



# County of Cheshire

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12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431  
[www.co.cheshire.nh.us](http://www.co.cheshire.nh.us)

## **Memo: Coronavirus and Flu Prevention**

Date: March 18, 2020

To: All employees

From: The Office of the County Administrator

As the world closely monitors the rapid spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) no one yet knows how severe this outbreak will be. Given this uncertainty and that the seasonal influenza (flu) virus is also widespread, we are taking proactive steps to address a number of concerns to County employees.

First and foremost, we want to maintain a safe workplace and encourage and adopt practices protecting the health of employees and their families and those entrusted to our care and custody.

We have a very important mission to fill as we care for those at the nursing home and at the jail as well as those who need the services of our County Attorney's, Financial Services, Registry of Deeds, Drug Court, Sheriffs, Dispatch personnel, facilities crews and the work of many more of our staff as we ensure the continuity of county operations during this critical time.

We ask all employees to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of the COVID-19 in the workplace. Employees are reminded of the following:

- Stay home when you are sick, you place all who come into contact with you at risk.
- Wash your hands frequently with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- When you are not working use common sense on staying healthy, in other words, you are strongly encouraged to stay home unless you need necessities such as food.
- Understand and practice social distancing.
- Cover your mouth with tissues or into your arm whenever you sneeze, and discard used tissues in a covered trash can if possible.
- Avoid people who are obviously ill and exhibit signs of flu like symptoms.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces, especially your work areas and personal cell phones.
- Understand and rigorously follow your department protocols and processes as presented.

Use soap and water often and use them after every interaction or physical contact with someone with which you interact for care or for social reasons. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are currently in short supply but will be placed throughout the workplace and in common areas as they become available. Cleaning sprays and wipes are also limited in availability right now but they will be provided to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones and keyboards as we can find and obtain them. In the meantime, maintenance staff will be disinfecting common areas multiple times per day.

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#### Area Code 603

♦ **County Commissioners** 352-8215/Fax 355-3026 ♦ **Registry of Deeds** 352-0403/Fax 352-7678 ♦ **Finance Department** 355-0154/Fax 355-3000 – 12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431 ♦ **County Sheriff** 352-4238/Fax 355-3020 ♦ **County Attorney** 352-0056/Fax 355-3012 – 12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431 ♦ **Alternative Sentencing/Mental Health Court** 355-0160/Fax 355-0159 – 33 West St. Keene N.H. ♦ **Department of Corrections** 825 Marlboro Street, Keene, 03431 - 903-1600/Fax 352-4044 ♦ **Maplewood Nursing Home & Assisted Living** 399-4912/Fax 399-7005 - TTY Access 1-800-735-2964 ♦ **Facilities** 399-7300/Fax 399-7357 ♦ **Human Resources** 399-7317/399-7378/Fax 399-4429 - 201 River Rd, Westmoreland, NH 03467

Employees are encouraged to use telephone and video conferencing instead of face-to-face meetings as much as possible during this outbreak. IT has developed an in-house conference call system and will assist employees who need training. We are working to develop a Zoom video account to use for meetings and once it is in place we will communicate how to access and use this app.

It is critical that employees do not report to work while they are experiencing respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills or fatigue. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that employees remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Many times, with the best of intentions, employees report to work even though they feel ill. Employees who are ill and report to work will be sent home in accordance with the policy that is outlined in the employee handbook.

While not all positions are conducive to telework, those positions with primary job duties that can be effectively performed remotely will be given consideration.

We will be working with the County Commissioners to develop additional policies that address these issues and answer the many questions that we are all dealing with during this global pandemic. This is a difficult time for all of us but once any new policies that are required and are put in place, we will immediately communicate them to all staff members.

These are uncharted waters that we are in and as this crisis evolves, we need to respond in a thoughtful and pragmatic manner as we always have in times of crisis.

We are strongly recommending that all staff not travel during this time unless you need food, medicine or other personal needs. If you choose to travel outside of the state you need to communicate that to your supervisor and risk being told to quarantine for 14 days.

The gift and strength of Cheshire County is all of you, and I watch in awe every day as you quietly go about your work...you are the magic of the county. There is strength in unity and If we walk this path together, we will all get through this very trying time.

Thank you for what you do every day but now more than ever.

Be safe, Be smart, Be healthy...wash your hands!!

*Chris Coates*

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County Administrator  
County of Cheshire  
12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

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