

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for the **Town of Augusta**

Approved Town Board of Augusta 12/17/2025

This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A108

Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a(as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of us or our valued employees under any law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or the rights and benefits which accrue to employees through collective bargaining agreements, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the agency, jurisdiction, authority, or district, as represented by the signature of the authorized individual below.

As the authorized official of the Town of Augusta, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with S8617B/A10832 which amends New York State Labor Law 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a(as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirements.

Sign on this day:
By: Suzanne M. Collins
Town Supervisor

Signature: Suzanne M Collins

Record of Changes

Date of Change	Description of Change	Implemented by

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Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview and Assumption

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a(as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan was developed exclusively for and is applicable to the Town of Augusta. This plan is pertinent to any declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations; and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this plan.

Situation Overview

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic for the novel coronavirus which causes the Covid-19 severe acute respiratory syndrome. This plan has been developed in accordance with amended laws to support continued resilience for infectious diseases which may emerge and cause a declaration of a public health emergency.

The health and safety of our employees and contractors is crucial to maintaining our mission essential operations. We encourage all employees and contractors to use [CDC Guidelines for Keeping Workplaces, Schools, Homes, and Commercial Establishments Safe](#). The fundamentals of reducing the spread of infection include:

- Using hand sanitizer and washing hands with soap and water frequently, including:
 - After using the restroom
 - After returning from a public outing
 - After touching/disposing of garbage
 - After using public computers, touching public tables, and countertops, etc.
- Practice social distancing when possible
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify your supervisor immediately and go home
- If you start to experience coughing or sneezing, step away from people and food, cough, or sneeze into the crook of your arm or a tissue, the latter of which should be disposed of immediately
- Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, middle, and end of each shift
- Other guidance may be published by the CDC, the State Department of Health, or County health officials.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The plan was developed to be applicable to infectious disease outbreaks.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of our employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety
- The public and our constituency expects us to maintain a level of mission essential operations
- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement
- The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc..) non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency as well as guidance and directions from public health officials and the governor
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job

Concept of Operations

The Town Supervisor of the Town of Augusta, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion of the town supervisor.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of the Town of Augusta shall be notified in writing and electronic format, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Department managers will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of written notification and by electronic communication. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email, as necessary. The Town Supervisor will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Town Supervisor of the Town of Augusta, their designee, or their successor will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governors office, directing the implementation of changes, as necessary. Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Town Supervisor of the Town of Augusta, their designee, or their successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications, as necessary.

Mission Essential Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, the Town of Augusta is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those functions that enable an organization to:

1. Maintain the safety of employees, contractors, and our constituency
2. Provide vital services
3. Provide services required by law
4. Sustain quality operations

The Town of Augusta has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to enable the organization to concentrate on providing the critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore operations. Appropriate communications with employees, contractors, our constituents, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions are prioritized according to:

- The time criticality of each function
- Interdependency of one function to others
- The recovery sequence of essential functions and vital processes

Priority 1 identifies the most essential of functions, with priority four identifying functions that are essential, but least among them.

The mission essential functions for the Town of Augusta have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description	Priority
Town Supervisor	Manages day-to-day operations; compliance officer	1
Finance	Budgeting, accounting, payroll, and purchasing	2
Assessment	Maintenance of tax roll and property records	4
Town Clerk	Tax collection, licenses and permits, vital registrations*	1
Public Safety	Provide security for court and constabulary duties	4
Dog Control	Pick up dogs at large	4
Transportation	Provides for the maintenance of roads*	2
Code Enforcement	Enforcement of building codes	2
Cleaner	Weekly cleaning of the building	2

*Workflow is seasonal

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some can be conducted remotely and do not need to be identified in this section.

Essential Function	Essential Position/Titles	Justification for Each
Town Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Town Supervisor	Coordinates all functions
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bookkeeper• Supervisor's Secretary	Accounting & payroll programs & files are onsite only.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessor	May perform some duties at home, may need to come in as law requires
Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Town Clerk• Deputy Clerk	Clerk's & Tax collection software is onsite only. Tax Collection must be performed at the office.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highway Superintendent• MEO's• Temporary laborers	Maintain roads and removal of Snow & Ice
Dog Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dog Control Officer	As needed (stray dogs)
Code Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code Enforcement Officer	Enforce property maintenance and NYS Fire/Building Code. May need to come in as law requires
Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-house service	Weekly cleaning of the building after hours

It is important to note that the Augusta Justice Court is a vital component of town government, with Justice Court functions budgeted and supported by the Town Board and Town Supervisor. However, we recognize that the New York State Office of Court Administration holds dominion over Justice Courts and, as such, may issue orders which suspend or alter the hours of operation or means by which Justice Court operates, which may not fully align with this plan or other measures taken by the Town Board or Town Supervisor. As such, the Town Board, Town Supervisor, and Town Clerk will coordinate as necessary with Justice Court personnel to ensure safe and effective continuity of town Justice Court.

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at work sites and on public transportation, with our physical plan being so large each department has separate offices, should be no problem.

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors, able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so at the greatest extent possible. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
 - a. A solution for telephone communications

As, possible, “essential” staff may be assigned to work remotely for part of their work week to reduce exposures. Further, business hours and locations of Town government may be altered to best accommodate public health protective actions for employees and the public. Alterations to building access and how the public interacts with Town employees may also take place to support these protections. Protective actions may include, but are not limited to occupancy restrictions, protective barriers, and increased conduct of business by internet, phone, or other means. Protective actions will be taken in accordance with Oneida County Health Department, New York State Health Department, and CDC guidelines and requirements.

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Department managers will submit proposals for staggered shifts to the Town Supervisor for approval.

For highway employees in Teamsters, the current labor agreement and all memorandums of agreement and/or understanding must be followed.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of infectious disease is important to support the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE which may be needed can include:

- Masks
- Face shields
- Gloves

Note that while cleaning supplies are not PPE, there is a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer.

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based on job duties and work location
2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified in the amended law, public employers must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required type of PPE to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least six months
 - b. Public employers must be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock
 - a. PPE must be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation
 - b. Employees and contractors must have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency
 - c. The supply of PPE must be monitored to ensure integrity and to track usage rates

PPE and health emergency-related cleaning supplies will be in a locked cabinet. Access will be granted through the Town Supervisor's office. A stockpile of eight weeks of PPE is recommended.

Staff Exposure, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposure

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. Following CDC guidelines, we have established the following protocols:

- A. If employees or contractors are exposed to a known case of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency (defined as a “close contact” with someone who is confirmed infected, which is a prolonged presence within six feet with that person)
1. Potentially exposed employees or contractors who do not have symptoms should remain at home or in a comparable setting and practice social distancing for the lesser of 14 days or other current CDC/public health guidance for the communicable disease in question.
 - a. As possible, these employees will be permitted to work remotely during this period of time if they are not ill.
 - b. The Town Supervisor must be notified and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed
 - c. See the section titled Documentation of Work Hours and Locations for additional information on contact tracing.
2. CDC guidelines for any public health emergency provide that critical essential employees may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure, provided they remain symptom-free and additional precautions are taken to protect them, other employees and contractors, and our constituency/public.
 - a. Additional precautions will include the requirement of the subject employee or contractor, as well as others working in their proximity, to wear appropriate PPE at all times to limit the potential of transmission.
 - b. In-person interactions with the subject employee or contractor will be limited as much as possible.
 - c. Work areas in which the subject employees or contractors are present will be disinfected according to current CDC/public health protocol at least every hour, as practical. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
 - d. If at any time they exhibit symptoms, refer to item B below.
 - e. The Town Supervisor must approve any work performed and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed.
- B. If an employee or contractor exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
 1. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms in the workplace should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors. They should immediately be sent home with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 2. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home, with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 3. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation per CDC/public health guidance and have consulted with a healthcare provider.
 4. The Town of Augusta will not require sick employees to provide negative test results for the disease in question or a healthcare provider’s note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or return to work, unless there is a recommendation from the CDC/public health officials to do so.

5. CDC criteria for any public health emergency provides that persons exhibiting symptoms may return to work if at least 24 hours have passed since the last instance of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 6. The Town Supervisor must be informed in these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed.
- C. If an employee or contractor has tested positive for any communicable disease that is the subject of the public emergency:
1. Apply the steps identified in item B, above, as applicable.
 2. Areas occupied for prolonged periods of time by the subject employee or contractor will be closed off.
 - a. CDC guidance for any public health emergency indicates that a period of 24 hours is ideally given before cleaning, disinfecting, and reoccupation of those spaces will take place. If this time period is not possible, a period of as long as possible will be given. CDC/public health guidance for the disease in question will be followed.
 - b. Any public areas entered, surfaces touched, or equipment used shall be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
 - c. See section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
 3. Identification of potential employee and contractor exposures will be conducted
 - a. If an employee or contractor is confirmed to have the disease in question, the Town Supervisor or their designee should inform all contacts of their possible exposure. Confidentiality shall be maintained as required by law.
 - b. Apply the steps identified in item A, above, as applicable for all potentially exposed personnel.
 4. The Town Supervisor must be notified in these circumstances and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed.

We recognize there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, and symptomatic people. We will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.
 - a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected at least hourly.
 - b. Each department will be responsible for cleaning all work surfaces, counters, and door handles.
2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before being disinfected.
4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Employee and Contractor Leave

Public health emergencies are extenuating and unanticipated circumstances in which the Town of Augusta is committed to reducing the burden on our employees and contractors. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act provided requirements, which form the policies outlined below. This policy may be altered based upon changes in law or regulation, as applicable.

It is our policy that employees of the Town of Augusta will not be charged with leave time for testing.

Additional provisions may be enacted based upon need and the guidance and requirements in place by federal and state employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources.

Documentation of Work Hours and Location

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification locations shall include on-site work and off-site visits. This information may be used by the Town of Augusta to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

All visitors to the Town Hall must be documented. Employees should, as much as practical, refrain from entering other department offices to avoid exposure.