



News Release

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City manager declares local state of emergency

Danville and Pittsylvania County have yet to have a confirmed case of the new coronavirus, but City Manager Ken Larking today declared a local state of emergency to enable the City to have access to additional resources as needed.

The declaration took effect at noon and will remain in place until April 7.

“It is important for the public to know that this situation is serious and that their local government is taking steps to protect the public and ensure the continuation of essential services,” Larking said.

In conjunction with this declaration, the City announces the following actions:

- The City of Danville will temporarily suspend the disconnection of utility services for late payment during the state of emergency. The Charles H. Harris Financial Service Center remains open for business as usual, but citizens are encouraged to use one of the various payment methods that do not involve face-to-face contact and avoid coming into the financial center if possible. Customers have the options of online payment, payment by mail, payment at the drive-thru window, and payment at the dropbox (during and after work hours but no cash allowed).
- All business travel for employees is suspended unless approved by the City Manager's Office.
- The City is exploring work-at-home options for certain employees and modifying leave rules in order to slow the spread of the disease and ensure the availability of City workers to deliver essential services.
- We have implemented social-distancing for workplace protocols, which limit the number of face-to-face meetings.
- Our first responders and front line employees are taking steps to protect themselves from exposure, including the use of personal protective equipment.



- We have stepped up our cleaning and disinfecting protocols in our public buildings.
- The Rubie B. Archie Library and indoor Parks and Recreation facilities remain closed to the public.
- Outdoor facilities including parks and the RiverWalk Trail will remain open.

Safety measures:

The Virginia Department of Health provides the following advice to help prevent respiratory illnesses of any kind, including COVID-19, year-round:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands, especially after coughing and sneezing, before and after caring for an ill person, and before preparing foods and before eating.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact (such as kissing, sharing cups, or sharing eating utensils) with people who are sick. Close contact is considered being within six (6) feet of someone who is ill for 15 minutes or more.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except when you need to get medical care. If you seek medical attention, call your doctor's office or medical facility before you go.

The CDC does not recommend that healthy people wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

How can I learn more about COVID-19?

If you have concerns that you may be sick from COVID-19, the Virginia Department of Health advises that you contact your healthcare provider.

Visit the City of Danville's COVID-19 website: <http://www.danvilleva.gov/coronavirus>

Visit the Virginia Department of Health website: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>



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Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html.

Visit the World Health Organization website: <https://www.who.int/>

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