

Bald
Head
Island

Village's Voice

A NEWSLETTER FOR BALD HEAD ISLAND PROPERTY OWNERS



March 13, 2020

1:30 p.m.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Village officials participated in two conference calls yesterday regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The first call was with Brunswick County's Emergency Management and Health Departments and the second call was with the Governor's office and the Departments of Public Safety and Emergency Management. Below is a summary of what was discussed and following that is some additional information regarding Village services, events, and local mitigation recommendations.

Brunswick County – As of the call, there were no positive presumptive cases of coronavirus in Brunswick County. There are 17 cases in the state of North Carolina. The County went over the recommendations it is receiving from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) many of which are included in the information received from the Governor's office and are listed below. The County indicated that there are COVID-19 tests available in Brunswick County. The County has advised to **call your primary care provider first before arriving at the site to discuss your symptoms to determine whether you need a COVID-19 test. Please review further instructions specific to Bald Head Island Public Safety protocol.**

The County is prepared to activate its Web EOC, if necessary, this would be the method the County would use to request resources from the State, and what the Village would also use to request resources. The County has modified its protocols for responding to emergency medical services calls in response to the virus. Since the conference call, the County has issued a [media release](#) announcing the closing of BSRI senior centers, effective March 16th and suspending park activities and programs immediately. The media release also includes FAQs and links for more information.

Governor's Office - Governor Roy Cooper and State health officials announced additional mitigation measures statewide to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Below are recommendations to reduce the spread of infection that come directly from the NC Department of Health and Human Services and the Governor's Office. These recommendations are for the next 30 days and will be re-assessed at that point.

Symptomatic Persons

If you need medical care and have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspect you might have COVID-19, call ahead and tell your health care provider you have or may have COVID-19. This will allow them to take steps to keep other people from getting exposed. NC DHHS recommends that persons experiencing fever and cough should stay at home and not go out until their symptoms have completely resolved. **Please review further instructions specific to Bald Head Island Public Safety protocol.**

High-Risk Persons without Symptoms

NC DHHS recommends that people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should stay at home to the extent possible to decrease the chance of infection. People at **high risk** include people:

- Over 65 years of age, or
- with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes, or
- with weakened immune systems.

Congregate Living Facilities

NC DHHS recommends that all facilities that serve as residential establishments for high-risk persons described above should restrict visitors. Exceptions should include end of life care or other emergent situations determined by the facility to necessitate a visit. If visitation is allowed, the visitor should be screened and restricted if they have a respiratory illness or potential exposure to COVID-19. Facilities are encouraged to implement social distancing measures and perform temperature and respiratory symptom screening of residents and staff. These establishments include settings such as nursing homes, independent and assisted living facilities, correction facilities, and facilities that care for medically vulnerable children.

Schools

State officials do not recommend pre-emptive school closure at this time but do recommend that schools and childcare centers cancel or reduce large events and gatherings (e.g., assemblies) and field trips, limit inter-school interactions, and consider distance or e-learning in some settings. Students at high risk should implement individual plans for distance or e-learning. School dismissals may be necessary when staff or student absenteeism impacts the ability to remain open. Short-term closures may also be necessary to facilitate public health investigation and/or cleaning if a case is diagnosed in a student or staff member.

Workplace

NC DHHS recommends that employers and employees use teleworking technologies to the greatest extent possible, stagger work schedules, and consider canceling non-essential travel. Workplaces should hold larger meetings virtually, to the extent possible. Additionally, employers should arrange the workspace to optimize distance between employees, ideally at least six feet apart. Employers should urge high-risk employees to stay home and urge employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave benefits.

Mass Gatherings, Community, and Social Events

NC DHHS recommends that organizers of events that draw more than 100 people should cancel, postpone, modify these events or offer online streaming services. These events include large gatherings where people are in close contact (less than 6 feet), for example, concerts, conferences, sporting events, faith-based events, and other large gatherings.

Mass Transit

Mass transit operators should maximize opportunities for cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces. People should avoid using mass transit (e.g. buses, trains) while sick.

Bald Head Island Impacts

Village Services

The Village continues to provide services in all areas. The Village is limiting work-related travel for employees for distances outside of contiguous counties. The Village has identified essential personnel and is planning for the possible implementation of social distancing and staggered scheduling. The Village will be implementing similar protocols as the County for responding to emergency medical services calls in response to COVID-19. Telework options have also been identified.

Events

The Village concurs with the Governor's recommendations regarding mass gatherings, community, and social events. At this time, public meetings will still be held, as they regularly do not exceed an attendance of over 100 people. Event organizers should heed the recommendations made by the State and consider the use of mass transit and close contact opportunities for attendees. The Village has been in contact with the organizers for the Badwater Cape Fear event and that event has officially been canceled. If you need to know the status of any other event on the island, please contact the event organizer.

Local Mitigation Recommendations

Since the island relies upon mass transit to get to medical care providers, the Village is recommending that extra precautions are taken for those who suspect they might have COVID-19. **If you are symptomatic and you are on Bald Head Island, please call 911.** As always, tell the 911 operator that you are on Bald Head Island. This will ensure that if you are symptomatic and in need of testing that Public Safety can coordinate your transit to the mainland with the

least amount of exposure to others. If you think you are sick, please do not come directly to the Public Safety building.

For more information about novel coronavirus go to the following websites:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus

www.brunswickcountync.gov/coronavirus

Or call North Carolina's Coronavirus Helpline at 1-866-462-3821.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carin Z. Faulkner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and a stylized 'Z'.

Carin Z. Faulkner

Village Public Information Officer

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