

Information on Helpful Services and Resources (during Covid-19 outbreak)

Updated 3-24-20- ver#2

Courts – All courts are closed. Housing Court eviction cases are on hold until April 27th and district court proceedings are on hold until May 1st. Mediation may happen over the phone. Families who have an upcoming court date are asked to contact the court house. Eviction execution dates already delivered to tenants will remain in effect.

National Grid- Is temporarily suspending collections-related activities, including service disconnections, to lessen any financial hardship the COVID-19 pandemic may cause customers. These policies are effective immediately and will be in place through the end of April. Please note that regular billing will continue for all customers. For more information families may visit <https://www.nationalgridus.com/COVID-19>

Columbia Gas- will suspend shutoffs for nonpayment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, effectively immediately. This suspension will apply to residential, commercial and industrial customers and will remain in effect until further notice. In addition, Columbia Gas will offer its most flexible payment plans to customers who indicate either an impact or hardship as a result of COVID-19 and will suspend late payment charges until May 1. Columbia Gas will continue to monitor current events and support our customers and communities.

Pharmacies - Families are encourage to contact the pharmacies via website / phone call to consult with pharm tech.

Pentucket Medical Associates.- routine/ well visits are cancelled. Patients with current cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat or runny nose are asked not to go in to reduce the potential spread. Families are asked to please call the office, before going for the clinicians to find alternative ways to help.

Lawrence General Hospital COVID-19 Screening Line at (978) 946-8409.

Access to cash assistance and food stamps: Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) offices also will be closed to the public until at least April 3rd, so families and individuals who are looking to apply for benefits or follow-up on existing benefits should contact DTA by phone or via the DTA Connect app or [website](https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/) at <https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/>.

To support the wellness of clients and staff, DTA local offices will be closed to in-person services until further notice. You can still conduct business with DTA by:

- Calling the DTA Assistance Line (877) 382-2363
- Visiting **DTAConnect.com**
- Downloading the DTA Connect Mobile Application For more information on how to download the app go to: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/download-the-dta-connect-mobile-app>.

Access to WIC: Northern Essex WIC Haverhill, Amesbury, Gloucester and Beverly Offices are limiting the number of visits. Please do not come into the office, stay at home, and wait for us to call you for further instructions on how we will be able to help you obtain your benefits. If you are new to WIC, please call 978-374-2191.

Access to unemployment assistance: With the sharp uptick in unemployment, the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) has set up a special web page with COVID-19-specific information on unemployment insurance claims (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-unemployment-information>). Please note that while DUA highly encourages applicants to apply online, details about phone applications are available on this page (<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-unemployment-benefits>).

Access to shelter: With office closures until at least April 3rd, families with children seeking to apply for Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter only can apply by phone with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Please share this number with families seeking shelter: 1-866-584-0653.

Access to emergency, drop-in child care slots: With the closure of most child care programs, the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care has created a list of emergency child care centers that will be making drop-in slots available for families that need care due to working as "health care workers, essential state and human service workers, COVID-19 health workers, grocery store employees, emergency response personnel, law enforcement, transportation and infrastructure workers, sanitation workers." and for families living in shelters and families involved with the Department of Children and Families.

The emergency drop in centers for ***Haverhill*** are:

- Haverhill YMCA Children's Learning Center 87 Winter Street Haverhill MA 00830 Cyndi Marchand 978-697-7103 marchandc@northshoreymca.org Center-based or Out-of home based Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 7:00:00 AM 6:00:00 PM
- Haverhill YMCA After School Program 81 Winter Street Haverhill MA 01830 Cyndi Marchand 978-697-7103 marchandc@northshoreymca.org Center-based or Out-of homebased Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM 3/23/20

The emergency drop in center for ***Lawrence*** is:

- Carolina Hidalgo 16 Orchard Street Lawrence MA 01841 Carolina Hidalgo 978-208-8738 carolinahidalgo10@yahoo.com Home-Based Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM

FOOD Distribution Programs

▪ Methuen School- food distribution

Bagged Breakfast and Lunches will be provided starting, Tuesday March 17 thru Friday March 20 from 9am to 12pm and next week, Monday March 23 thru Friday March 27 from 9am-12pm
Monday March 30 thru April 3 from 9am-12pm At the Tenney Grammar School, Upper School Side. The bags that will be given out will have both a breakfast and lunch inside them.

** In general families are asked to stay home as much as possible, wash hands constantly. Highly suggested one person per household to go food shopping if needed.

▪ **Lawrence School - food distribution**

Throughout the Lawrence School closure grab 'n go meals will be available for all Lawrence Public Schools students Monday through Friday, 11:00am - 1:00pm, at the following schools

- Arlington complex, Parthum complex,
- Guilmette complex and
- Lawrence High School campus.

Nursing and counseling staff will also be available for health- and wellness-related questions at the same times and sites. Good hygiene and health practices remain the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including frequent handwashing; coughing and sneezing into the crook of the elbow; staying home when sick; and limiting contact with people who are ill. People with fever, cough or shortness of breath should stay home from school, and are encouraged to call their healthcare provider (before visiting) and closely follow their guidance. You will be find updates and resources at our website, Lawrence.k12.ma.us, and are encouraged to follow the district's social media accounts on Twitter (@LPS_Education) and Facebook (Lawrence Public Schools). Cynthia Paris Superintendent of Schools (Phone) 978-975-5905

▪ **Haverhill School – Food Distribution Bagged breakfast and lunches for all Haverhill residents aged 1-18**

- Hunking School – 11:00 am to 1:00
- Consentino School – 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Nettle School – 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
- YMCA – 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Boys & Girls Club – 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Meals and Pantry Locations - Haverhill

- The Liz Murphy Open Hand Pantry is modifying their procedure to pre-bagging and distributing at the door. We service Haverhill/Bradford residents. We are open Tuesdays 4-7 located in the basement of the Unitarian Church at 16 Ashland Street
- Sacred Hearts Food Pantry is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:15 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. 48 S. Chestnut Street Bradford, MA Participants are asked to wait outside using social distancing in line while they wait to check in at the usual door facing the parking lot. Prepackaged bags of food may then be picked up at the next door. We are accepting new participants. Our Pastoral Center phone lines are open for calls and spiritual support 978-373-1281
- Open Heart Ministries– 217 Main Street Haverhil MA Distributing hot meals in to-go containers on Sundays from 2-3pm. Distribution is at the kitchen door in the back of First Baptist Church.

- The Salvation Army 395 Main Street Haverhill MA, is doing a modified food pantry service with pre-packed boxes on Mon-Wed-Fri mornings from 9:30-11 am. New clients are welcome. Haverhill/Bradford/Groveland is our normal service area but we will make an exception during this time. They are serving bag lunches on Tues-Thurs-Fri at noon in place of our regular meal service. This is for anyone.
- Somebody Cares New England- 385 Washington Street Haverhill MA 978 912 7626 Thursday March 26th 8am-5pm. If first time coming, bring proof of residency.

Emergency Funds:

- **Salvation army-**
https://www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/massachusetts_salvation_army_f.html
- All **St. Vincent de Paul Helplines have been closed** due to the requirement that a home visit be made before disbursing funds. At this time, volunteers are not authorized to make home visits due to the state of emergency and quarantine restrictions.
- **RAFT - Community Action. CAI's offices at 3 Washington Square are closed to the general public until further notice with the following exception:** Document drop-off is available at the main office, 1st floor, for all programs, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
- **Other Community Action Inc. Program Updates:**
 - Heating/Fuel Assistance is available for new applications and questions by phone only please call 978-373-1971 ext. 218.
 - Community Services (includes RAFT and other housing/benefit services) is available to a limited extent by telephone only - please call 978-373-1971 ext. 286 or ext. 213 for English; ext. 213 for Spanish only.
 - Head Start/Early Head Start classes and group programming are closed for a minimum of three weeks, during which time staff will be reaching out to families individually.
 - Family Day Care All Family Day Care educators will be closed effective Monday, March 23,2020 until Monday April 6,2020 as a result of the mandatory closing of all early childhood education programs across the State of Massachusetts issued by Governor Baker.
 - Family and Community Connection is available by phone, please call 978-914-7893 or e-mail Melanie, mtamberino@communityactioninc.org. Like FCC on Facebook for updates and resources for families.
 - Amesbury Notice: The CAI Amesbury Center food pantry is providing curbside pickup at the handicapped/side entrance of building, 44 Friend St in Amesbury. You must call to schedule food pickup, (978) 388-2570. The Amesbury food pantry serves residents of Amesbury, Merrimac, Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury and West Newbury. For other assistance, please call and leave messages for return calls as possible. The Clothing Bank is closed until further notice.
 - CAI's Drop-In Center is open for limited access to street homeless adults only from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday, except holidays.

- CAI Adult Learning Center is closed through April 7th, following the Haverhill Public School system.
- All First Time Homebuyer classes have been suspended.
- Please check <https://www.communityactioninc.org/> for updates or call the main phone line at 978-373-1971.

Therapeutic Services Update:

- **Lahey- BILHBS** is maintaining services via telephone with all current clients. They are not taking new clients at this time. Emergency Services is continuing regular in-person operations for clients who complete a basic verbal Covid screening.
- **Northeast Family Services-** NFS is accepting new referrals. They have a short waitlist for IHT and IHBS, but are opening with new families using telehealth. So able to move our waitlist along. We are using telehealth to provide services safely for all concerned. *Main Office: 774-206-1125*
- **Family Services of Merrimack Valley:** We have begun to offer telehealth services to our existing clients. We are not scheduling new intakes at this moment, but will maintain a list of referrals that need appointments immediately following this situation.
- **ACA Family Resources:** Actively taking new referrals and offering TeleHealth services. Programs/Services: Outpatient Therapy, IHT, Therapeutic Mentoring, and Community Service Programming (CSP). Multilingual and multicultural services available *Main Number: (978) 989- 9902 Address: 599 Canal Street #12, Lawrence, MA 01840. Website: <http://www.acafamilyservices.com>*
- **Children's Friend & Family Services:** Actively taking new referrals and offering TeleHealth services. Programs/Services: Outpatient Therapy, IHT, Therapeutic Mentoring, and Community Service Agency (CSA) *Main Number: (978) 682-7289. Address: 15 Union Street, Lawrence, MA 01840 Website: <https://jri.org/community-services/childrens-friend-and-family-services>*

Recovery and Addiction Services:

Virtual AA meetings:

- "Pause a While" free conference call meetings 2pm every day (425) 436-6360 access code 422932#
- AA meeting 730 every night 605-313-5684 access code 855830#
- "WEconnect" and "Unit Recovery" are partnering 4x day meetings open format anyone in or seeking recovery 7 days a week 9am, 12pm, 3pm, 9 pm Go to. Unitrecovery.zoom.us/my/allrecovery
- Many more by checking here <http://aa-intergroup.org/>
- NA meetings <https://www.na.org/meetingsearch/>

In Home Educational Resources:

The Haverhill Public School Department has put together a number of on-line learning resources for families to use while the schools are closed. Please go to HPS website at <http://www.haverhill-ps.org/supportive-home-learning-resources/>

Some Financial Resources from Our Friends at Budget Buddies

- **Student loans:**

For those with federal student loans, it was announced that you can suspend payments for at least two months (without incurring interest or penalties) with very minimal effort. You just contact the loan service online or via phone to enroll. Even if your loan repayment is delinquent, you will still get suspended payments. The federal government has also announced that it will be waiving interest specifically for federally-held student loans during this time. [Learn more go to https://www.forbes.com/sites/zackfriedman/2020/03/22/student-loans-forbearance-coronavirus/#70a01b9b416c](https://www.forbes.com/sites/zackfriedman/2020/03/22/student-loans-forbearance-coronavirus/#70a01b9b416c).

- **Mortgage payments:**

[U.S. Orders Up To A Yearlong Break On Mortgage Payments](#) - Homeowners who have lost income or their jobs because of the [coronavirus outbreak](#) are getting some relief. Depending on their situation, they should be eligible to have their mortgage payments reduced or suspended for up to 12 months. Homeowners can't just stop paying their mortgage. They need to contact their servicer — that is the lender that they send the check to every month.

- **Financial Support**

- **United Way of Massachusetts Bay & Merrimack Valley:** Financial Support: **The United Way** is offering “one-time grants of up to \$2000” to “help families impacted by the COVID-19 crisis meet their basic food, childcare or housing needs.” You can dial 2-1-1 for information on where you can access flexible funds through the COVID-19 Family Support Fund. For immediate help, <https://unitedwaymassbay.org/resources/need-help/>.

For free, confidential, multilingual support: <https://www.mass211.org/>,
<http://www.211nh.org/>

- [Restaurant Strong Fund](#)

The Greg Hill Foundation has teamed up with Samuel Adams* to support those from the Massachusetts restaurant industry who have been impacted by the Covid-19 closures. Grants to full-time restaurant workers in Massachusetts who are dependent on wages plus tips to cover basic living expenses and provide for their families. Our goal is to provide \$1,000 grants to as many qualifying grantees as possible. <https://www.thegreghillfoundation.org/restaurantstrong/>

- [COVID-19 College Student Emergency Relief Mini Grants](#)

The Leadership Brainery is offering racially/ethnically diverse, first-generation, or LGBTQ+ undergraduate students from the Greater Boston Area who have been

displaced by COVID-19 a one-time \$100 mini grant. Eligible students can apply through the website at <https://www.theleadershipbrainery.org/covid19grants>.

▪ **Tax Information**

- The IRS has [moved the national income tax filing day to July 15](#), three months after the normal deadline for Americans to send in their federal returns due to the COVID-19 emergency.
- The IRS urges taxpayers who are due a refund to file as soon as possible. Most tax refunds are still being issued within 21 days.
- As of 3/24, neither [Massachusetts](#) nor New Hampshire had extended their state tax deadlines.

▪ **Internet Accessibility Resources**

- [Comcast](#) offers low-income individuals nation-wide two months of free internet via their [Internet Essentials](#) program, with XFINITY Wifi networks free for public use, and no disconnects or late fees for existing customers.
- [Charter-Spectrum](#) offers free access for 60 days to broadband and WiFi services to households with students (K- college) who do not already have services. To enroll: call 1-844-488-8395 (installation fees for student households waived).
- A growing number of companies have pledged to ["Keep Americans Connected"](#) :
 - ✓ Not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;
 - ✓ Waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic;
 - ✓ Open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.