

ACIR

Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations Best Practices Guidelines

Updated 1-28-2021 - Declaration of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies

Building Official

This function is responsible for the enforcement of building codes that must be followed by property owners, contractors, and developers, when improvements are made to real property. The Chief Building Official (CBO) is usually in charge of this program, with a number of code inspectors (e.g., building, electrical, heating, and plumbing), as required. (Connecticut Town and City Management Association - Model Practices for Municipal Governments - 2007)

Plans, organizes and directs a comprehensive building, advisory, inspection and enforcement program; administers and enforces the State Building Code, town building ordinances and regulations related to health, safety and fire codes.

- Receives and reviews proposed building and related construction plans
- Participates in preliminary reviews and consultations with other town departments regarding major building projects
- Confers with and interprets code provisions with architects, engineers, contractors and members of the public
- Assists members of the public in amending plans to conform with building codes
- Provides technical consultation to town boards and commissions and to various town departments and special building committees
- Oversees and inspects all construction work in progress to ensure conformity with code and regulations
- Issues certificates of use and occupancy
- Receives and investigates complaints of code violations, takes corrective action as needed
- Evaluates the results of various tests, such as soils and material tests to assure compliance with standards
- Works closely with the town's engineer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, health officials and Fire Marshal in inspection and review duties
- Prepares various reports for town, state and federal agencies

Statutory Issues/References

- Sec. 29-260 - Appointment and authority for the Building Official.
- Sec. 29-252 - State Building Code
- Sec. 29-263(a) - Building Permit Issuance

Executive Orders

Declaration of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies

January 26, 2021

On March 10, 2020, in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 disease associated with a novel coronavirus that was affecting multiple countries and states and had resulted in the spread of infections in Connecticut and surrounding states, as well as resulting shortages of personal protective equipment and other supplies that could jeopardize public safety and civil preparedness, and in order to provide me and other appropriate officials with all authorities necessary to limit the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and protect public safety within the State of Connecticut, I declared a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State...On September 1, 2020, in anticipation of the expiration of those states of emergency and in recognition of continued and newly emerging threats to public health and safety and civil preparedness posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I renewed the March 10, 2020 declarations and declared new public health and civil preparedness emergencies through February 9, 2021

Since I declared and renewed those public health and civil preparedness emergencies, and due in no small part to the orders I have issued pursuant to those emergencies, Connecticut has made significant progress in limiting the spread of COVID-19 and mitigating its devastating public health and economic effects. And yet,

while it has been more than a month since I have issued a new executive order, those orders currently in effect remain crucial to the state's civil preparedness and ability to protect the public health. COVID-19 remains a global pandemic, capable of spreading quickly within our state. New and unforeseen challenges have arisen since September of last year, when I declared new and renewed emergencies. The current, second wave and the recent mutations of the virus have made clear that many of the existing orders will remain essential beyond February 9. While our vaccination effort currently leads the country in many respects, an effective mass vaccination program requires that I be vested with all of the flexibility and resources that the declared states of emergency provide. As was true in September of last year, the risks to public health and to our state's economy would be heightened substantially if the existing emergencies expired as scheduled on February 9.

As a result, and for the same reasons I declared emergencies on March 10 and declared new and renewed emergencies on September 1...I am renewing the existing public health emergency and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the State...I hereby declare that new states of public health and civil preparedness emergency exist throughout the State...These new and renewed states of emergency shall run concurrently and remain in effect until April 20, 2021, unless earlier terminated by me.

- 7H- 1 - Defines “Essential Services”** and includes:
 - ✓ Construction including:
 - ▶ all skilled trades such as electricians, HVAC, and plumbers
 - ▶ general construction, both commercial and residential
 - ▶ other related construction firms and professionals for essential infrastructure or for emergency repair and safety purposes
 - ▶ planning, engineering, design, bridge inspection, and other construction support activities
 - ✓ Services necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation and essential operations of all residences and other buildings (including services necessary to secure and maintain non-essential workplaces)
 - ▶ building code enforcement

Executive Order 7H Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7H.pdf>

- 7I-15 - Extension of Municipal Deadlines and Waiver of Penalties Related to Municipal Planning, Assessment and Taxation.** The deadlines for Net Grand Lists, Assessor Reports, Board of Assessment Appeals applications and decisions, Grand List of Taxable and Tax-Exempt Property Sales Data Reports, and State Owned, College and Hospital Claim Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) reimbursement claims are extended without penalty. Additionally, the related penalty provisions set forth under are suspended. Sections 10-261a(c), 12-63c, 12-110, 12-111, 12-117, and 12-120, and Section 12-2b-11 of the Regulations and Sections 10-261b, 12-19a, and 12-20b, Sec 10-261b, 12-19a, and 12-20b
- 7I-16 - Suspension of In-Person Filing Requirements Related to Municipal Planning, Assessment and Taxation.** The requirement under of the Statutes for a taxpayer to appear in person are suspended to the extent necessary to permit any public agency to meet and take such actions authorized by law without permitting or requiring in-person participation in such meetings or filings, and to hold such meetings or obtain necessary information remotely by conference call, videoconference, electronic communication, or other technology, consistent with requirements set forth in Executive Order 7B. Sections 12-110, 12-111, 12-117 and 12-170aa
- 7I-19 - Suspends, modifies, and clarifies certain municipal procedural requirements and time limitations regarding notice, commencement, and holding of public hearings, decisions, and appeals, including land use and other municipal boards.** Specifically, General Statutes Chapters 14, 97a, 98, 103, 124, 126, 246, 368k, 440, 444, 446i, and the repealed Section 14-55, if and to the extent such repealed section is revived by current judicial action, and any related special act(s), and municipal charter, ordinance, resolution, or regulation (all such state and municipal laws and regulations being, collectively, the "Covered Laws"); any provision of such Covered Laws that establish procedural requirements for municipal decisions and that conflict with this order, is suspended and modified.
 - a. **Any time deadlines** contained in the Covered Laws that may pass or expire during the public health and civil preparedness emergency declared by me on March 10, 2020 ("state of emergency") are **extended by an additional 90 days**
 - b. If the **90-day demolition delay** required by Section 7-147j would commence or expire during the state of emergency, such period of delay shall be extended for 90 days.

- c. Any Covered Law requiring a municipality or agency to **publish any notice or notices** in a newspaper of general or substantial circulation **is suspended and modified** to allow a single notice to be **published electronically on a municipality's or agency's website**
- d. Any Covered Law requiring **any notice to be filed in the office of any municipal clerk**, including any town, city, borough, or district clerk, **is suspended and modified** to allow said notice to be **posted electronically on a municipality's website**,
- e. Any Covered Law requiring **direct or personal notice by mail from a municipality, agency or applicant** to any other person, agency, municipal clerk (including any town, city, borough, or district clerk), municipality, utility company or water company regarding the filing or pendency of any petition, application, or other proposal is suspended and modified to allow said notice requirement **to be satisfied by electronic mail notification**,
- f. Any Covered Law prescribing the procedure for any petition, including petition of **a decision**, to an agency or legislative body, is suspended and modified to allow **such petition to be signed electronically**
- g. Any Covered Law **prescribing the procedure for commencement of an appeal of a decision to the Superior Court** and associated service of process is **suspended and modified to permit any such appeal to be commenced by a proper officer by electronic mail notice**
- h. Any Covered Law **prescribing the procedure for commencement of an appeal of a decision to the Superior Court** and associated service of process is **suspended and modified to permit any such appeal to be commenced by a proper officer by electronic mail notice**
- i. Any Covered Law prescribing the procedure for commencement of an **appeal of a decision by a zoning enforcement officer or an agent for an inland wetland agency** is suspended and modified to **permit any such appeal to be commenced by regular mail or by electronic mail**

Land Use Clarification for Section 19:

- a. Land use applications and proceedings that are constrained by statutory deadlines will have those deadlines extended by up to an aggregate period of ninety (90) days in addition to any other statutory or regulatory extension provisions.
- b. Demolition delay timelines are extended by ninety (90) days
- c. Statutory or regulatory provisions requiring filings or publications of notices and other information are generally suspended to allow such filings or publications to be made on the municipality's website rather than in the town clerk's office or in a newspaper
- d. Statutory or regulatory provisions requiring posting of physical signs are suspended (with one exception noted below)
- e. Statutory or regulatory provisions requiring personal notice by mail to individuals, other boards or commissions, other towns, regional planning organizations or other entities or persons may be made by electronic mail where possible. If electronic mail addresses are unknown for any such recipients, the party obligated to give the notice may (i) post a sign on the property indicating that an application is pending and giving relevant details or (ii) mail required notices to those individuals or entities at the address provided to them by the municipality.
- f. Statutory or regulatory provisions requiring the filing of any petition, including a petition for an appeal to a legislative body or agency, may be satisfied by electronic filings of and electronic signatures on such petitions
- g. Commencement of an appeal of a municipal decision to Superior Court which requires service on the town clerk or other town official or entity may be satisfied by service by electronic mail by the proper officer. The time period for filing an appeal has not been changed.
- h. The appeal of a decision of a zoning enforcement officer or an inland wetlands agent may be made by electronic mail rather than regular mail. The time period for filing such appeals has not been changed.
- i. The suspensions and modifications contained in Section 19 of Executive Order 71 would require the filing or delivery of the applicable confirmations, notices, appeals or other actions to be made within a reasonable time after the applicable office opens for public activity.

Executive Order 71 Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-71.pdf>

- 7L-3 - Suspends restrictions on the re-employment of retired municipal employees:** To enable municipalities to meet critical staffing needs caused by COVID-19 with skilled and experienced employees who require little to no additional training, the order modifies state statutes to allow certain retired employees who are in the municipal

retirement system to work without any hourly or durational limitation while also continuing to receive retirement allowances. Sec. 7-438(b). Continuation of retirement allowance upon other public employment. Participation in state retirement system. Reemployment by participating municipality.

Executive Order 7L Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7L.pdf>

7M-3 - Authority to Extend Statutory and Regulatory Administrative Deadlines by 90 Days.

- **Building Code Modifications** – Sec. 29-254.
 - ✓ Submission of modification applications by local building officials to OSBI – may be delayed up to 90 days from the date of receipt.
- **Building Officials Continuing Education** - Sec. 29-262. L
 - ✓ Continuing education cycles ending during this time period – end date is extended 90 days from the original end date.
- **Building Permits** - Sec. 29-263. Permit to construct or alter. Education fee.
 - ✓ Building Official action on permit applications – may be extended up to 90 days from the date of application.
 - ✓ Submission of education fees by municipalities to DAS/OEDM for the quarter ending March 31, 2020 - may be delayed up to 90 days.

7V-1 - Safe workplaces in essential businesses: Requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to work in consultation with the Department of Public Health on the development of legally binding statewide rules prescribing additional protective measures that every workplace in Connecticut deemed essential – and any other business or nonprofit allowed to remain open – must follow. Such rules will be mandatory throughout the state.

- Immediately upon Governor Lamont’s signing of this executive order, the Department of Economic and Community Development published the Safe Workplaces Rules for Essential Employers on its website, outlining guidance for these businesses. These rules go into effect immediately.
- Nothing in such rules or this order shall supersede Executive Order No. 7S, Section 1, or the “Safe Stores” rules
- ✓ Go to DECD’s website for the most recent guidance: <https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/Safe-Workplace-Rules-for-Essential-Employers>

Executive Order 7V Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7V.pdf>

7BB-1 - (Repealed and Replaced by EO 7NNN) Cloth face coverings or higher level of protection required in public wherever close contact is unavoidable - Each employee shall be required to wear a mask or other cloth material that covers his or her mouth and nose at all times while in the workplace. Towns shall issue such masks or cloth face coverings to their employees. In the event a town is unable to provide masks or cloth face coverings to employees because of shortages or supply chain difficulties, towns must provide the materials and CDC tutorial about how to create a cloth face covering, or compensate employees for the reasonable and necessary costs employees expend on such materials to make their own masks or cloth face coverings.

- Nothing in in these rules shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition.
- If a person declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition as described above, such person shall not be required to produce medical documentation verifying the stated condition.

Executive Order 7BB Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7BB.pdf>

7QQ-6 - Clarification that Commissioner Orders Issued Pursuant to the Governor’s Executive Orders Are Not Regulations Subject to the UAPA. Section 4-166(16) of the Connecticut General Statutes is modified to clarify that the definition of a regulation does not include any amendment or repeal of an existing regulation and any directive, rule, guidance, or order issued by a Commissioner or Department Head pursuant to a Governor’s Executive Order during the existing civil preparedness and public health emergency and any renewal or extension thereof. Notwithstanding

Sections 4-166 to 189, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, any Commissioner or Department Head, as permitted or directed by any such Governor's executive order, may modify or suspend any regulatory requirements adopted by the Commissioner or Department Head that they deem necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the public health. This section applies to all orders that have been issued since the declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies on March 10, 2020 and for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency, including any period of renewal of such emergency declaration.

Executive order 7QQ Link - <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7QQ.pdf>

- **7UU-2 - Determination of Suitable Work.** For any claim submitted covering May 17 through July 25, Section 31-236-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is modified to read, "In determining whether or not work offered is suitable for an individual, the Administrator shall consider the degree of risk to the individual's health or, due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the health of a member of that individual's household. In determining the degree of risk, the Administrator may consider the individual's or household member's health, his or her physical capabilities, the physical and mental requirements of the job, working conditions and the existence of any medical documentation concerning the individual's limitations. Where an unreasonable risk to the individual's health or, due to COVID 19, the health of a member of that individual's household is established, the Administrator shall find the work to be unsuitable for the individual."

Executive Order 7UU Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7UU.pdf>

- **7NNN - 1 - Executive Order No. 7BB, Section 2, issued on April 17, 2020, is repealed.** Effective immediately, any person in a public place in Connecticut, whether indoors or outdoors, who does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service, or any means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area.
 - a. Nothing in this order shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition, a child in a child care setting, or anyone under the age of 2 years. Any person who declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition shall be exempt from this order and any requirement to wear masks in Sector Rules or other rules issued by the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), but only if such person provides written documentation that the person is qualified for the exemption from a licensed medical provider, the Department of Developmental Services or other state agency that provides or supports services for people with emotional, intellectual or physical disabilities, or a person authorized by any such agency. Such documentation need not name or describe the condition that qualifies the person for the exemption
 - b. The Commissioner of DECD shall issue updated versions of Sector Rules, Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employers, or other rules issued pursuant to previous executive orders, which updated versions shall set forth updated requirements for face coverings within those settings, and which, when complied with, shall constitute compliance with this order.
 - c. This order shall supersede and preempt any current or future municipal order whenever such order conflicts with this order.

Executive Order Link 7NNN- <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7NNN.pdf>

- **9L1 -Extension of COVID-19 Executive Orders to February 9, 2021.** Pursuant to the emergency declarations issued on September 1, 2020, all executive orders issued pursuant to the public health and civil preparedness emergencies declared on March 10, 2020 and renewed on September 1, 2020 (COVID-19 Orders) that are unexpired and currently in effect as of the date of this order are hereby extended through February 9, 2021, unless earlier modified or terminated by me. Any individual section of any such order that is scheduled to expire on any other specific date shall remain in effect until such specific date, and any specific effective date or date for action contained in any such individual section shall remain valid. By way of illustration, and for the sake of clarity, Executive Order No. 9E has no specific duration because each individual section has specific dates for expiration or other action. The specific deadlines within such order, including the January 1, 2021 expiration of the eviction moratorium in Section 1 of that order and the February 9, 2021 expiration of the café liquor permits provided for in Section 2 of that order, shall remain unchanged and unaffected by this order.

- **9L.2 - Extension of Agency and Municipality Orders of Concurrent Duration with Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies.** Any unexpired order, rule, regulation, directive or guidance issued by any official, agency, department, municipality, or entity pursuant to an unexpired COVID-19 Order, which by its own terms provides that it shall remain in place for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency **shall remain in effect until February 9, 2021**, unless earlier modified or terminated by the issuing authority or a subsequent executive order.

Executive Order Link 9L - <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-9L.pdf>

Continuity Issues

- **Safety** - Workplace safety is now the “new normal” and will - for the foreseeable future change the workplace. The Building Official operates in both the field and the office. When in the office, proper distancing from fellow workers and the public (once town halls are re-opened) must be adhered to - this may result in the need to reconfigure the office to comply with and provide proper workforce protection.
- **Staffing** - Many municipalities, especially small towns, utilize part-time building officials. Often these persons have relationships with one or more other towns and there may or may not be an inter-local agreement to share these persons. The pandemic has the possibility of disrupting the pool of qualified inspectors - causing delays to an already stressed system.
 - ✓ Inter-local agreements (7-339a to 7-339l, inclusive) .require endorsement of the town’s legislative body
- **Public Interactions** - Some things can be done remotely and others may require in person meetings. The challenge in the short and long-term is having in place the capacity to serve the public while protecting office staff.
- **Routine Functions**
 - ✓ Permit Applications and Process
 - ▶ Lack of electronic options
 - ✓ Remote plan reviews
 - ✓ Inspections
 - ✓ Process

Suggested Best Practices

- **Staffing**
 - Towns may consider either an **inter-municipal agreement or mutual aid agreements** with a neighboring community to either **share staff or “piggyback”** various town staffing with a community with more capacity. Before exercising this option, municipalities should consult with their bargaining units to meet any staffing challenges to ensure proper coordination in accordance with the terms of existing bargaining agreements and all applicable laws including but not limited to the Teachers Negotiations Act and the Municipal Employees Relation Act.
 - **Regional councils of governments** should be assembling rosters of qualified inspectors who can fill in as independent contractors on an as-needed basis to fill vacancies or work loads of member towns
 - ✓ Avoids need for inter-town agreements
 - ✓ **Independent contractors used to fill temporary need should be allowed through E.O. so as not to conflict with local collective bargaining agreements**
 - Towns with either **staffing capacity issues or a temporary interruption in staffing** due to COVID-19 could bridge such situations utilizing their regional council of governments (COGs). The nine regional COGs either have the staffing capacity or the ability to “staff up” to perform most town functions. COGs have the statutory authority (8-31b) to provide most any function a town may need. COGs already provide dozens of services otherwise performed individually by towns on a shared or regional basis.
 - ✓ Avoids need for inter-town agreements
 - ✓ Independent contractors used to fill temporary need should be allowed through E.O. so as not to conflict with local collective bargaining agreements
 - ✓ COGs **must engage and involve bargaining unit representatives** to be part of any regional staffing.
 - Utilizing Executive Order 7L-3 municipalities are allowed to **re-hire retired municipal employees** - allowing communities third- experienced staff. Before exercising this option, municipalities should consult with their bargaining units to meet any staffing challenges to ensure **proper coordination in accordance with the terms of existing bargaining agreements.**

□ **Safety**

- **CDC Interim Guidance For Employers With Workers At High Risk** (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/cdc-activities-initiatives-for-covid-19-response.pdf#page=57>)

As workplaces consider a gradual scale up of activities towards pre-COVID-19 operating practices, it is particularly important to keep in mind that some workers are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. These workers include individuals over age 65 and those with underlying medical conditions. Such underlying conditions include, but are not limited to, chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, hypertension, severe heart conditions, weakened immunity, severe obesity, diabetes, liver disease, and chronic kidney disease that requires dialysis. Workers at higher risk for severe illness should be encouraged to self-identify, and employers should avoid making unnecessary medical inquiries. Employers should take particular care to reduce workers' risk of exposure to COVID-19, while making sure to be compliant with relevant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) regulations. First and foremost, this means following CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidance for reducing workplace exposure for all employees. All decisions about following these recommendations should be made in collaboration with local health officials and other state and local authorities who can help assess the current level of mitigation needed based on levels of COVID-19 community transmission and the capacities of the local public health and healthcare systems. In addition, the guidance offered below applies to workplaces generally; specific industries may require more stringent safety precautions. Finally, there may be essential workplaces in which the recommended mitigation strategies are not feasible. CDC is releasing this interim guidance, laid out in a series of three steps, to inform a gradual scale up of operations. The scope and nature of community mitigation suggested decreases from Step 1 to Step 3. Some amount of community mitigation is necessary across all steps until a vaccine or therapeutic drug becomes widely available. Scaling Up Operations:
In all Steps:

- ▶ Establish and maintain communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in your community
 - ▶ Protect employees at higher risk for severe illness by supporting and encouraging options to telework
 - ▶ Consider offering workers at higher risk duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees (eg , restocking shelves rather than working as a cashier), if agreed to by the worker
 - ▶ Encourage any other entities sharing the same work space also follow this guidance
 - ▶ Provide employees from higher transmission areas (earlier Step areas) telework and other options as feasible to eliminate travel to workplaces in lower transmission (later Step) areas and vice versa
 - ✓ Step 1: Scale up only if business can ensure strict social distancing, proper cleaning and disinfecting requirements, and protection of their workers and customers; workers at higher risk for severe illness are recommended to shelter in place
 - ✓ Step 2: Scale up only if business can ensure moderate social distancing, proper cleaning and disinfecting requirements, and protection of their workers and customers; workers at higher risk for severe illness are recommended to shelter in place
 - ✓ Step 3: Scale up only if business can ensure limited social distancing, proper cleaning and disinfecting requirements, and protection of their workers and customers
- **Guidance on Mask Management** (World Health Organization - Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19: Interim Guidance)

For any type of mask, appropriate use and disposal are essential to ensure that they are as effective as possible and to avoid any increase in transmission. WHO offers the following guidance on the correct use of masks, derived from best practices in health care settings:

- ▶ perform hand hygiene before putting on the mask;
- ▶ place the mask carefully, ensuring it covers the mouth and nose, adjust to the nose bridge, and tie it securely to minimize any gaps between the face and the mask;
- ▶ avoid touching the mask while wearing it;
- ▶ remove the mask using the appropriate technique: do not touch the front of the mask but untie it from behind.
- ▶ after removal or whenever a used mask is inadvertently touched, clean hands with an alcohol-based hand rub, or soap and water if hands are visibly dirty;
- ▶ replace masks as soon as they become damp with a new clean, dry mask;
- ▶ do not re-use single-use masks;
- ▶ discard single-use masks after each use and dispose of them immediately upon removal.

- **Rank and file public employees are a resource that must be used when discussing, planning or implementing safety protocols and to assist in determining safe practices for public interactions.** To not the people who will be staffing worksites is shortsighted, may compromise their safety and will only lead to future problems
- Building Office can remain open during regular business hours for employees ONLY - public should not be allowed in town halls
 - ✓ **Sick employees to stay home.** Where possible, employees should take their temperature before they go to work. If they have a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, they should stay home.
 - ✓ Distribute summaries of health insurance processes and procedures to employees.
 - ✓ Place posters that encourage hand hygiene to help stop the spread at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
 - ✓ **Ensure that all employees who do not speak English as their first language are aware of procedures** by communicating the procedures, either orally or in writing, in their native or preferred language.
 - ✓ Each employee shall be required, in accordance with Executive order 7BB-1, to **wear a mask** or other cloth material that covers his or her mouth and nose at all times while in the workplace. Towns shall issue such masks or cloth face coverings to their employees. In the event a town is unable to provide masks or cloth face coverings to employees because of shortages or supply chain difficulties, towns must provide the materials and CDC tutorial about how to create a cloth face covering, or compensate employees for the reasonable and necessary costs employees expend on such materials to make their own masks or cloth face coverings.
 - ✓ Ensure that the town hall office where the building official is located has a sufficient number of personnel to control access, maintain order, and enforce social distancing of at least 6 feet. **Increase ventilation rates and increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system where possible.**
 - ✓ Wherever possible, **segment the workspace into discrete zones.** Prohibit employees from entering into zones where they are not required to be to perform their jobs
 - ✓ To the extent workstations or equipment must be shared, **employees should be provided CDC compliant disinfectant to disinfect work areas before finishing their shift.** During this work, employees must sanitize the work areas upon arrival, throughout the workday, and immediately before departure. The Town should provide alcohol-based wipes for this purpose.
 - ✓ **Maintain minimum six-foot separation** between all employees (and customers) in all interactions at all times. When strict physical distancing is not feasible for a specific task, other prevention measures are required, such as use of barriers, minimizing staff or customers in narrow or enclosed areas, and staggering breaks and work shift starts.
 - ✓ Tightly enclosed spaces or small rooms should be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing cloth face coverings, masks or respirators. If occupied by more than one person, will keep occupancy under 50% of maximum capacity.
 - ✓ **Post social distancing markers** using tape or signs that denote 6 ft. of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas on the site (e.g. clock in/out stations, health screening stations)
 - ✓ **Limit in-person gatherings as much as possible and use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible.** Essential in-person gatherings (e.g. meetings) should be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants.
 - ✓ Establish designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.
 - ✓ Provide (at no cost to employees) and require the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, goggles, face shields and face masks as appropriate or required for the work activity being performed. Cloth face coverings must be worn by every employee not working alone on the job site unless their exposure dictates a higher level of protection under L&I safety and health rules and guidance.
 - ✓ Ensure frequent and adequate hand washing with adequate maintenance of supplies. Use disposable gloves where safe and applicable to prevent virus transmission on tools or other items that are shared
 - ✓ Conduct regular cleaning and disinfection at least after every shift, daily, or more frequently as needed, and frequent cleaning and disinfection of shared objects (e.g. tools, machinery) and surfaces, as well as high transit areas, such as restrooms and common areas, must be completed
- In the field, in addition to normal safety gear, **inspectors should adhere to all applicable CDC recommended protections.**

Applications

- Online submission of drawings, license information and applications via permit portal or email from town website
- If paper is the only method, mail-in applications only
- Payments received via online portal or mail-in checks

 Process Consolidation

- Grant permits conditionally subject to post-construction inspection
- Provided to PE-stamped applications and drawings certifying compliance with relevant codes
- Provided to pre-qualified contractors with demonstrated track record or industry certification (subject to building official's discretion)
- Inspections still occur post-construction, but installation process is not delayed due to periodic inspections, and contractor bears risk

 Inspections

- For exterior only, conduct as normal with proper distancing
- If interior - **utilize virtual inspections ONLY** - Virtual inspections are conducted between a customer and Town/City inspector by using a video call on a smart phone or tablet. Generally:
 - ✓ Inspection complexity will be determined by the inspector.
 - ✓ For inspections deemed too complex for virtual completion, the Town/City may accept, at the municipalities's discretion, third-party inspections.
 - ✓ Customers must have a smartphone or tablet connected to WiFi or 4G wireless service with Google Duo(all devices), FaceTime (Apple OS devices), or Microsoft Teams (all devices) to host the video call.
 - ✓ Third party engineers or third party agencies must obtain approval prior to conducting a virtual inspection. Town should have procedures for such approval.
 - ✓ The inspector will determine if additional fee(s) for re-inspection is required.
- Many municipalities have e-permitting/inspection systems. Communities without such should consider such program (For example: Municipity 5, CentralSquare, form.com, ProntoForms, Permit-LV, Accela Building Civic Application or AuditUtopia) as a means to expedite the process and protect inspectors.

Resources

- Office of the State Building Inspector** - <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/Office-of-State-Building-Inspector/Office-of-State-Building-Inspector>
- Connecticut Building Officials Association (CBOA)** - <http://www.ctbuildingofficial.org>
- Certified Commercial Property Inspectors Association (CCPIA)** - <https://ccpia.org>
- COVID-19: A Guide For Commercial Property Inspectors** - <https://ccpia.org/covid-19-a-guide-for-commercial-property-inspectors/#standards-specific-to-commercial>
- Virtual site visits help control infection on project sites** <https://www.bdcnetwork.com/virtual-site-visits-help-control-infection-project-sites>
- Town Of West Hartford Video Inspection Guide** - <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=41458>
- Building Officials Turn To Video Inspections To Mitigate COVID-19 Risk** - <https://www.constructiondive.com/news/covid-19-forces-building-officials-to-explore-remote-video-inspections/576072/>
- International Code Council COVID-19 Response Center** - <https://www.iccsafe.org/advocacy/coronavirus-response-center/>

ACIR

Best Practices Guidelines

The information contained in this document is not intended to provide legal advice and should be used only for guidance regarding various functions performed by municipalities. Individual questions regarding the applicability of Executive Orders should be directed to the Office of Policy and Management Intergovernmental Policy and Planning Division (IGPP) or the town's legal representative.

The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) is a 25-member agency of the State of Connecticut created in 1985 to study system issues between the state and local governments and to recommend solutions as appropriate. The membership is designed to represent the state legislative and executive branches, municipalities and other local interests, and the general public.

The role of ACIR, as contained in Section 2-79a of the Connecticut General Statutes, is to: (1) serve as a forum for consultation between state and local officials; (2) conduct research on intergovernmental issues; (3) encourage and coordinate studies of intergovernmental issues by universities and others; and (4) initiate policy development and make recommendations to all levels of government.

For Further Information, Please Contact:

Bruce Wittchen: phone (860) 418-6323 e-mail bruce.wittchen@ct.gov