COVID – 19 Update & VILLAGE RESPONSE PLANNING

Dear Neighbors,

While we are all concerned by the volume of confirmed COVID-19 (Coronavirus) cases, the nature of “distancing” new guidance, and the calls to shelter-in-place, please know that staff and elected officials are working together to educate residents and protect the Village of Forest Park. Forest Park is not subject to a shelter in place order. However, we do strongly suggest that you act as though you think that you have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus, as our over-arching goal is to minimize its spread. Now that the availability of testing has increased, it is reasonable to expect that we will have a need for increased medical facilities and supplies. For all the reasons you can imagine, we want you to know that the Village of Forest Park is planning for any contingencies. Our staff and department heads are in continuing contact with counter-parts at the county, state and federal levels.

Our village’s public responders are well-versed in plans to respond to the expected surge in medical calls due to the pandemic. Our Chiefs have strong working relationships with their counter-parts in neighboring communities. If necessary, first responders are prepared to offer mutual aid including equipment sharing. Our planning is ongoing and commenced several weeks ago.

Our Village Administrator and department’s heads are meeting daily to address staffing contingencies and implement strategies for the maintenance of service delivery to the Village of Forest Park based on industry best practices and state/federal mandates. The leadership of our departments are trained and experienced in disaster management and robust plans have been developed and tested for situations that potentially strain normal operating capabilities. Our seasoned staff has participated in policy development, disaster management training, real-time exercises and actual disasters working side-by-side with our regional, state and federal partners.

Prior to any state or national declarations, our village administrator convened an ongoing series meetings that includes the Village of Forest Park, District 91 Schools, and the Park District of Forest Park for purposes contingency planning, as well as resource and information sharing. The Village of Forest Park and our partners can call on a number of volunteers who are ready to offer assistance to the village and our first responders if the need arises.

Depending on your level of familiarity with our village staff, you may know that the heads of our public safety units all have at least 28 years of experience in their roles and working in this community. Some Members of police and fire departments are National Guard reservists. Others are military veterans. As we hear news that our federal government intends to mobilize military resources, it is important to for the public to know that key members of our staff have experience working with state and federal authorities in disaster settings.
In the coming weeks, the Village will provide messaging that is consistent and adheres to all guidelines posted by our state, county and federal health authorities. These are very hard times, but I hope you can find comfort knowing that the cooperation between our residents, business community and neighboring communities will pay dividends as we combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Village staff continue to monitor updates provided by the Governor’s office as well as the Center for Disease Control and Cook County Department of Public Health.

Effective March 16, 2020, the Village has cancelled all non-critical meetings and events. This includes local Boards and Commissions. This suspension of public meetings will remain in place until further notice. However, the regularly scheduled Village Council meeting for March 23, 2020 will be held at the regular time, but we strongly discourage public attendance. If you wish to view the meeting, please watch it via our website. Below, please review a few important items to consider.

- The April 1, 2020 deadline for the purchase of vehicle stickers has been extended until further notice. You may still purchase a village sticker online, through the US Postal Service or you can leave the forms and payment in the secure drop box outside of Village Hall.
- Enforcement for vehicle sticker violations will be suspended until further notice.
- The Village of Forest Park receives its guidance from the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Please refer to their respective websites for specific information.
- The Village is relaxing deadlines for the renewal of business and liquor licenses that will otherwise be due May 1. Further guidance will be available.
- **Please do not come to Village Hall unless it is absolutely necessary.** Other questions can be addressed by calling the Village Hall. (708) 366-2323

Finally, if you are able to volunteer to help those in need please contact the Village at (708) 615-6203. A list of volunteers is being compiled, and if you know of someone in need (a neighbor or senior citizen) please contact the Village. This virus and the response is changing rapidly and we will do our best to update our residents via our website [www.forestpark.net](http://www.forestpark.net). Additional phone and website information has been provided (below) for your convenience.

Very truly yours,

Rory Hoskins

**Helpful phone numbers & websites**

Village Hall - 708-366-2323 www.forestpark.net  
Police Parking - 708-366-7272 pay tickets www.violationspayment.com  
Village of Forest Park Website - www.forestpark.net  
Park District of Forest Park – 708-366-7500 www.pdofp.org  
Forest Park Public Library – 708-366-7171 www.fppl.org  
Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) 708-633-4000 www.cookcountypublichealth.org  
Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) 312-814-2793 www.dph.illinois.gov