

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 18, 2020**

**Mayor Colin Read**

Yesterday I asked all our department heads to provide a plan to immediately reduce the number of members of our workforce coming to work by 50%, while we still maintain all emergency and necessary services. That was yesterday. Today I am instructing all non-essential staff to go home. The definition of essential staff are those engaged directly in the protection of health and safety of our community.

These critical operations are to ensure:

- a minimum staff to ensure police are able to respond to emergencies, with additional staff on 24 hour call at all times for emergency situations.
- full staffing of the fire department, and the immediate placement into service of our second ambulance, to be stationed at the fire hall on the south side of our city to best serve the senior citizen populations at the nursing homes, high rises and extended care facilities.
- rotating staffing to ensure our water supply and wastewater treatment facilities remain fully operational.
- all other staff are asked to stay home.
- every staff member is asked to support these efforts to their best possible extent. For many employees, it will be to stay home and stay safe.
- City Hall is **closed** to Public unless emergency
- All unnecessary Face to Face meetings are cancelled.
- Services will be delivered in other ways than personal contact.

Those staff who are able to work at home to maintain critical operations that include the ability for the city to pay its staff are being provided with facilities to perform any such critical functions from home.

I am available to any member of the press who answer any questions so all employees and the general public can fully understand the scope of city operations in maintaining essential services.

I ask that all residents and businesses engage in maximum social distancing and the minimum face-to-face operations possible to ensure the health and safety of our workforce and our residents, and afford the greatest opportunity to minimize the rate of spread of the Coronavirus. Lives will be saved by your acts at this time. I understand only the Governor can order mandatory compliance of these practices, but I plead with all to consider the acts recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. They can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

I do not know the degree to which authority exists for these acts. I have not been able to receive guidance on these decisions, but I am not going to risk the health and safety of any member of our community.