

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for the Village of Highland Falls

Date of Approved Plan: April 17, 2021
This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A10832

Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with the 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 applicable.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish or impair the rights of us or our valued employees. This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the Village of Highland Falls, NY and the State of NY. This plan was developed using the Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for Town of Highlands as a template.

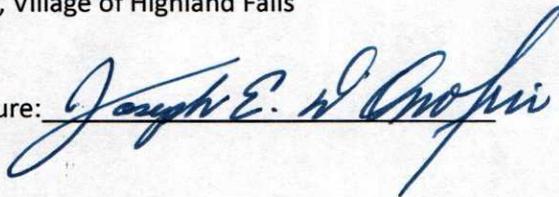
As the authorized official of the Village of Highland Falls, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with S8617B/A10832, as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirements.

Signed on this day:

By Joseph E. D'Onofrio

Mayor, Village of Highland Falls

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph E. D'Onofrio". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned over a horizontal line.

Record of Changes

Date of Change

Description of Change

Implemented By

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

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Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview and Assumptions

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l subdivision 2 of section 2801-a. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020. It 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 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 the Village of Highland Falls, NY.

Situation Overview

The health and safety of our employees and contractors is crucial to maintaining our mission essential operations. We encourage all to follow the CDC Guidance for Keeping Workplaces, Schools, Homes, and Commercial Establishments Safe. Fundamentals of reducing the spread of infection include:

- Washing hands with soap and water frequently to include: after restroom use, after returning from a public outing, after touching garbage, after using public items to include computers.

- Practice of social distancing

- Notifying the supervisor if you are feeling ill or have a fever and staying home if so

- Step away from people or food when coughing or sneezing.

- Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, middle and end of each shift.

- Other guidance as published by the CDC, the State Department of Health, or County

Health Officials.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed to largely reflect the circumstances of 2020-2021 Coronavirus pandemic but may also be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

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

- The health and safety of our employees, contractors, their families is of utmost importance.

- The public and our constituency expect us to maintain a level of mission essential operations

- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited

-Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies may be heavily impacted and result in delays in procurement

-The operations of other entities to include private sector (vendors) and other governmental agencies may be impacted causing delays or disruption in services

-Emergency measures and operational changes may need adjustment based upon specific circumstances and guidance from public health officials and the Governor.

-“Essential Employee” is defined as a public employee or contractor required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job

-“Non-essential employee” is defined as a public employee or contractor not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job

Concept of Operations

The Mayor of the Village of Highland Falls, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan.

Upon determination of implementation, all employees and contractors of the Village of Highland Falls shall be notified by email. Details and updates will be given on a regular basis. Notification will be done by Department heads.

The Village of Highland Falls is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are functions that enable an organization to:

1. Maintain the safety of employees, contractors, constituents.
2. Provide vital services.
3. Provide services required by law.
4. Sustain quality operations.
5. Uphold the core values of the Village of Highland Falls.

The Village of Highland Falls has identified as “critical” only those functions required or necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to concentrate on providing critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore disrupted operations. Communication with employees, contractors, constituents and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions are prioritized according to:

- Time criticality of each essential function
- Interdependency of one function to another
- Recovery sequence of essential functions and their vital processes

Definition of Priorities:

Priority 1 identifies the most essential of functions. Priority 4 identifies functions that are essential but least among them.

The mission essential functions for the Village of Highland Falls have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description	Priority
Police Department	Provide safety and security for the Village	1
Fire Department	Provide fire protection to the Village	1
Water Department	Provide water filtration and distribution to the Village	1
Waste Water Treatment Plant	Provide waste water treatment to the Village	1
Village Clerk	Provides purchasing, payroll, accounts payable and registrar services	1

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on site to effectively operate. Positions essential to be staffed on site for the continued operation of each essential function will be determined by the head of the Department. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these can be conducted remotely.

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Certain staff will be assigned to work remotely. On site employees will have staggered work shifts to decrease crowding and density at the work site and on public transportation.

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. Internet capable laptop
 - b. Access to VPN and or secure network drives

- c. Access to software and databases necessary to perform duties
- d. Solution for telephone communications (phone lines may be forwarded to off site staff)
- e. Necessary peripherals

Staggered Shifts

Management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. The Village of Highland Falls will ensure employees are provided their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will staggered
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours.

Personal Protective Equipment

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

- Masks
- Gloves
- Face Shields
- Disposable gowns and aprons

Cleaning supplies to include soap and hand sanitizer are not PPE but are related needs to sanitize surfaces and self.

Protocols for providing PPE include:

1. Identification of need for PPE based on job duties and work location
2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified by 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.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. Following CDC guidelines:

- A. If employees of 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. Close contact is defined as a prolonged presence within six feet of 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. If possible, these employees will be permitted to work remotely during this period of time if they are not ill.
 - b. If remote work is not possible, these employees as well as others working in their proximity will wear appropriate PPE at all times to limit the potential of transmission.
 - c. In person interactions with the subject employee or contractor will be limited as much as possible.
 - d. Work areas in which the subject employee or contractor are present will be disinfected according to CDC/public health protocol at least every hour, as practical.
 - e. If at any time the subject employee or contractor exhibits symptoms, refer to Item B below.
- B. If an employee or contractor exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
 1. The subject employee or contractor should be immediately separated from other employees, customers, and visitors. They will be immediately sent home with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 2. The subject employee or contractor exhibiting symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home, with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 3. The subject employee or contractor 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 Village of Highland Falls will not require sick employees to provide a negative test result for the disease in question or 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. For Covid 19 in particular, the CDC criteria 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. If the disease in question is other than Covid 19, CDC and other public guidance shall be referenced.

The Mayor of the Village of Highland Falls must be informed in these circumstances and will identify who is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed.

- C. If an employee or contractor has tested positive for the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health 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 Covid 19 in particular indicates a period of 24 hours is given before cleaning, disinfecting, reoccupying spaces. 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 common areas entered surfaced touch or equipment used shall be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
 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 Mayor of the Village of Highland Falls or his/her designee should inform all contacts.
 - b. Apply the steps identified in item A above for all potentially exposed personnel.

The Mayor of the Village of Highland Falls must be notified in these circumstances and ensure these protocols are followed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

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

1. Employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces at a minimum, in the beginning, middle, and end of shift. High traffic and high touch areas, as well as areas accessible to the public will be disinfected at least hourly if possible. The department head is responsible for identifying who is responsible for cleaning the common areas.
2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.

3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before being disinfected.
4. All surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria.
5. Staff will follow instruction of cleaning products per directions.

Employee and Contractor Leave

Public health emergencies are extenuating and unanticipated circumstances. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act provided requirements related to the Covid 19 pandemic, which form the policies outline below.

It is our policy that employees of the Village of Highland Falls will not be charged with leave time for testing. Employees will be provided up to one week (40 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay for a period which the employee is unable to work due to quarantine (in accordance with federal, state, or local orders or on advice of a healthcare provider), and/or experiencing symptoms and seeking medical diagnosis. The Village of Highland Falls will provide this for up to 3 separate instances of the employee requiring quarantine.

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.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of the Village of Highland Falls, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by the Village of Highland Falls, unless required by law.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

Identification of locations shall include on site and off site work. This information may be used by the Village of Highland Falls to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials. Each department head will document the hours and locations of each employee.

Housing for Essential Employees

Circumstances when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner to help prevent the spread of the subject communicable disease may arise. If such a need arises, hotel rooms are expected to be the most viable option. If not available, the Village of Highland Falls will coordinate with the Orange County Office of Emergency Management to help identify and arrange for the said housing needs.