



FYI SALEM

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 8

APRIL 27, 2020

CONTACT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE:

Phone:

(978) 619-5600

Fax:

(978) 744-9327

Email:

mayor@salem.com

Web:

salem.com/mayor

Facebook:

Kim Driscoll

Twitter:

@MayorDriscoll



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

START	2
Take-Out Parking	2
Save on Utility Bills	2
Safe Walks	3
Evictions Moratorium	3
Share Your Story	3
COVID-19 Updates	3
School Updates	4

From the Mayor's Desk



Dear Salem resident,

As of today, there have been 354 positive COVID-19 cases in Salem and, sadly, there have been 15 of our neighbors have died from the virus.

We know that these numbers are likely higher, given the inadequacy of broad testing. We also know that any lost life is not just a number. Please join me in keeping those that are fighting this illness or who have family members who have succumbed to this illness in your thoughts and prayers.

This is a horrible virus that robs us of the ability to see and say goodbye to loved ones and prevents us from supporting each other through our grief. I am grateful that the number of lives lost in Salem has not been greater, however, and am especially appreciative of the outstanding care that healthcare professionals are doing every day to treat

patients – often putting themselves in harms way to do so.

We all need to continue to do our part to protect them and each other from the transmission of this illness. Wash hands frequently, maintain safe physical distances, and wear facial coverings while working or patronizing essential businesses and in common areas inside buildings remains very critical.

In terms of the current situation, we are where public health officials, epidemiologists and state leaders thought we would be at this time. Officials believe we are most likely at our peak, but not declining very quickly. We are dealing with a virus that is incompletely understood and a situation that is continually evolving. We must be vigilant.

Many individuals and small businesses have been hard hit by the onslaught of the coronavirus. We are going to have to work together as a community to rebound from these circumstances and develop a plan, in concert with state leaders and public health officials, at the appropriate time to re-open slowly and carefully.

There will not be a date when the city simply switches back on. It doesn't give me joy to say that, but there are many uncertainties with this virus; we have no choice but to move forward together in incremental stages.

You can find the latest information on our efforts to fight the virus and a list of programs and resources to aid residents, business owners and others at salem.com/covid19.

We know people are hurting and The Salem Together Assistance and Recovery Toolkit (START) is the beginning of our efforts and includes funding relief for renters, homeowners and small businesses. For more info, go to salem.com/start

One of the reasons I feel grateful to live and raise my family in Salem is the strong shared values we hold as a community. There are lots of uncertainties related to COVID-19, but what we do know here in Salem is that we are going to get through this. We are going to protect the most vulnerable members of our community. We are going to support our small businesses who are our neighbors, co-workers, and employers.

This will take all of us - our best energies, ideas, and innovations. The challenge for all of us will be to discover, innovate, and lead the way forward guided by science and by our community values. We've been through a lot in our nearly 400 year history. We will overcome this. Stay safe.

Kim Driscoll
Mayor
City of Salem

Support for residents and businesses.
www.salem.com/START

"These new programs provide critical dollars to some of our most vulnerable residents and struggling small businesses," said Mayor Kim Driscoll. "I encourage anyone who may be eligible to consider applying for support. Your City is here for you and we want to do all that we can to help you through these difficult days."

Working with a number of banks, the City has announced that some homeowners impacted by COVID-19 have the option to defer at least three months of mortgage payments during this crisis. Deferred payment amounts are added to the conclusion of the mortgage and spread out over the same timeframe. No late fees will be charged and deferrals are not reported to credited agencies. To receive a deferral, homeowners should contact their bank or lender directly. Not all banks are offering this option. A list of banks that are participating will be updated at salem.com/START.

Rental assistance of \$500 per household for two months is available for Salem residential renters who have had a demonstrated gap in their income due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are at risk of losing their housing. Payments are made directly to the landlord. The program is administered by North Shore Community Action Programs.

Microenterprise and small business relief grants of up to \$10,000 are available to offset the negative business impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding can be used to offset payroll costs, rent and mortgage payments, utilities, and loss of inventory due to mandatory closures. The program provides short-term working capital assistance to support businesses and retain jobs during the severe economic interruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City of Salem has posted a number of parking spaces downtown as 15-minute parking only, to pick up take-out orders from downtown restaurants. Please do not park in any of these signed spaces for more than 15 minutes. Find a list of Salem restaurants that offer take-out at salem.org/eat.



Safe Walks

During this challenging time, many Salem residents want to get outside to exercise and get fresh air. To encourage safe physical distancing while doing so, the City suggests that pedestrians use the sidewalk with the street on your right side where possible. You may want to cover your face with a mask, bandana, scarf, or other face covering, and should avoid touching common surfaces to the extent possible.



The City's Traffic and Parking Department has developed the maps available at www.salem.com/home/news/safe-walks-around-salem to help suggest safe pedestrian routes that can be traveled in an hour or less. As you walk, you can help support local businesses by window shopping and ordering online when you find something you like. Consider calling ahead to one of Salem's restaurants offering take-out, as well.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Salem Board of Health

Evictions Moratorium

On April 15, 2020, the Salem Board of Health issued an emergency order placing a moratorium on all residential and commercial evictions within the City of Salem during the current public health emergency. The full text of the order can be found online at www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/news/eviction_moratorium_-_final.pdf.

Share Your Story

The Salem Public Library invites you to share your stories, drawings, photos and videos that describe life in our city during the COVID-19 crisis at www.salempl.org/your-story/. Your story could be helpful to other residents living through this unprecedented time, and will be a valuable resource as we tell Salem's in the future.



How has the virus disrupted your daily life? What are you missing – school, graduation, sports, extracurricular activities, social plans, vacations? How are you staying in touch with friends and family? Are you finding ways to move your body and get fresh air outdoors? What changes, big or small, are you noticing in the world around you? What have you learned about yourself? Has anything changed for the better?



**Coronavirus
(COVID-19)
Update**

City of Salem
salem.com/covid19



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Entries will be collected and the project will be viewable by the public, both online and in the library once we reopen. We're excited to share your stories, and we look forward to seeing you again soon!

Schools Updates

Internet for Families

The City of Salem has signed an agreement with Comcast to offer six free months of internet for families who currently do not have access to wifi in their homes. Two of the six months will be free as part of Comcast's Internet Essentials program and the other four months are being paid for by the City of Salem Relief Fund through a donation by the Salem Children's Charity.



Bilingual staff members will begin reaching out to families who we already know do not have this resource. Qualifying families will be provided a code to use when applying, and SPS staff will assist families with the simple application process. The deadline for signing up for this program is May 13th. If your family is in need of internet access or has questions about eligibility, please call 978-219-6689 and a Salem Public Schools staff member can assist you.

This is a huge step forward in ensuring that all of our students and families have access to remote learning and supports during the school closure. This program is one avenue to address internet access equity. While this solution may not work for every family, we continue to explore all options to assist our families with accessing the internet.

Margaret V. Howard Teacher Recognition Award

This year, it may be even more important to call attention to the important, dedicated work that teachers perform. The Margaret Voss Howard Teacher Recognition Award is calling for nominations to honor teachers from Marblehead and Salem. Each year, the award recognizes one teacher from the Salem school district and one from the Marblehead school district, each with a \$500 unrestricted award.

Anyone—colleague, parent, student, citizen—may nominate a teacher. A teacher may be cited for work during the current challenges, for a previous special project or accomplishment, or for his/her general excellence. To nominate a teacher, submit a confidential, detailed letter explaining why the teacher should be honored and mail it to: Teacher Award, 80 Leach St., Salem, MA 01970 or email to howardteacheraward@yahoo.com. Nominators should include their full contact information in the letter or in a completed nomination form. Please postmark your nominations by the newly extended date of May 10. Honorees are selected by a committee of local educators. The award is a fund of the Essex County Community Foundation. For more information, send an e-mail to howardteacheraward@yahoo.com

Remote Learning Plans Update

As you know, we started with an early version of our remote learning plan on March 15th soon after the school closure began. Our immediate concern and goal, at that time, was to connect with every student and family to ensure they were safe and to also set up access to remote learning opportunities that were made available on www.salemlearns.org. These opportunities included activities across content areas and a supporting printable packet for grades PreK-5. We are now taking steps to implement enhancements to our remote learning plan that will include new components.



New learning plans for all grades can now be viewed at www.SalemLearns.org. The goal of these plans is to provide a consistent structure where students are able to interact more often with their teachers and classmates. Teachers are already implementing many of these components and will do so with increasing consistency over the next couple of weeks.