

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**April 2, 2020**

**TO:** Keene City Council  
**FROM:** Mayor George Hansel  
**RE:** FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION – COVID-19 update

This week the New Hampshire National Guard was in Keene to set up an alternative care facility on Keene State College's campus. A portion of the Keene State College Recreation Center has been equipped to serve as a treatment area. This alternative care facility will increase our community's capacity to treat sick people in the event we need it. Additionally, several dormitories on campus are being prepared to house first responders and healthcare workers should that become necessary. The City's Emergency Management Team, the City Manager and I participated in an extensive operational planning exercise over two days to support the creation of this facility. The Cheshire Medical Center, the City of Keene, Keene State College, Monadnock Community Hospital, the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the New Hampshire National Guard participated in this process. I want to reiterate that setting up these facilities is a precaution and there is currently no need for them to be used.

As of this morning, the NH National Guard has left Keene, but a small number of Guard personnel will return should the facility be activated. It is also important to note that, if activated, this facility will become an extension of the hospital. Any patients will need to be referred to the alternative care facility from the Cheshire Medical Center campus.

Any questions on this facility or its use can be referred to the Mayor's office.

*Changes to City operations:*

- There has been some confusion in the community regarding the registration of new vehicles. The City is still registering new vehicles by appointment and in person. We are encouraging the public to utilize the [online resources](#) for renewals.
- Infrastructure projects in Keene will be going ahead. Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #17 (related to the stay-at-home order) did stipulate that critical infrastructure is considered essential. This status extends to the City's contractors. City employees and all contractors will be required to comply with Article 3 of Executive Order #17 which states:

All businesses or other organizations providing Essential Services shall develop strategies, procedures and practices to allow for social distancing protocols consistent with guidance provided by the CDC and the Division of Public Health.

We are following up with our contractors to ensure compliance with these requirements. Many road, sidewalk, and underground infrastructure projects scheduled for this construction season are currently accepting bids and are expected to move forward.

*Public Outreach:*

The public is encouraged to participate in the Mayor's Virtual Town Halls daily, Monday-Friday at 8am. Credentials for the Zoom meeting change daily and can be found by visiting: [www.notifykeene.com](http://www.notifykeene.com).

Additionally, participants can call in via telephone by dialing 603-766-5646 and using the participant code: 981441.

The Mayor's Daily Virtual Town Hall Schedule for the rest of the week:

- Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> – Small Business Friday - Jack Dugan and Arthur Robert from MEDC, Mollie Kaylor from the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), and Vardhan Bajpai from the Small Business Administration (SBA) will be available to discuss small business loans and relief programs. It is also important to note that nonprofits can now qualify for low interest [SBA loans](#).