](#)

Employee Health Protection – ZERO Tolerance

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SICK WORKERS REPORTING TO WORK. IF YOU ARE SICK, STAY HOME! IF YOU FEEL SICK, GO HOME! IF YOU SEE SOMEONE SICK, SEND THEM HOME!

If you are exhibiting any of the symptoms below, you are to report this to your crew supervisor, foreman or director (via phone, text or email) right away, and head home from the job site or stay home if already there.

If you notice a co-worker showing signs or complaining about such symptoms, he or she should be directed to their supervisor (via phone, text or email) and asked to leave the project site immediately.

COVID-19 Typical Symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath – Trouble Breathing
- Sore Throat
- Chills/Body Aches
- Fatigue

- Headache
- Loss of Taste/Smell
- Nausea/Vomiting

Self-certify prior to shift

Prior to starting a shift, each employee will self-certify to their supervisor that they:

- Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
- Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. "Close contact" means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.
- Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.

Workers that are working in a confined space or inside a closed building envelope and are within 6 feet of each other shall wear masks.

Employees exhibiting symptoms or unable to self-certify should be directed to leave the work site and seek medical attention and applicable testing by their health care provider. They are not to return to the work site until cleared by a medical professional.

General On-the-Job Guidance to Prevent Exposure & Limit the Transmission of the Virus

- No handshaking or physical contact.
- Wash hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol.
- Employees shall not use other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- Each DPW facility or worksite should develop cleaning and decontamination procedures that are posted or shared. These Procedures must cover all areas including workspaces, equipment, vehicles, etc. and shall be posted at all entry points to the facility, and on communication bulletin boards.
- A "No Congregation" policy is in effect; individuals must implement social distancing by maintaining a minimum distance of 6-feet from other individuals.
- Avoid face to face meetings – critical situations requiring in-person discussion must follow social distancing.
- Conduct all meetings via conference calls, if possible. Do not convene meetings of more than 10 people. Recommend use of cell phones, texting, web meeting sites and conference calls for project discussions.
- All individual work crew meetings/tailgate talks should be held in the garage or outside and follow social distancing.

- Please keep all crews a minimum of 6' apart at all times to eliminate the potential of cross contamination.
- At each morning briefing/project talk, employees are asked if they are experiencing any symptoms, and are sent home if they are.
- Each DPW Building should have laminated COVID-19 safety guidelines and handwashing instructions.
- All restroom facilities/porta-potties should be cleaned, and handwashing stations must be provided with soap or hand sanitizer and paper towels.
- All surfaces should be regularly cleaned, including surfaces, door handles, laptops, etc.
- All common areas and meeting areas are to be regularly cleaned and disinfected at least once a week.
- Be sure to use your own water bottle, and do not share
- To avoid external contamination, we recommend everyone bring food from home
- Please maintain Social Distancing separation during breaks and lunch.
- Cover coughing or sneezing with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands, if no tissue is available then cough into your elbow
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands
- To avoid sharing germs, please clean up after Yourself. DO NOT make others responsible for moving, unpacking and packing up your personal belongings
- If you or a family member is feeling ill, stay home!

Work Site Risk Prevention Practices

- At the start of each shift, the foreman or crew leader shall confirm with all employees that they are healthy.
- We will have a 100% glove policy from today going forward. All DPW workers will be required to wear cut-resistant work gloves or the equivalent while using shared tools or equipment.
- Use of eye protection (safety goggles/face shields) is recommended
- In work conditions where required social distancing is impossible to achieve affected employees shall be supplied PPE including as appropriate a standard face mask, gloves, and eye protection.
- All employees shall drive to work site/parking area in a single occupant vehicle. DPW staff shall not ride together in the same vehicle
- When entering a machine or vehicle which you are not sure you were the last person to enter, make sure that you wipe down the interior and door handles with disinfectant prior to entry.
- In instances where it is possible, workers should maintain separation of 6' from each other per CDC guidelines.
- Multi person activities will be limited where feasible (two person lifting activities)
- Large gathering places on the site such as lunch/break areas will be eliminated, and instead small break areas will be used with seating limited to ensure social distancing.

- Clean all high contact surfaces a minimum of twice a day in order to minimize the spread of germs in areas that people touch frequently. This includes but is not limited to desks, laptops and vehicles

Hand Sanitizer

All site-specific projects with outside construction sites without ready access to an indoor bathroom MUST have hand sanitizer available.

- Each DPW crew will be required to have hand sanitizer available to be used for frequent handwashing for all onsite employees
- All onsite workers are required to use hand sanitizer after touching equipment or tools without gloves.
- If a worker notices hand sanitizer is running low or out, immediately notify supervisors.

Do all you can to maintain your good health by: getting adequate sleep; eating a balanced, healthy diet, avoid alcohol; and consume plenty of fluids.

Please Note: This document is not intended to replace any formalized procedures currently in place with the Town.

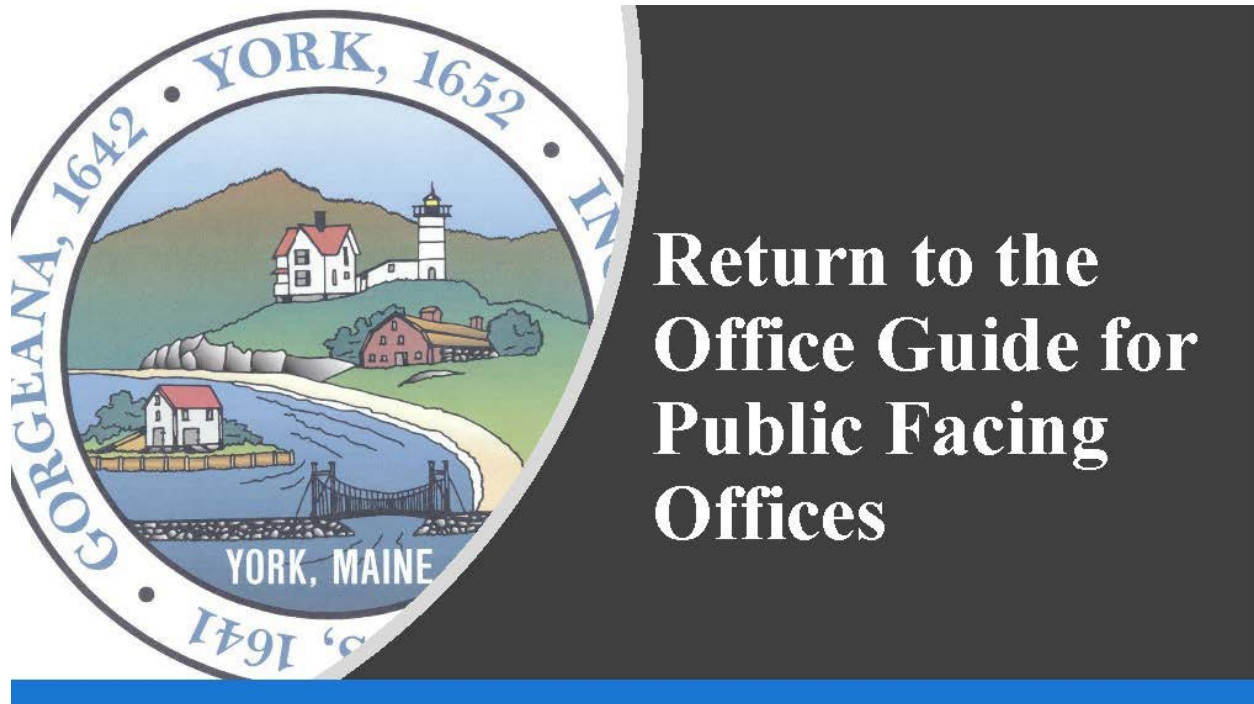
Where this guidance does not meet or exceed the standards put forth by the Town, everyone shall abide by the most stringent procedure available.

A site-specific COVID-19 Officer (DPW Crew Leader) shall be designated for every site.

The COVID-19 Officer shall certify that the contractor and all subcontractors are in full compliance with these guidelines.

Any issue of non-compliance with these guidelines shall be a basis for the suspension of work. The contractor will be required to submit a corrective action plan detailing each issue of non-conformance and a plan to rectify the issue(s). The contractor will not be allowed to resume work until the plan is approved by the Owner. Any additional issues of non-conformance may be subject to action against the contractor's prequalification and certification status.

Exhibit 2: Town Hall Reopens to Public



Welcome back!

Thank you to each one of you for your continuing work during this very challenging time. We appreciate your efforts to meet the needs of York citizens throughout the past two months. The next several months will require us to continue being adaptable while doing our best to provide excellent services to our community.

The Town of York will re-open to the public on June 1st, 2020, with procedures in place to protect the staff and the public. These standards are based on guidance defined by the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Maine. They will be adjusted as necessary based on CDC recommendations, State of Maine Executive Orders, and the needs of departments and the public. As we return to work and begin this “new normal” in our workplace, we understand that many employees are concerned about safety as we welcome the public back into our building. We want every employee to be assured that we are taking your concerns and well-being seriously.

What we are doing:

- The public will be asked to line up mostly outside, with one person just beyond the double doors in order to not crowd the hallways of Town Hall. Signage will be clear asking that no one enter the building who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or has been in close proximity of someone who has been.
- The public will enter through the front door and exit through the side door, unless other arrangement have been made.
- The public will be required to wear a face covering when in the building. If someone refuses to wear a mask or who may be exempt from the face covering requirement other arrangements will be made for that person to complete their business with the Town.
- Common areas and frequently touched surfaces are being cleaned daily. Cleaning supplies will be available, and employees are encouraged to clean and disinfect their workspaces throughout the workday.
- Hand sanitizer is provided throughout the building.
- Workspace layouts and seating arrangements are revised to allow for social distancing.
- Business travel remains restricted to essential travel only.



What you can do:

- By entering the building you are affirming that you are not displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in close proximity (within 6ft for more than 30 minutes) with someone who is displaying symptoms or have been diagnosed.
- Stay home or go home if you are sick.
- Maintain social distancing practices in the workplace.
- Follow cleaning product instructions when cleaning your work areas.
- Wash your hands frequently or use hand sanitizer
- Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Wear a face covering when in communal spaces or if in face to face contact with the public and there is no plexiglass shielding.
- Replace handshakes with head nods and waves.
- Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment.
- Wipe down shared equipment such as copiers and mail machine before and after use.
- Follow all company policies and practices.



Frequently Asked Questions



Can I continue to work from home?

We expect all employees to report to work unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the Department Head and Human Resources. The nature of the position and job duties must be compatible with teleworking. You should discuss your specific circumstances with your Department Head.



Is it safe to return to work?

We are taking every precaution to ensure our workplace is safe. We are following CDC health and safety guidelines as well as guidance from our state governments. We are implementing practices such as: requirement of face covering to enter the building, implementing social distancing practices, continuing with remote meeting when possible, and public areas will be cleaned and sanitized each night. Employees will be responsible for keeping their own areas/offices cleaned and sanitized.

Frequently Asked Questions, cont.



What should I do if I feel sick?

Employees who feel ill should notify their manager per the company policy and **not** report to work. If you are already at work and begin feeling sick, you should notify your manager and go home immediately. Employees can utilize accrued paid-time-off hours and/or other paid leave that may be available. Contact human resources for more information on available paid time off.



How will positive cases of COVID-19 be handled in the workplace?

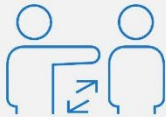
Despite all precautionary measures, there is always a risk of workplace exposure to communicable diseases. Should an employee contract COVID-19 and expose others in our workplace, we will immediately inform those employees of the possible exposure. Employees who have been directly exposed (30 minutes of exposure within 6 feet) will be sent home and asked to telework if possible for the recommended amount of time by the CDC. A thorough cleaning of the workspace used by the infected individual will be conducted after the area has been closed off for at least 24 hours.

Frequently Asked Questions, cont.



Do I have to wear a mask at work?

We will require face coverings for employees when there is face to face contact with the public, except where there is a plexiglass protector. Masks will also be required in common areas of the building (hallways, conference room, etc...). If you have a medical condition that restricts you from wearing one, please speak with human resources.



Will we continue to have in-person meetings?

We will continue to encourage remote meetings for the time being. If you are required to attend an in-person meeting, please ensure that it is in a space that is large enough to allow for distancing between participants.

Frequently Asked Questions, cont.

Do I Qualify for the Families First Act under FMLA?

Town employees are covered by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). This leave requires employers to allow employees to take paid leave for a finite period of time for reasons related to the coronavirus outbreak. This act covers the time period of April 1-December 31, 2020 and is in addition to your accrued paid leave.

This act allows 14 days leave at full pay if you're unable to work remotely and are 1) Under state ordered quarantine, 2) Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine, 3) Experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a diagnosis; or 4) Leave at 2/3 pay for caring for someone who falls into these categories; and 5) 10 weeks leave at 2/3 pay for caring for a child because of school or childcare closures.

Once this FFCRA leave has been used, the act does not cover additional coronavirus-related leave. If you have exhausted this leave and are required to quarantine due to exposure, symptoms, or caring for someone in those situations, you will be required to use accrued leave or take it unpaid.

Contact Human Resources with any questions: klagasse@yorkmaine.org.

The Town of York will follow guidelines provided by the State of Maine, including the Governor's Orders, throughout the pandemic. We expect employees to also follow the laws, ordinances and orders that govern the people of Maine. Employees are required to follow those orders during working hours, and preferably outside of work as well. Not following directives during working hours may result in discipline. <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/>

PLEASE REMEMBER

While we are all in this storm together we are not all in the same boat. Be kind. Understand that this is a stressful time for everyone, and an extra bit of kindness right now can go a long way.

Exhibit 3: Travel Policy



Town of York
186 York Street
York, Maine 03909-1314

Town Manager/
Selectmen
(207)363-1000

Town Clerk/
Tax Collector
(207)363-1003

Finance/
Treasurer
(207)363-1004

Code Enforcement
(207)363-1002

Planning
(207)363-1007

Assessor
(207)363-1005

Police Department
(207)363-1031

Dispatch
(207)363-4444

York Beach Fire
Department
(207)363-1014

York Village Fire
Department
(207)363-1015

Public Works
(207)363-1011

Harbor Master
(207)363-1000

Senior Center
(207)363-1036

Parks and
Recreation
(207)363-1040

Fax
(207)363-1009
(207)363-1019

www.yorkmaine.org

Non-Essential Staff COVID Travel Policy (This applies to all non-emergency personnel)

State orders from Governor Mills requires a 14-day quarantine after returning from travel out of state, with the exception of New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts. Employees are now required to inform their supervisors if they are planning to travel outside of the approved states. If you are traveling out of the approved list of states you will be required to follow these steps upon return to Maine:

(1) Self quarantine for 14 days, you may work from home during that period (with permission from Supervisor/HR/Town Manager) upon return to Maine. If no symptoms of COVID after 14 days, you can return to work,

OR

(2) Take a PCR-COVID (rapid test will not be accepted) test at least five days from the day you traveled home in order to build up any viral load in your body due to a possible, unknown exposure.

- You must stay home until you receive your test results.
- Provide Human Resources with a copy of test results or a Doctor's note stating a negative result. NOTE: The Town reserves the right to require a second COVID test. If negative test **and** you confirm that there are no known exposures, you can come back to work.
- You will be required to take extra precautions in the workplace which include wearing a mask at all times, isolating from employees as much as possible at the direction of your supervisor, and self-monitoring each day for symptoms of COVID-19 for a period of 14 days from the date you came back to Maine. If extenuating circumstances prevent you from being tested, please contact your supervisor.

Example: Employee flies back to Maine from Florida on a Saturday, November 14. Day 1 begins on Sunday, November 15. Day 5, or date of earliest COVID-19 test, is on Thursday, November 19. Day 14 is November 28.

The Town discourages employees from traveling to non-exempted states; therefore, pre-approval is required to ensure adequate staffing. Supervisors will need to determine if the vacation request and the requirement of quarantine will be acceptable for department needs.

Employees are entitled to use their 80 hours of paid time under the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act in order to quarantine. Please be advised that this is a one-time use of the 80 hours and once used it cannot be utilized again. Supervisors have the right to deny vacation requests if the time out of the office will create a hardship on the Department. *The Families First Coronavirus Relief Act is set to expire on 12.31.2020.

This Policy takes effect on November 16, 2020, and remains in force until rescinded by the Town Manager.

Appendix 8: Acronyms and Terms

AAR	After Action Report
CAL	Center For Active Living
CDC	Center for Disease Control
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CRT	Coordinated Response Team
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
EMS	Emergency Management Specialist
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFCRA	Families First Coronavirus Relief Act
IP	Improvement Plan
IT	Information Technology
LHO	Local Health Officer
NPG	National Preparedness Goal
PIO	Public Information Officer
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
YCSA	York Community Service Association
YHTF	York Health Task Force
YPL	York Public Library
YRCC	York Region Chamber of Commerce
WHO	World Health Organization