



## **City of Kingston**

### **COVID-19 Blueprint for Re-Opening**

#### **Procedures and Recovery Guidance**

The City closely monitors and adheres to State and County government policy changes, guidelines, government mandates, and public health advisements, and will continue to make changes as necessary or appropriate to our protocols and procedures to ensure safety and compliance.

The Governor has outlined regional re-opening requirements for non-essential workers. Before our region begins to open up, this plan has been developed to outline the return to work for non-essential and other employees. As this crisis unfolds, we will rely on State Executive Orders and guidance from State and County Health Departments.

The objective of this document is to guide offices and departments to methodically and safely implement a phased recovery of operations, as informed by the New York Forward (<https://forward.ny.gov/>) and Ulster County Government. This document will work in conjunction with the New York Forward Plan and the Ulster County reopening guidelines. The City of Kingston reopening plan will be subject to updates as new guidelines and information is made available.

City offices and departments have maintained essential services since the New York State Stay-at-Home Executive Order was issued. The City has largely avoided closing facilities or curtailing services, but instead has altered processes that provide services in a way that is safe for all. City offices and departments will work toward reopening any closed facilities or curtailed services to employees and the public over the next couple months. This will require non-essential staff members returning to work on either a full-time or part-time basis. Essential staff members will continue to work and if applicable transition from telework over the next couple months.

#### **General Consideration for Employee and Resident Health**

COVID-19 is primarily a respiratory transmission concern for spreading the virus. As such, our primary focus will be with atmospheric spread, but will also include physical dispersion. The primary means of preventing the spread via the atmosphere will be to reduce the number of employees and residents in our physical office space. Those City staff that are in the office will need to conduct business in accordance with requirements that reduce the potential for dispersion of the virus. We will continue to:

- provide public services that do not require direct-contact interaction such as digital communications, the use of glass windows, and “drop boxes” whenever possible;
- social distancing operations;
- continuation of telework where possible if not disruptive to operations

Actions to make the workplace safer follow a hierarchy of controls. These controls in order of preference are Facilities, Administrative, and Personal Protective Equipment. Best practices and Phase I operations will be broken down for each category.

The health and safety of both our employees and residents is our number one priority. The sections below outline procedures for how we plan to ensure the safety of all.

Physical Distancing: Posted signage will advise employees and residents to practice physical distancing by standing at least six feet away from other groups of people not traveling with them while standing in lines, using stairs, or moving around the property. Total number of occupants of any City building is limited to 50% of the maximum occupancy at any given time. Signage will remind all City properties to comply with local or state mandated occupancy limits.

Public Spaces and Communal Areas: Employees should increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g. opening windows and doors in individual office rooms or vehicles), while maintaining safety protocols.

The use of small areas (e.g. elevators, supply rooms, personal offices, bathrooms, vehicles) by more than one individual at a time is prohibited, unless all individuals in such a space are wearing face coverings. However, even when face coverings are in use, occupancy must never exceed 50%.

Hand Sanitizer, PPE, and Hygiene Reminders: The City will place hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, at key entrances and contact areas. There will be health and hygiene reminders and signage throughout the property reminding employees of the proper way to wear, handle, and dispose of masks, how to and when to use gloves (in positions deemed appropriate by medical experts), wash hands, sneeze, and to avoid touching their faces.

A distance of at least six feet must be maintained among individuals at all times. Any time individuals must come within six feet of another person, acceptable face coverings must be worn. Individuals must be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly comes within six feet.

*See further details on in the section “Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Masks”*

Employee’s Responsibilities: The City will instruct all employees to wash hands, or use sanitizer when a sink is not available, every 60 minutes (for at least 20-seconds) and after any of the following activities: using the restroom, sneezing, touching the face, blowing the nose, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, smoking, eating, drinking, going on break, and before or after starting a shift.

Employees must limit sharing of objects, such as laptops, notebooks, touchscreens, and writing utensils, as well as the touching of shared surfaces, such as conference tables; or, employees must perform hand hygiene before and after touching such shared objects.

Employee and Workplace Procedures: Employees are encouraged to use electronic communication where practical, and otherwise socially distanced in-person communication. Employees are discouraged from using another worker’s phone, desk, office, or other work tools and equipment. Employees should avoid direct human contact, including handshakes. Non-essential travel by employees should also be kept to a minimum.

Employees may modify or reconfigure workstations, so that employees are at least six feet apart in all directions and are not sharing workstations without cleaning and disinfection between uses. When distancing is not feasible between workstations, employees are required to use face coverings or physical barriers.

Measures to reduce bi-directional foot traffic should be put in place using tape or signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or other spaces. Distance markers denoting spaces of six feet should be denoted in any spaces where lines are formed or people may congregate (e.g., copy rooms, reception desks, health screening stations).

Case Notification: If we are alerted to a presumptive case of COVID-19 at a City property, we will work with the Ulster County Health Department to follow the appropriate actions recommended by it.

Cleaning Products, Protocols, and PPE Distribution: The City uses cleaning products and protocols which meet all Federal and State guidelines and are effective and approved for use against viruses, bacteria, and other airborne and blood-borne pathogens. The City continues working with our vendors, distribution partners, and suppliers to ensure an uninterrupted supply of these cleaning supplies and the necessary Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).

Cleaning and Sanitizing Protocol: The frequency of cleaning and sanitizing has been increased to twice a day with an emphasis on frequent contact surfaces including, but not limited to, door handles, public restrooms, stair handrails, and seating areas. Additionally, the City will make widely available cleaning solution/wipes for use by employees. The City will maintain updated logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Public Access Points: Upgrades to public access points will be implemented. There will be a barrier between the public and public servants with glass or Plexi-glass where social distancing is not feasible or may have limited compliance.

At this point in time, the City will continue to restrict public access to employee areas of municipal facilities. Should a resident request interaction with an employee, employees will make themselves available following proper safety protocol. Virtual meetings (video communication, phone call, email) are still the preferred method, but accommodations will be made to meet in person if needed, adhering to safe distancing guidelines.

Designated areas will be established for pick-ups and deliveries, limited contact to the greatest extent possible.

Signage: Signage will be posted throughout City buildings, consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage to remind people to:

- Cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when six feet of social distance cannot be maintained.
- Adhere to physical distancing instructions.
- Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.

## **Public Re-Opening Timeline and Protocols**

City Hall and All Other Public Buildings: City Hall was closed to the public, but never stopped operating. City Hall and its offices have been operating with reduced staff, an outside drop-box, and as much online transaction as possible.

As the facility opens back up to the public, residents and employees are expected to follow social distancing and the health and hygiene procedures outlined above. The public is still encouraged to only

visit City Hall and other City buildings if absolutely necessary and to use electronic and remote communication if possible.

All public facing City buildings should plan to open to the public June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Morning Temperature/Wellness Checks:**

- Employees who are physically coming into work will need to self-check their temperature each morning at home beginning June 22, 2020 as COVID-19 poses a direct threat to the health and safety of the City's workforce and citizens and ongoing community transmission is present. This includes employees who primarily work outdoors.
- If an employee's temperature reads 100.4 Fahrenheit or above, they are required to stay home. In this instance, the employee should notify their supervisor. The employee will be unable to return to work until they have been fever free for 72 hours (3 days) without the use of fever-reducing medications and have been cleared by their doctor per the attached New York State Department of Health Protocols for Essential Personnel to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection.
- Mandatory health screenings will be self-implemented before arrival at work. At a minimum, screening is required for all employees or visitors and completed using a questionnaire. *See Employee Health Screening Questionnaire below.* Employees should complete remote screenings by answering the questions and checking their temperature.
- City Buildings will be open to the public between the hours of 10am and 2pm each workday. Once City buildings are opened to the public, all visitors will need to submit to mandatory health screenings. **Any visitor to any public building must first visit City Hall for a health screening and check-in.** An employee at City Hall will check the visitor's temperature with a contactless thermometer, complete the health screening questionnaire, and record where the visitor is going and who they plan on seeing. Visitor health screenings will be completed near the entrance of City Hall.
- Before engaging with a member of the public, employees should ensure that the visitor has first been screened at City Hall. If not, the visitor should be instructed to leave the premises and return after being checked. Signage will be posted at the entrance of each public building explaining that a health screening at City Hall is required before entry.
- As conveyed in previous guidance, employees exhibiting at least two of the following symptoms should not report to work or should leave once symptoms begin to occur:
  - Fever (measured or subjective)
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Chills
  - Rigors (bouts of shivering or shaking, accompanied by a feeling of coldness, e.g., "chills")
  - Myalgia (muscle aches or pains)
  - Headache
  - Sore throat

- New olfactory and taste disorder(s) such as loss of the senses of smell and taste
- Employees will also need to continue to self-monitor symptoms of COVID-19 and communicate to their supervisor if they are exhibiting any symptoms.
- An employee who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to enter the office and should be sent home with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing.
- Employers must review all employee and visitor responses collected by the screening process on a daily basis and maintain a record of such review. Employers must also identify a contact as the person for employees and visitors to inform if they later are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, as noted in the questionnaire.
- Employers must designate a site safety monitor whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the site safety plan.
- If an employee test positive for COVID-19, or has symptoms and has not yet received a test, or has had close contact with a person with COVID-19, that individual may only return to work after completing at least 14 days of self-quarantine.
- Employers must notify the local health department and DOH immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by an employee in their office.

#### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Masks:**

- The Governor and NYSDOH guidance requires face masks in public areas but are not a replacement for social distancing.
- While Phase 1 and 2 reopening is an encouraging step forward, New York State and CDC guidance still remain in effect. All residents must continue to wear masks, maintain social distancing, wash hands and take the following recommended safety precautions:
- Employees will not be required to wear masks if they are able to socially distance (within their own office alone for example) but will be required when they are in communal areas and not able to distance given their job functions. This includes employees who primarily work outdoors.
- The City of Kingston has required employees to wear face masks when maintaining safe distancing (6 feet) is not possible as COVID-19 poses a direct threat to the health and safety of the City's workforce and citizens and ongoing community transmission is present. This includes both employees in the office and in the field per the Governor's orders.
- Absent safety or documented medical concerns, employees will not be permitted to work on-site without a mask or face covering and may be subject to discipline. As a reminder, a mask or face covering is not necessarily meant to protect the wearer from others. Rather, the intention is to prevent a possibly asymptomatic person from unknowingly transmitting the virus to others.
- The City will provide every employee the proper allotment of masks based on anticipated usage. Alternatively, employees will be allowed to wear their own masks or face covering provided that any imagery is appropriate and professional and meets CDC guidelines:
  - Must fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;

- Must be secured with ties or ear loops;
- Must include multiple layers of fabric;
- Must allow for breathing without restriction;
- Must be able to be laundered and machine dried, at least once a day, without damage or change to shape.

**Meetings:**

- In-person gatherings (e.g. meetings, conferences) must be limited to the greatest extent possible and use of other methods, such as video or teleconferencing, is encouraged whenever possible. When videoconferencing and teleconferencing is not possible, meetings should be held in well-ventilated spaces and ensure that individual maintain six feet of social distance between one other.

**Department Specific Procedures**

All employees and residents should follow and adhere to the expectations outlined above in terms of social distancing, sanitation, and personal hygiene. Below are additional procedures, notes, and expectations, for each respective department.

In addition, all departments must follow the City’s reopening plan and each department is also required to implement a tailored safety plan for reopening to the public (A template for offices can be found at [forward.ny.gov](http://forward.ny.gov)). Having this safety plan in effect prior to reopening will ensure the safety of City employees and the public as we transition throughout the state reopening plan.

- **DPW/Highway/Streets:**

- Working outdoors and maintaining six feet distance, does not require a mask, but one is still encouraged for those that would like to wear one. With closer contact, or working indoors, masks are recommended for all.

- **Drivers/Laborers:**

- One person per vehicle when possible. If more than one person is in a vehicle, masks should be worn.
- Keep hand sanitizer and wipes in the vehicle.
- Clean and sanitize the cabin as often as possible.

- **Waste Water Plant:**

- Operators and workers should consider disposable Tyvek during work and/or uniforms that stay on-site.
- Clothing should be changed to uniform or covered with Tyvek during work and then changed back into personal clothes when leaving.
- Do not drive the same vehicle at work as you do to go home, unless the vehicle has been sanitized before going home.

- **Playgrounds and Outdoor Recreational Leagues:**
  - Stay tuned in to the State and Federal Departments of Public Health for guidance on this topic.
- **Recreation and Pools:**
  - Stay tuned in to the State and Federal Departments of Public Health for guidance on this topic.
- **Municipal Offices:**
  - Follow the general guidelines outlined above.
  - Consider establishing alternating workdays or shifts that reduce the total number of employees in a facility at a given time.
- **Code Enforcement:**
  - Use face masks when within 6 feet of others.
  - One person per vehicle when possible. If more than one person is in a vehicle masks should be worn.
  - Keep hand sanitizer and wipes in the vehicle cab.
  - Clean and sanitize the vehicle cab as often as possible.
- **Police Department:**
  - Follow procedures put in place by the Chief of Police.
  - Essential personnel have been working through this pandemic. Consider limiting hours, not sharing common spaces when possible, and other general office guidelines above.
  - As non-essential personnel come back, they should follow the general and Office provisions above.
- **Fire Department:**
  - Follow procedures put in place by the Chief of Fire.
- **Other Departments:**
  - Should use their discretion, implementing as many of these guidelines as appropriate, with manager review and approval.
  - If appropriate, facilities will place physical markers on the floors to promote social distancing. Please work with Facilities to optimize flow in your office.
  - Employees are encouraged to not solely rely on cleaning staff for the cleaning of high-touch surfaces – cleaning supplies can be provided.
  - Vehicular occupancy should be one person or as low as possible. If there is more than one person in a vehicle, people should maximize spacing as much as possible and wear masks. Most importantly, if more than one person is in a vehicle, ensure the vehicle's

heating/AC system is not recirculating air. The vehicle should be placed in the setting to draw outside air. Open windows would be ideal.

- The City has placed hand sanitizer dispensers at the entrances to buildings.

Should you have any questions about the re-opening plan outlined, any of the protocols or procedures explained, or need to report any information regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic and potential exposure, please contact the City Clerk or the Mayor's Office.

## **Additional Resources and References**

- New York Forward: <https://forward.ny.gov/>
- New York State Department of Health: <https://www.health.ny.gov/>
- New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus Website  
[www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov](http://www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov)
- For additional information about COVID-19 visit: <https://ulstercountyny.gov/coronavirus>
- Ulster County COVID-19 Hotline: 845-443-8888
- 845-443-8888 NYS Coronavirus Information Hotline: 888-364-3065

## **EMPLOYEE HEALTH SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Ask employees initially returning to work:

1. Have you been infected with the virus in the past 14 days? Yes  No
2. Have you had a fever in the past 14 days? Yes  No
3. Has anyone in your home had the virus within the past 14 days Yes  No
4. Have you traveled anywhere considered to be a COVID-19 hotspot? Yes  No

If any of the above answers are "yes," the employee should be sent home immediately until all answers are "no."