

Community Engagement and Public Information Department

IMPORTANT EMERGENCY INFORMATION
County Government Announces Operational
Changes due to COVID-19



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Due to the continuing concerns of the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and recommendations by state and national government to limit exposure to others, public access to all Gloucester County offices and buildings will remain suspended through March 31. This also puts the County in direct alignment with the President's "15 Days to Slow the Spread" efforts on slowing the disease's spread and flattening the infection curve. Gloucester County continues to operate under a Local Emergency declaration. This is a precautionary security measure, which allows for the full powers of government to deal effectively with emergencies or hazardous weather conditions.

During this time, County staff is committed to continuing services to the public to every extent possible. The following information is the latest as to how various County departments and constitutional offices are continuing to operate over the coming weeks:

Circuit Court

For the next 21 days, until April 6, 2020, all civil, traffic and criminal matters, including jury trials, are suspended, with the exception of emergency matters. For specific information, contact the Circuit Court Clerk's office, which will remain open at this time, by calling 804-693-2502.

General District Court

Similarly, for the next 21 days, until April 6, 2020, all civil, traffic and criminal matters in the Gloucester General District Court, except for emergency matters, will be postponed. Emergency matters include, but are not limited to, petitions for isolation, inmate arraignments, bail reviews, protective order cases, civil commitment hearings. For specific information, call 804-693-4860.

Library

The Gloucester County Public Library, in compliance with Gloucester County Emergency Protocols regarding the COVID-19 virus, have suspended all programs and outreach through Tuesday, March 31. Updates will be provided on social media as well as on the Library's website. Also, all AARP Tax-Aide services that have traditionally operated out of the Library have been suspended. The Library is always open online at www.gloucesterva.info/publiclibrary.

Meetings cancelled

All County public meetings, including the joint meeting of the Gloucester County Board of

Supervisors and Gloucester County School Board (previously scheduled for March 17) and the Budget Town Hall (previously scheduled for March 18), have been postponed, with reschedule dates to be determined. Future announcements may include additional cancelations, postponements, and/or other changes.

Parks, Recreation and Tourism

All regularly scheduled programming and structured activities remain cancelled at this time. In compliance with Federal and State directives due to COVID-19, playgrounds at all County parks will be closed effective March 17 until further notice. While the restrooms at Beaverdam Park are currently remaining open, rental equipment (batteries, jon boats, canoes, kayaks, paddles, life vests, etc.) and bait sales will not be available at Beaverdam Park. All Gloucester County parks remain open for passive recreation.

Public Schools

Gloucester County Public Schools will remain closed through March 27 to students and staff. Essential personnel only will report.

Public Utilities

Customers can pay Gloucester water and sewer bills as follows:

- By mail to: 6489 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061.
- In person using the Treasurer's drop box in the median of Justice Drive between County Office Buildings 1 and 2. Checks, money orders, or cash will be accepted in the drop box, despite cash typically being discouraged. Change will not be provided and will rather post to your account, to be applied to future bill(s). Please be sure to include the payment portion of the bill in an envelope with your payment.
- Online, by visiting the Public Utilities page on www.gloucesterva.info using a credit card (\$3.95 fee) or by check (\$2.50 fee).

Account numbers will be required to ensure payment is applied to the correct account – please ensure that you include your account number on your check or on a separate piece of paper if paying by cash.

Applications for service are available by visiting <https://www.gloucesterva.info/DocumentCenter/View/1428/Application-for-Water-and-or-Sewer-Service-PDF>. Completed/signed applications can be submitted by e-mail to (ADurham@gloucesterva.info), by fax, 804-693-4664, or by dropping it off in the Justice Drive drop box. Deposits or transfer fees can be paid through Official Payments. Contact customer service at 804-693-4044 to coordinate payments.

Payments for March bills are due by March 31, 2020. Utilities staff are not currently disconnecting customers for non-payment, but late fees will be added to outstanding bills after the due dates.

Social Services

Customers who currently have already-scheduled appointments for new applications or recertification for SNAP, TANF and childcare will have their appointment completed by phone. If you have recently changed your phone number and failed to report it to social services, contact the agency at 804-693-2671 to provide your current phone number.

If you do not have access to a phone to contact the agency, there are directions posted on the front door of the Social Services office with instructions on how to proceed. For more information, contact the Department of Social Services at 804-693-2671. To apply for benefits, contact Virginia Commonhelp at 855-242-8282.

Treasurer's Office

The Treasurer's Office has implemented ways to do business while closed to the public. To make a payment, use the drive by drop box, located in the median of Justice Drive, between County Office Buildings 1 and 2. The drop box will be checked first thing in the morning and every few hours throughout the workday. Payments should be made by check or money order – cash will also be accepted, although typically discouraged. Please be sure to include a payment voucher and/or other identifying information, along with your name and phone number, to ensure that your payment is appropriately credited.

Customers are also able to pay online by electronic check, credit card and debit card online at www.officialpayments.com (a convenience fee will apply) and the jurisdiction code is 1087. Payments by telephone can be made by electronic check, credit card and debit card by calling 1-800-2-PAYTAX (800-272-9829) with the jurisdiction code 1087. A convenience fee will also apply.

Finally, the office will continue to receive any payments or other information sent to the office via U.S. Mail.

For those who have a hold on their registration with the DMV, call the Treasurer's Office at 804-693-2141 to find the current balance on the account. The balance can be paid online, by telephone or by putting a payment in the drop box. Those paying online or by telephone can call the office with their confirmation number to have the hold released as soon as possible.

Voter Registrar

Although the Voter Registrar's Office has been closed to the public, residents can still get registered to vote, make changes to their voter registration and make many other transactions online at www.vote.virginia.gov. Residents with questions can call the Voter Registrar's office at 804-693-3659.

Waste Management

All Waste Management's convenience centers will continue to operate as normal. The organization does not have intentions of taking extraordinary measures at this time. Staff members at convenience centers have been asked to keep their distance from the public and assist only those with disabilities.

For more information

This is an evolving situation and all information is subject to change at any time. For up to date information, visit www.gloucesterva.info or the County's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gloucesterva. For specific questions, contact Gloucester's Community Engagement and Public Information office at 804-693-5730 or e-mail qsheppard@gloucesterva.info.

For health-related information, contact the Gloucester Health Department by calling 804-693-2445 or 1-877-ASK-VDH3 or visit the Virginia Health Department's special website on Coronavirus at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>.

End of Announcement