

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fifth Update
March 15, 2020

Dear Guilderland residents:

The Town of Guilderland and its Medical Director, and the professional staff in the Department of Emergency Medical Services and Police Department, are all working hard to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in our community, and protect our residents, visitors, businesses, fellow employees and themselves. We are all in this effort together, and, upon behalf of Town employees, I thank you for your words and acts of support for our collective efforts in addressing this health emergency. In this email, like its four predecessors, we are committed to keeping you informed on important information. The Town has a [webpage](#) devoted to the Town's response to COVID-19.

As of Noon on Sunday, March 15th, the Albany County Department of Health (DOH) reported that there are apparently no new confirmed COVID-19 cases in Town. However, due to the marked increase in confirmed cases in the County, currently 11, and with 89 persons under mandatory quarantine and 476 persons under precautionary quarantine, there is a strong likelihood that the number of confirmed cases in Guilderland will increase. The good news is that only one of the 11 confirmed cases is hospitalized and that all 11 cases are recovering. I urge you to visit websites of the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [State DOH](#), and [County DOH](#) for more information about COVID-19 and links to other resources.

We are aware of the [Guilderland Central School District's](#) decision regarding school closings and the [County DOH's March 15th letter](#) to Farnsworth Middle School families regarding quarantines. Please check the District's website for regular updates and contact the District should have any questions. We are also mindful of the Governor's [Executive Orders](#) which limit mass gatherings and encourage municipalities to continue providing services and holding meetings by using methods other in-person participation.

At the Town level, we are taking responsive action one week at a time with a plan to assess the situation daily for adjustments. As a reminder, this week, the Town is cancelling Town Court proceedings and all programs at the Senior Center. We ask that seniors who might need transportation for medical appointments and groceries to please call the Department of Senior Services at (518) 280-7607. While all other Town offices will remain open, we urge residents to use email, phone, or the [Town's website](#) for many Town services. Please also do not be alarmed or offended if Town employees maintain social distancing and that some may be wearing gloves or facemasks as directed by health guidelines.

We are awaiting the NYS Commissioner of Health's approval of proposed protocols which would allow Town ambulances to transport patients to destinations other than hospitals and allow dispatching medics, without ambulances, to address minor medical issues. A recent Governor's Executive Order provided this authority to EMS departments. As one of the few municipalities with both Town-operated ambulances and medic services, the Town is able to deploy its advanced-life support ambulances and over 40 medics and emergency medical technicians to meet the needs of residents during these exigent circumstances. Dr. Donald

Doynow, the Town's Medical Director, has been indispensable in working with State and County DOH officials, guiding the Town's emergency services during this difficult time, and emphasizing the vital importance of keeping first responders fully protected and healthy.

The County DOH, like its fellow health professionals, is advising seniors and persons with severe underlying medical conditions like respiratory restrictions, heart or lung disease, and diabetes to avoid human contact as much as possible. We are concerned, however, that these precautions could cause some persons to not leave their homes for groceries or other daily needs. We encourage you to safely check on vulnerable neighbors and friends about their status, and let the EMS Department know if you believe that medical issues may be present. The EMS Department also makes welfare checks based upon its prior interaction with residents.

This dynamic health emergency situation highlights the role of local organizations in addressing food insecurity and other urgent needs. The Guilderland Food Pantry is at the forefront of helping residents in need, and the current difficulties are increasing our community's demand on its services. The Pantry's current need is easy to prepare food, like macaroni and cheese, canned ravioli, canned soups, juice, and laundry soap. You can contact the Pantry, located at 4 Charles Park in Guilderland, by phone (518) 930-1001 or email: guildfoodpantry79@gmail.com for more information on you can help. You can also make monetary donations online to the Pantry at: <https://guilderlandfoodpantry.ccbchurch.com/goto/giving>.

Thank you again for remaining calm.

Sincerely,

Peter G. Barber
Town Supervisor