



May 11, 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update #6 General Update

New in this update:

- [Governor's Stay at Home Order](#)
- [Motor Vehicle Registration & Bill Payment Office Opens](#)
- [Public Library – Curbside Pickup](#)
- [Temporary Outdoor Dining Permit](#)

The Town of Bedford is committed to providing a high level of service for the community, while also prioritizing the health and safety of our employees. We are monitoring the coronavirus pandemic and utilizing information from the State of NH DHHS and the CDC in our decision making. This situation is evolving daily and information will be updated as it becomes available via the [town web site](#) and our social media channels. The Town's Emergency Management team is evaluating information, keeping in touch with community and State partners and will also provide updates as necessary.

- ❖ **STAY AT HOME EMERGENCY ORDER** – [Emergency Order #40](#) extends [Emergency Order #17](#) issued by the Governor keeps all non-essential business closed until May 31, 2020, with exceptions for hair salons, retail at 50% capacity, golf courses, and dentists being able to open on May 11, 2020, and restaurants with outdoor seating on May 18th. Paragraph #6 of Order #17 exempts local government because of all of the necessary functions the Town provides in support of our residents and community. We remain committed to providing a high level of service while also prioritizing the health and safety of our employees. As you will read in this update many of our services continue to be conducted virtually but motor vehicle registrations and library services are being expanded. The State has made phone number 2-1-1 available to any resident who needs information.
- ❖ **MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION** – The lobby of the Town Office Building has reopened for limited hours 10 AM – 4 PM for motor vehicle registration and other bill payments ONLY. At risk members of our community or anybody else who is not comfortable coming in can make an appointment for weekday morning hours by contacting the department at 472-3550 and MV@BedfordNH.org. Motor vehicle registrations also includes boats and trailers. We do encourage people to continue taking advantage of online or mail in options whenever possible as maximum occupancy in our lobby is 4 customers. **Please wear a face covering and keep a 6 foot separation to others when coming to the building.** Offsite payment option can be found on our website <https://www.bedfordnh.org/819/Online-Bill-Payment>.
- ❖ **PUBLIC LIBRARY** – The Library is now offering contactless curbside pickup of library materials for cardholders 10 AM – 2 PM, Monday - Saturday.

HOW IT WORKS:

- Place a request on a Bedford item by using the [online catalog](#) or by calling 472-2300.
 - We will call you when your item(s) is ready for pickup.
 - Before you leave the house for the Library, or when you arrive, call 472-2300. We will then check the item(s) out to you and place your item(s) on the table outside the main entrance. After the staff person has returned to the building, come to the table to pick up your items.
 - Read, enjoy, and return in the outdoor bookdrop between 10 AM - 2 PM, Monday – Saturday.
- ❖ **TEMPORARY OUTDOOR DINING PERMIT** – The Town has created a [temporary permit](#) allows existing food service establishments that choose to operate under the “NH Stay at Home Order 2.0” to begin serving customers through outdoor seating. Establishments with previously approved outdoor seating do not need a temporary permit unless they request additional seating beyond what has been previously approved
- ❖ **THE TRANSFER STATION REMAINS OPEN** - We know a lot of you are using this time at home to get your Spring cleaning done. Our busiest day each week is Saturday so please consider coming another day if you can. Please be patient and maintain social distancing with each other and our employees. Regular Hours: Tue 7-5, Wed 8:30-5, Thur 8:30-7, Fri & Sat 8:30-5.
- ❖ **BEDFORD CARES** – A group of Bedford residents lead by Councilor Ricciardi have formed Bedford Cares to assist residents with any non-emergency needs such as shopping for food or medicine or anything you might need and are also supporting our first responders with sanitizer and other supplies. They have also teamed up with the Bedford Food Pantry to support their efforts which continue to grow. If you are in need of their help or you want to assist in the effort please contact them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BedfordNHCares/> or by calling at (603) 792-1319.
- ❖ **PUBLIC MEETINGS WILL GO ON** – The Governor has provided for public meetings to continue during the Stay at Home Order by allowing the board or commission members to be present over the phone or virtually and allowing the public to listen to the meeting over the phone. Our Council, Planning Board, ZBA, and other meetings continue to be completed in this virtual manner using a video and phone conferencing platform called [Zoom](#). It is easy to use and access instructions will be provided to the public when the agenda is published. Meetings can also be viewed on Channel 22 (Comcast); and via live stream and on-demand from BCTV’s website <https://www.bedfordnh.org/393/BCTV>.
- Comments for items appearing on a Planning Board, Zoning Board, Conservation Commission, or Historic District Commission agenda can be made to the Planning Department at planning@bedfordnh.org.
 - Comments regarding items on Town Council agendas can be sent to the Councilors at councilors2@bedfordnh.org or the Town Manager at rsawyer@bedfordnh.org.
- ❖ **PLAYGROUNDS, COURTS, & SKATEBOARD PARK CLOSED** as we have no way to clean those surfaces within current CDC recommendations and people were not respecting the social distancing requests. Open fields and trails remain open for individual use but please maintain all social distancing and hygiene recommendations.

❖ **THE SAFETY COMPLEX, TOWN OFFICE, LIBRARY, BCTV, & HIGHWAY GARAGE ARE CLOSED TO VISITORS (EXCEPT AS NOTED).** Employees continue to work in the buildings and at home to complete all aspects of official business. If you do come to the Safety Complex you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department.

BELOW ARE SOME ADDITIONAL UPDATES AND INFORMATION FROM OUR TOWN DEPARTMENTS:

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|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Assessing | 6. Parks & Recreation | 11. Planning |
| 2. Building & Health | 7. Police | 12. Town Clerk |
| 3. DPW | 8. Library | 13. Transfer Station |
| 4. Facilities | 9. HR & Welfare | |
| 5. Fire | 10. Motor Vehicle & Tax | |

ASSESSING

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

72:33 Application for Exemption or Tax Credit. –

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

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

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

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

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

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

BUILDING & HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department. Applications and inspections are still being completed but may be impacted or requirements modified. **Please call 472-3838** to see if we can address your issue over the phone.

- **Renewal Fees Waived** - In response to the ongoing emergency pandemic situation any permits issued by the Bedford Building Department between 09/17/2019 and 11/17/2019 that are in good standing shall not be subject to permit renewal fees if they expire prior to May 31, 2020.
- **Building, Sign, Demolition, Septic & Swimming Pool Applications** – Please submit completed permit applications, two sets of plans, plot plan and any other necessary documents to the drop box located in the main lobby of 55 Constitution Drive. These documents are also accepted via email to safety@bedfordnh.org or fax to 603-472-4565. You will be notified via phone when your permit is ready for pickup and the amount of your permit fee. Permit applications are available at <https://www.bedfordnh.org/169/Building-Code-Compliance>
- **Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Gas, Low Voltage Permit Applications** – Permit applications are to be completed & submitted at the Bedford Safety Complex. Please choose the building department option from the phone located in the main lobby to speak with a representative. A building department representative will take the information and payment may be submitted into a secure drop box in the lobby (cash & check only). A copy of the permit and receipt of payment will be mailed or emailed, depending on preference.
- **Food Service & Pool License Renewals** – Please drop off completed & SIGNED permit applications, additional documents and fees (payable by cash or check) to the drop box in the main lobby of 55 Constitution Drive. Applications can also be submitted via email at safety@bedfordnh.org, or faxed to 603-472-4565. If email or fax method is utilized please MAIL payment to The Bedford Health Department, 55 Constitution Drive, Bedford, NH 03110. Please ensure you reference your establishment license number or address with the payment. Your Food License will be mailed (if you

would prefer email please include an email address). We ask you sign and return via mail, email (safety@bedfordnh.org) or fax (603-472-4565) a signed copy of your license.

DPW ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department. **Please call 472-3070** to see if we can address your issue over the phone or to make an appointment to ensure that staff is available to meet with you. Issues can also be emailed to: publicworks@bedfordnh.org

DPW – HIGHWAY GARAGE

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

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

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

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public. If you do come to the building you will see that there is a phone located in the lobby with direct connections to the Fire Department, Building & Health Department and DPW. Please use this phone to contact the appropriate department. The Bedford Fire Department is closely monitoring daily information from the CDC, State of NH DHHS, the State's Epidemiologist, and our medical partners. We have made adjustments to our protocols to protect our first responders while still providing the best possible services to the community. You can contact the Fire Department for non-emergencies at 472-3219. The Fire Department will not be doing car seat inspections or physical fire permits until further notice. Fire permits are available on line at: <https://nhdfweb.sovsportsnet.net/>

PARKS & RECREATION

The office is closed to the public. The Bedford Parks & Recreation Department is will be cancelling all scheduled programs until further notice. You can contact the department by calling 472-5242 or emailing us at Recreation@Bedfordnh.org. **Playgrounds, Courts, & the Skateboard Park are closed** as we have no way to clean those surfaces within current CDC recommendations and people were not respecting the social distancing requests. Open fields and trails remain open for individual use but please maintain all social distancing and hygiene recommendations. Camp Witzel has been cancelled for 2020.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Public Safety Complex is closed to the public. The Public Safety Complex remains available to citizens for their safety and security. The public will have access to the outer lobby of the Public Safety Complex where a telephone is available 24/7/365 to contact Police.

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

BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Bedford Library is closed to the public but is now offering contactless curbside pickup of library materials for cardholders 10 AM – 2 PM, Monday - Saturday.

HOW IT WORKS:

- Place a request on a Bedford item by using the [online catalog](#) or by calling 472-2300.
- We will call you when your item(s) is ready for pickup.
- Before you leave the house for the Library, or when you arrive, call 472-2300. We will then check the item(s) out to you and place your item(s) on the table outside the main entrance. After the staff person has returned to the building, come to the table to pick up your items.
- Read, enjoy, and return in the outdoor bookdrop between 10 AM - 2 PM, Monday – Saturday.
- Please be patient with us because we have limited staff in the building. Please recognize that we may not be able to fill all requests on the same day due to high demand.

Please see our website for remote book, magazine, music, and film options: <https://bedfordnhlibrary.org/>
Please email reference@bedfordnh.org, or leave a message at 472-2300 for any assistance. Please check out our [Facebook page](#) for online information, activities, and engagements.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The office is closed to the public. You can contact the department by calling 792-1315. Welfare applications and appointments will continue to be given to those who are unable to meet their basic needs. Hopefully we can address your issue over the phone or via email. Please also visit our website: <https://www.bedfordnh.org/813/Welfare> Job applications should be submitted online, via mail, or emailed to jobs@bedfordnh.org.

MOTOR VEHICLE and TAX OFFICE

The Motor Vehicle and Tax Office has reopened for limited hours 10 AM – 4 PM for motor vehicle registration and other bill payments ONLY. At risk members of our community or anybody else who is not

comfortable coming in can make a curbside appointment (limited) for weekday morning hours by contacting the department at 472-3550 and MV@BedfordNH.org. Motor vehicle registrations also includes boats and trailers. We do encourage people to continue taking advantage of online or mail in options whenever possible as maximum occupancy in our lobby is 4 customers. **Please wear a face covering and keep a 6 foot separation to others when coming to the building.**

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

Other Payment Options:

For Motor Vehicle Renewals:

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

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

2. **Mail In to:**

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

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

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

There is no ability to process NEW motor vehicle registrations online but the State has approved an extension until May 31, 2020 in concern for the health and well-being of employees, customers, and our community.

For Property Taxes:

1. **Mail In To:**

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

Please include your bill number on your check.

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

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

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

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

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

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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

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

All required regulatory meetings (Planning Board, ZBA, etc.) will occur “virtually” without the board or the public being physically present in a room. The meetings can be viewed in the following ways: on Channel 22 (Comcast); via live stream and on-demand from BCTV’s website <https://www.bedfordnh.org/393/BCTV>. Instructions for listening to the meetings via phone and or through Zoom will be provided when the agendas are published.

TOWN CLERK

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

TRANSFER STATION

At this time, the Transfer Station remains open with regular hours and we encourage everyone to maintain social distances and to be patient with each other. We know a lot of you are using this time at home to get your Spring cleaning done. Our busiest day is Saturday so please consider coming another day if you can. Please be patient and maintain social distancing with each other and our employees. Regular Hours: Tue 7-5, Wed 8:30-5, Thur 8:30-7, Fri & Sat 8:30-5.

- **Beautify Bedford** – The Bedford Energy Commission, The Department of Public Works, and many residents organized by former Councilor Rombeau have started a grassroots effort to clean up Bedford during this time of social distancing. This is a great way to show community spirit and to get out of the house while also maintaining social distances and we thank the community for wanting to take this on. Please be safe along the road and where gloves and reflective or bright colored clothing. The Energy Commission has created [a map](#) where you can sign up for an area or register an area you have already completed.

Reflective vests, trash bags, grabbers, and warning signs are available at the Transfer Station on a first come first use basis. DPW will also attempt to pick up the bags if you make PRIOR arrangements with our team by emailing us at publicworks@bedfordnh.org in advance of your clean-up event, but we would prefer if you disposed of the materials yourself at the Transfer Station if possible.

Coronavirus Resources:

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