



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Mark Lavin

MEMO

Updated

TO: Building Industry Professionals, Planning & Development Services
FROM: Mark Lavin, PDS Director, Jason Blais, Building Official
CC: Jade Riley, Chief Operating Officer, Courtney Washburn, Chief of Staff, Elizabeth Koeckeritz, Civil Section Senior Attorney
DATE: 4/16/2020 (**Updated from previous 4/2/20 Updated Memo**)
RE: Governor's Order to Self-Isolate – Exemptions, Safety Precautions

COVID-19

Governor's Order to Self-Isolate - Exemptions

The Governor's Order to Self-Isolate issued on March 25, 2020, specifically includes exemptions for public works construction, commercial construction, construction of housing (in particular affordable housing or housing for individuals experiencing homelessness), water, sewer, gas, electrical and telecommunication systems, among others, as "Essential Infrastructure". **NOTE: On 4/15/20, the Governor has extended the Order to Self-Isolate effective through April 30, 2020.**

The Order also includes an extensive list of "Essential Businesses" such as, healthcare operations and essential infrastructure, grocery stores, food businesses, shelters, social services, media companies, gas stations, auto supply or service, financial institutions, hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, landscapers, educational institutions, among others.

"Essential Government Functions" includes "others working for or to support Essential Businesses". "Essential Government Functions" means all services needed to ensure the continuing operation of local, state, federal, or tribal government agencies and provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public. All Essential Governmental Functions shall be performed in compliance with the **Social Distancing Requirements** as defined by Section 8.j., to the extent possible.

Thus, per the Order at this time, **City functions to review, process and issue permits, and to conduct inspections, therefore, are considered "essential" and are exempt from the Order.** However, in carrying out our services, additional heightened safety precautions will be implemented.

Safety Precautions

During these times it is imperative our team members adhere to safety precautions. It is highly recommended that those who can work from home, do work from home. If you must work at City Hall, practice social distancing requirements and good hygiene.

There are many precautions to consider when carrying out inspections:

1. Ask if anyone in the area or building is sick, has been sick or has been asked to be quarantined. Other questions that can also be asked:
 - Have you or anyone in your residence/job site recently experienced any illness related symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath?
 - Have you or anyone in your residence/job site recently traveled out of state or outside of North America in the past 14 days?
 - Have you or anyone in your residence/job site recently interacted with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19?

If yes, do not conduct the inspection and ask them to reschedule for a later date.

(4/2/20 Update – Added additional questions that can be asked. Where it can be determined that the job site has been properly cleaned and sanitized, reinspection can occur after at least 48 hours has passed. Where it cannot be adequately determined, reinspection can occur after at least 72 hours has passed. For occupied homes, reinspection can occur after at least 14 days has passed.)

2. Ask contractors what provisions they have implemented on the job site for safety considering the COVID-19 situation.

(4/2/20 Update – Reference separate document – COVID-19 Precautionary Job Site Practices)

3. Have awareness of the symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, dry cough, difficulty breathing). If you observe any of these, do not conduct the inspection and ask them to reschedule for a later date.
4. Maintain at least 6' of social distancing from persons at all times. If this cannot be achieved, do not conduct the inspection and ask them to reschedule for a later date.

(4/2/20 Update – Request that workers and/or subcontractors be removed from the building, applicable floor or area subject to inspection. Inspectors will not enter construction trailers at this time. All approved plans and documents that need to be referenced or signed off by the inspector need to be brought out to the inspector.)



5. Carry only items, tools or equipment needed to conduct the inspection. Avoid placing items, tools or equipment on surfaces unless properly disinfected.
6. Wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer or disinfectant wipes often.
7. Use provided Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) gear as necessary, gloves, shoe covers, masks, biohazard bags, etc., especially in occupied living spaces. Lead by example with use of this gear.
8. Have higher caution in interior remodels, repairs or additions to existing occupied homes. If any concerns, do not conduct the inspection and ask them to reschedule for a later date. Consult supervisor if needed.

(4/16/20 Update – Effective 4/2/20, most all in person inspections for projects involving the interior of existing occupied homes are suspended, and now extended until after May 1, 2020. Re-evaluation of this condition and date may occur. Residential permits, including water heater and HVAC retrofit permits, can still be issued, however, in person inspections within occupied dwellings will not occur until after that date.

As an exception and per inspector discretion, inspections for items such as electrical service panels, water heaters and HVAC retrofits located in a garage, accessed from the outside and through a large open garage overhead door, may occur with safe distancing and appropriate PPE gear worn. Virtual inspections according to Item #10 below may also be an option for any inspections and inspections for emergency repairs of power, heating, gas, water and sewer services for a safe and healthy living environment can still occur with safe distancing and appropriate PPE gear worn.)

9. Where possible, avoid high risk areas with patients or occupants such as hospitals, medical offices, assisted living facilities, or daycares. Determine if the inspection can be delayed or rescheduled. Consult supervisor if needed.
10. In high risk areas or occupied homes, consider the possibility of virtual inspection approvals by video, photos, video calls or cell phone apps such as Google Duo (**preferred**), Zoom, Skype, Teams, etc.

(4/2/20 Update – Added occupied homes and updated cell phone apps that can work with both Samsung phones and I-phones. Virtual inspections can be an option in some cases. Contractors and Inspectors can communicate and work directly together to determine if this can be accomplished for a specific inspection or situation.)

11. Where inspections need to be rescheduled, enter comments of the reasons for the need to reschedule in the inspection activity within our permit system.
12. If you feel sick, stay home. Communicate to supervisor.

