



THE CITY OF ERIE

JOSEPH V. SCHEMBER, MAYOR

Media Release

For Immediate Distribution

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City of Erie takes preventive measures for COVID-19

ERIE, PA (March 13, 2020) – The City of Erie is taking action steps to upgrade our protocols to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

First, we ask that City of Erie residents **avoid coming to City Hall** for non-essential reasons. This would include in-person meetings, paying bills, and general inquires. City of Erie residents can pay their taxes, parking tickets, and their water, sewer, or refuse bills online by visiting the link <https://cityof.erie.pa.us/residents/services/make-a-payment/>, or you can send them by mail to the address listed on your bill.

We would also ask residents, who believe they need to come to City Hall, to call ahead to make an appointment with the appropriate department. You can find a complete directory of City of Erie Departments on our [website](#) by clicking on 'contact us.' Or you can call the Citizen Response Center at 814-870-1111.

The City of Erie has chosen to cancel several upcoming City-hosted public meetings due to the threat of [COVID-19](#). The City of Erie will continue to hold public meetings related to City Council functions, and public input or comment can be relayed through our social media channels.

The City of Erie is asking residents who are experiencing symptoms such as **fever above 100°F**, **cough**, and **shortness of breath**, or residents who have traveled to affected areas to refrain from physically attending these meetings.

If you, or someone you know, has these symptoms, call the emergency room for direction on what to do next. The last thing we want is for anyone to walk into a crowded doctor's office or emergency room and infect the patients, doctors, nurses, and staff.

Residents may view City Council meetings on Channel 1024 or on the City of Erie's social media pages by searching @CityofEriePA.

Internally, we will be canceling non-essential meetings, and postponing, teleconferencing, or videoconferencing meetings that do not need to occur in-person.

In addition, we encourage authorities, boards, and commissions to cancel or postpone meetings until interactive technology can be put in place to allow for public comment.



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This decision does not impact events hosted by organizations other than the City of Erie government.

Governor Wolf announced today that all schools in the Commonwealth will be closed for the next two weeks. City residents are reminded that there is a curfew which runs from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. throughout the year that affects all minors. If you want more information about the curfew and its requirements, please visit the City of Erie's website [and review Article 738 - Curfew](#).

"This is an unprecedented, difficult situation, one which we know impacts every resident, not only in the City of Erie, but globally. I encourage all residents to put the health of the community first, stop the spread of misinformation, and listen to our Erie County public health officials. There are only ten health departments in Pennsylvania, and Erie is lucky to have one. If there is something for us to report, we assure you we will be open, honest, and transparent." said Mayor Joe Schember.

The City of Erie has been in regular communication with Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper and the Erie County Department of Health to ensure we are relaying the most up-to-date information for the safety of Erie residents. We encourage all residents to follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health guidelines so you can be informed on the latest updates.

Currently, there are no positive cases of COVID-19 in Erie County.

We encourage residents to take the following preventative measures to keep you and others safe and healthy:

- **Stay home if you are sick**, especially if you have a **fever**.
- Frequently **wash your hands** with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Refrain from shaking hands** or hugging.
- **Use hand sanitizer regularly**, after shaking hands or touching surfaces, when hand washing is not available.
- **Keep hands away from face** - In particular, refrain from touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue to cough or sneeze**, and discard it in a lined trash can.
- **Wipe/disinfect surfaces** - door knobs, hand rails, doors, sinks, desk tops, steering wheels, phones, keyboards, tablets, etc.
- Practice "**desocialization**". The Governor has directed events with 250+ attendees to be canceled or postponed. If you are considering attending an event with lower attendance, please consider the added risk of doing so. It is better to be safe than sorry right now. There is a lot we do not know about this strain of the coronavirus, but it is clear that it is spreading rapidly.
- Engage in social distancing of approximately six feet.

All emergency services will continue. We ask that residents please be aware that this situation is developing rapidly. Erie County, City of Erie, and Public Safety personnel will continue to monitor this situation closely and provide updates if anything changes.

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