

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for the
TOWN OF POESTENKILL

Rensselaer County, New York



Table of Contents

Scope, Purpose and Assumptions	1
<i>Scope and Purpose.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Assumptions.....</i>	<i>1</i>
Responsibilities and Processes for Plan Management.....	2
Essential Town Functions.....	3
<i>Essential Town Positions</i>	<i>5</i>
Managing On-site and Remote Work	6
<i>On-site Work.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Remote Work</i>	<i>7</i>
Personal Protective Equipment.....	8
Cleaning, and Disinfection	8
Exposures of Town Employees and Officials.....	9
<i>Employee or official exposed to a confirmed case</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Employee or official experiencing symptoms</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Employee or official tests positive.....</i>	<i>10</i>
Employee Leave.....	11
Record of Changes	13

Scope, Purpose and Assumptions

Scope and Purpose

This plan has been developed exclusively for and is applicable to the Town of Poestenkill in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020. This legislation 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 identifying the titles and positions of essential personnel, identifying and defining a process for storing and distributing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), establishing occupancy standards and staggered scheduling to minimize contact among employees, facilitating remote work for non-essential positions and creating a system for contact tracing. This plan will be activated in response to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact town operations. The intended purpose of the plan is to mitigate the spread of communicable disease, to maintain the safety of town employees and contractors, and to ensure the continuity of town operations.

The health and safety of town employees and contractors is crucial to maintaining essential town operations. All town employees and contractors are encouraged to use [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) Guidance 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 warm 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
- Wear face coverings over the nose and mouth when social distancing cannot be maintained
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify your supervisor immediately, go home or do not come to work
- 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 which may be published by the CDC, the State Department of Health, or County health officials.

Assumptions

Response to and experience with the circumstances of the current Coronavirus pandemic has informed the development of this plan with an expectation that the principles and practices adopted during the current pandemic are applicable to other public health emergencies. The plan is based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of town employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact town operations.
- Response by the town to the impacts of a public health emergency will take time to ensure appropriate safety measures are put into place and adjustments in town operations are made to maximize safety
- The public and our constituency expects a level of essential town operations to continue
- 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 the 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 direction 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

Responsibilities and Processes for Plan Management

The Supervisor of the Town of Poestenkill, or their successor, in consultation with the Town Board, 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 Supervisor. The Supervisor of the Town of Poestenkill, or their successor will stay informed about the public health emergency, will maintain awareness of current guidance from public health officials and the Governor's office, and direct the implementation of changes to the emergency plan and Town operations as necessary.

Upon implementation of this plan, all employees and contractors of the Town of Poestenkill shall be notified of the details and operational requirements of the plan by email, phone or the Town's automated call system (to be implemented). General information about the public health emergency and the implementation of the plan will be communicated to Town residents using the Town's automated call system and through postings on the Town of Poestenkill website. All Town employees and contractors, vendors, Town residents and other interested parties will be notified of pertinent operational changes by email, phone or through the automated call system and posted on the Town's website. . Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The Deputy Town Clerk will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Supervisor of the Town of Poestenkill, or their successor, in consultation with the Town Board, will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

Essential Town Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, the Town of Poestenkill is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances. Essential functions are those functions that enable the Town to:

1. Maintain the safety of employees, contractors, and Town residents
2. Provide vital services and services required by law
3. Sustain quality operations
4. Uphold the core values of the Town of Poestenkill

The Town of Poestenkill has identified essential priority functions that are required by law or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, other activities may be shifted to remote operation or may be temporarily suspended to enable the Town to concentrate on providing the essential functions and build the capabilities necessary to restore operations. Appropriate communications with employees, contractors, our constituents, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions of the Town of Poestenkill are listed in Table 1 below and are prioritized on a scale of 1 through 4, with 1 indicating highest priority and 4 being deemed as essential but of lower priority. During a public health emergency, the Town Supervisor, in consultation with the Town Board will identify those functions (Table 1) and associated Town positions and Boards (Table 2) that will continue to operate. In some circumstances only the highest priority functions will be maintained while other lower priority functions will be temporarily suspended until the public health emergency situation allows for resumption of activities.

Essential Town Positions

Highest priority essential functions identified above will be maintained in a public health emergency through remote or on-site work by employees and Town officials. Table 2 below identifies the essential positions and Boards that are responsible for each essential function listed in Table 1. Some personnel responsible for providing essential functions for the Town may be required to conduct their work on-site or while others may do their job remotely. Essential Town positions and Boards and their mode of work during a public health emergency are listed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 1: Essential Town Functions and Priority Assignment

Essential Functions	Description	Priority
Management of Town functions	Overall management and decisions for the Town	1
Elections	Ensure that all special, primary and general elections are held	1
Taxes	Assess, levy, collect and enforce tax payments	1
Licenses and permits	Issuing of licenses and permits for the Town	2
Town records and vital statistics	Maintaining vital statistics and Town records	2
Highway maintenance	Maintain roads and highways in the Town	1
Justice Court ¹	Hear and rule on civil and criminal cases under the jurisdiction of the Town Court	1
Water District Management	Maintain a safe and reliable water supply for residents of the Town's water district	1
Planning Board Functions	Regulate subdivisions, review site plans, and assist in developing and administering zoning	3
Zoning Board of Appeals Functions	Appointment of a building inspector/zoning enforcement officer, appeals and grant relief in proper instances	3
Information Technology	Maintain the Town website and other technical services	1
Town Youth Programs ²	Provide supervised recreational activities for the youth of the Town of Poestenkill	4
Animal/dog control	Provide animal control services	3
Code enforcement	Implement NYS building and fire codes; maintain NY property maintenance codes as well as the Town of Poestenkill code.	2
Town History	Maintain historic preservation of Town archives and resources	4

¹New 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 Courts operate; 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.

²Operation of youth programs and summer camp will defer to New York State guidance in instances of a public health emergency.

TABLE 2: Essential Town Positions and Boards, essential functions, mode of work and priority.

Essential Position/Boards	Essential Function	Mode of work	Priority
Town Supervisor	Town management	Remote	1
Secretary to the Supervisor	Support Town management	Remote	2
Town Clerk	Elections, taxes, licenses and permits, Town records and vital statistics	On-site, staggered	1
Deputy Town Clerk	Communication	On-site, staggered	1
Town Board	Town management	Remote	1
Information Technology Officer	Maintain the Town website and other technical services	On-site, staggered	1
Highway Department	Highway maintenance	On-site	1
Water Manager	Maintain a safe and reliable water supply for residents of the Town's water district	On-site/Field	1
Town Court Justices	Hears and rules on civil and criminal cases under the jurisdiction of the Town court	Remote ¹	1
Court Clerk	Assist Town justices and Town court	Remote ¹	1
Town Attorney	Advises the Town Supervisor and Town Board on legal matters related to management of the Town	Remote	2
Accountant	Manages accounting records and the general ledger for the Town and ensures compliance with municipal finance laws	Remote	2
Assessor	Identifies and estimates the value of real property located within the Town	Remote	2
Assessor's Clerk	Assists the Town assessor	Remote	4
Code Enforcement Officer	Implement NYS building and fire codes; maintain NY property maintenance codes as well as the Town of Poestenkill code.	On-site/Field	2
Planning Board	As defined in New York Town Law	Remote	3
Planning Board Attorney	Advises the Planning Board on legal matters related to Planning Board activities	Remote	3
Zoning Board	As defined in New York Town Law	Remote	3
Secretary to Planning and Zoning Boards	Secretarial and clerical functions for the Planning and Zoning Boards	Remote	3
Dog Control Officer	Provide animal control services	On-site/Field	3
Town Custodian	Performs routine custodial cleaning and other duties at Townhall	On-site, staggered	4
Town Historian	Maintain historic preservation of Town archives and resources	Remote	4

Managing On-site and Remote Work

The essential positions and Boards, their designated functions and priority, and their mode of work during a public health emergency are provided in Table 2 above. On-site work will be managed through imposing occupancy limits in Town workspaces and vehicles, along with implementing staggered work schedules to decrease crowding. Other essential functions will be maintained by employees and Town officials working remotely.

On-site Work

The following positions (Table 3) have been identified as those who will continue to work on-site during a public health emergency.

TABLE 3: Town of Poestenkill On-site Work Positions during a Public Health Emergency

On-site Essential Positions	Priority
Town Clerk	1
Deputy Town Clerk	1
Information Technology Officer	1
Highway Department	1
Water Manager	1
Code Enforcement Officer	2
Dog Control Officer	3
Town Custodian	4

Occupancy limits will be established for each of the work buildings and rooms used by essential Town employees and officials to allow for appropriate social distancing when occupied. In instances where shared workspaces exceed established occupancy limits, staggered work schedules will be adopted. It may be necessary, in some instances, for staff to work outside core business hours to accommodate staggered scheduling. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, the Town of Poestenkill will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. In instances where staggered work schedules are necessary, the Town Supervisor or staff supervisor will identify the specific positions for which work hours will be staggered and will work with affected employees in the assignment of changed work hours. Occupancy in Town vehicles should be limited to one person at a time.

Work hours and locations of each on-site and field employee or Town official will be documented to support contact tracing in the event that a Town employee or official contracts an infectious disease. On-site and field employees and Town officials will be required to log the dates, times and locations of their work schedule. A log in sheet in Townhall will be used to track on-site and field employee hours and locations. Log sheets will be archived by the Town Clerk or assistant Town Clerk.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided by the Town for all employees and Town officials working on-site and in the field on behalf of the Town. See the section below for details. All Town workspaces and vehicles will adopt enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols (see below) to limit exposure and spread of infectious disease.

Remote Work

The following essential positions (Table 4) have been identified as those who will work remotely during a public health emergency.

TABLE 4: Town of Poestenkill Remote Work Positions during a Public Health Emergency

Essential Position/Titles	Priority
Town Supervisor	1
Secretary to the Supervisor	2
Town Board	1
Town Court Justices	1
Court Clerk	1
Town Attorney	2
Accountant	2
Assessor	2
Assessor's Clerk	4
Planning Board	3
Planning Board Attorney	3
Zoning Board	3
Secretary to Planning and Zoning Boards	3
Town Historian	4

Shifting as many employees and Town officials to remote work will help to reduce exposures during a public health emergency. Employees and Town officials listed in Table 4 have been identified as those essential positions that are able to accomplish their functions remotely. Upon implementation of this plan, the Town Supervisor will inform Town employees and officials when their essential functions will be shifted from on-site to remote work. Changes to business hours, building access and guidance for how Town residents may contact Town employees and Town officials will be posted on the Town website. For remote work:

- The Town may provide employees working remotely with an internet-capable laptop and software, as necessary, to perform their essential functions. Town officials are expected to utilize their own computer to fulfill their essential work remotely.
- The Information Technology Officer will provide technical support to employees and Town officials as needed, including remote access to secure network drives.
- Email and telephone will be used as the primary means of regular communication among Town employees, their supervisors, and Town officials working remotely.
- Call forwarding will be set up for employees as needed.
- Town residents will be directed to contact Town employees and Town officials via email or by telephone.
- Meetings will be held through internet-based video conferencing. The Town will provide necessary peripherals (headsets, web-cams, etc.).
- Documents for board meetings will be distributed to board members electronically via email.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn to minimize exposure to hazards that are known or thought to cause serious illness. PPE is an essential tool to protect employees and Town officials while performing their essential functions during a public health emergency. PPE used during a public health emergency may include gloves, safety glasses and shoes, masks, respirators, and/or coveralls.

During a public health emergency, the Town of Poestenkill will activate a PPE program to address the hazards associated with the emergency. The program will include identifying and procuring the kind of PPE required for Town employees to perform their essential functions, using the [Occupational Health and Safety Administration \(OSHA\)](#) and [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) guidance. The Town will also require training for all employees on when and how to use PPE, and on the proper care, limitations and disposal of PPE using [OSHA's free, on-line training tutorials](#).

The Town of Poestenkill will procure, store and coordinate distribution and access of necessary PPE to Town employees during a public health emergency. Vendors been identified as suppliers for standard, required PPE for infectious diseases and other biohazard and are listed in Table 5 with links to each vendor website. Multiple vendors for each type of PPE are provided. A supply of common PPE (gloves, masks, protective aprons/coveralls) will be acquired and stored in Town Hall and in the Highway department building. The Secretary to the Supervisor will be responsible for purchasing, storing and maintaining inventory of these PPE supplies, and the distribution, as necessary to Town employees. The Highway Superintendent will identify appropriate storage of PPE at the Highway department building, and establish distribution and access protocols of PPE for Highway department employees. In accordance with New York State law, a 6 month supply of PPE sufficient for all essential Town employees working on-site or in the field will be purchased and stored in a cool, dry location in Townhall and the Highway department building to prevent degradation to ensure Town employees are properly equipped. Town employees will be informed about how they can access PPE. The Secretary to the Supervisor will monitor PPE use and inventory.

TABLE 5. Vendors Identified for Procurement of PPE for the Town of Poestenkill

Type of PPE	VENDORS			
Masks	Amazon	Fisher Scientific	Grainger	Uline
Gloves	Amazon	Fisher Scientific	Grainger	Uline
Coveralls	Amazon	Fisher Scientific	Grainger	Uline

Cleaning and Disinfecting

All Town employees, officials, residents and visitors are expected to frequently wash their hands and use hand sanitizer (>60% alcohol; when soap and water are unavailable) when entering/occupying Town facilities and vehicles. Soap and hand-sanitizer is provided in Town facilities. Town employees, officials, residents and visitors are expected to refrain from entering any Town facilities or vehicles if they are feeling sick and should remain at home.

The Town of Poestenkill will follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting work areas and surfaces in Town buildings and vehicles (APPENDIX 1). The Town will maintain an inventory of cleaning and disinfecting supplies. Guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

- Employees and Town officials utilizing Town offices, other facilities and Town vehicles are responsible for cleaning their own workspaces. Workspaces (including vehicles) should be cleaned at the start and end of utilizing the space.
- High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected at the start middle and end of each day of use. Frequently touched surfaces in common use areas of occupied Town buildings and vehicles will be cleaned with appropriate disinfectants identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against infectious agents associated with the public health emergency. When such products are temporarily not available, alternatives such as a bleach solution (2% chlorine bleach solution; ~ 1 tablespoon of bleach in 1 quart of water) or 70% alcohol can also be used for disinfecting, if surfaces are compatible. Examples of frequently touched surfaces include doorknobs, handles, handrails, kitchen and bathroom faucets and fixtures, and light switches.
- When cleaning and disinfecting areas, employees will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.

Exposures of Town Employees and Officials

During a public health emergency, the Town of Poestenkill will following CDC guidelines for managing exposure of employees and Town officials to an infectious disease. The following protocols will be implemented:

Employee or official exposed to a confirmed case of person with communicable disease (prolonged exposure, within six feet)

- Exposed Town Hall employees or officials should inform the Town Supervisor of the exposure. Highway Department employees should inform the Highway Superintendent of the exposure. The Town Supervisor/Highway Superintendent is responsible for informing the employee or official of the required protocols. The Secretary to the Town supervisor is responsible for documenting the exposures for all Town employees and officials. The Town Supervisor/Highway Superintendent are responsible for monitoring employee/officials compliance with the required protocols.
- Exposed employees or officials without symptoms should remain at home and practice social distancing for 14 days or other current CDC/public health guidance for the communicable disease in question. Employees or officials with symptoms should remain at home and contact their healthcare provider for guidance and treatment.
- Exposed employees and officials are not allowed to enter Town buildings or vehicles until the required quarantine period has been completed and they are symptom-free.
- Exposed employee/official may resume work if they are symptom-free after completion of the required quarantine period. The employee/official should contact the Town Supervisor or Highway Superintendent for guidance about returning to work.
- Exposed employees will be permitted to work remotely during the quarantine period if they are not ill.

Employee or official exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease

- Employees or officials who exhibit symptoms in the workplace must immediately be separated from other employees, officials, residents or visitors and sent home with a recommendation to contact their healthcare provider. Work areas occupied by a symptomatic employee/official will be cleaned and disinfected by the Town Custodian using appropriate precautions and CDC cleaning/disinfecting protocols. The occupied areas will be vacated and closed off for a period of 24 hours prior to cleaning/disinfecting.
- Employees or officials who exhibit symptoms outside of work should notify the Town supervisor (Town Hall employees/Town Officials) or the Highway Superintendent (Highway department employees) and must stay home, with a recommendation to contact their healthcare provider.
- Sick employees or officials are not allowed to enter Town buildings or vehicles until they are symptom-free for a period of 14 days or required period designated by CDC or other public health guidance.
- Employees/officials may resume work if they are symptom-free after completion of the required quarantine period. The employee/official should contact the Town Supervisor or Highway Superintendent for guidance about returning to work.
- The Town of Poestenkill 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. Employees or officials who test positive for a communicable disease within 24 hours of coming into contact with other Town employees or officials are obligated to report the positive test to the Town Supervisor (Town Hall employees/Town Officials) or Highway Superintendent (Highway Department). The purpose of the reporting is to allow those exposed to be informed. Log sheets will be referenced to identify and potentially exposed employees.

Employee or official tests positive for the communicable disease

- Employees or officials who have a confirmed case of the communicable disease will follow the guidelines outlined above for symptomatic employees/officials, as applicable.
- If an employee or official is confirmed to have the disease in question, the Town Supervisor or Highway Superintendent will work with the infected employee/official to identify potential employee/official exposures. The Town Supervisor or Highway Superintendent will inform all contacts of their possible exposure. Confidentiality shall be maintained as required by law.
- Potentially exposed employees or officials will follow guidelines outlined above.

The Town of Poestenkill recognizes that there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. The Town will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Employee Leave

The Town of Poestenkill is committed to reducing the burden on our Town employees during a public health emergency. The [*Families First Coronavirus Response Act*](#) provided requirements related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which inform the policies outlined below. This policy may be altered based upon changes in law or regulation, as applicable.

It is the policy of the Town of Poestenkill that employees of the Town will not be charged with leave time for testing. Employees will be provided with leave for a period in which the employee is unable to work due to quarantine, illness and/or experiencing symptoms in accordance with federal, state, or local orders. This provision may be modified if an employee is able to effectively work remotely.

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 Town of Poestenkill, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by the Town of Poestenkill, unless required by law.

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020.

This plan has been developed with the input of the Town of Poestenkill Highway Department, as required by the amended New York State Labor Law.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of Town 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 Town of Poestenkill, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirements.


(Signature)

Keith Hammond
Town Supervisor
Town of Poestenkill

4/1/21
(Date)

Record of Changes

Date of Change	Description of Change	Implemented by