

Town of Fairfield News

10/23/2020 - 10.23 TOWN UPDATE



Good Afternoon Fairfielders,

Last week, the State of Connecticut launched a color-coded weekly COVID-19 alert map and yesterday, the Town of Fairfield was moved into the red level along with 18 other towns.

According to the Department of Public Health, the red level is assigned to municipalities that have a two week average daily case rate higher than 15 per 100,000. The recent increase in positive cases at Fairfield University over the past few weeks are largely attributable to this change in Fairfield's status.

- **It is very important to note that the dates of positive cases used to determine the rate that moved Fairfield to red from orange was from October 4-17.**
- The University has done a great deal of targeted testing to identify positive cases, and the good news is that Fairfield University's cases are now trending downward.
- [Click here](#) to read a very detailed explanation from Fairfield University on the steps they have taken and continue to take to protect their students and our greater community at large. (You can read previous correspondence [here](#))
- Fairfield University is also having another zoom meeting with all beach students today to emphasize the importance of following the CDC guidelines as well as the Town & University guidelines.

The Emergency Management Team, which includes the Health Department, continues to be in constant contact with the Universities and the State Department of Public Health and we are closely monitoring the daily changes.

Fairfield Public Schools

The decision to return full-time for in person learning lies solely with the Superintendent of Schools. I did speak with Mike Cummings this morning regarding his decision to hit the pause button with the school district's plans to reopen full time for grades K-5 on November 12th. According to the Superintendent, he took many factors into consideration when he made his decision, and engages in continual conversations with State Department of Public Health, the town's Health Department and school staff, while monitoring the data. The Superintendent shared that his goal is to return to full in person learning for grades K-5 I am hopeful that they will be able to do that.

Community Transmission

Currently, the primary means of transmission has been from small gatherings where residents across all age groups are letting their guard down by taking off their masks and are coming too close in contact with each other. This includes something as simple as having friends and family over for dinner. I know we are all weary of living life during a pandemic, but this is our reality and we must continue to do our part to stop the spread until we have a vaccine.

I would like to once again remind all residents to continue to wear masks, wash your hands frequently and maintain a social distance from others. At this time, the town has decided to continue with the phase 3 guidelines, however the town is not sponsoring any large gatherings and we are encouraging residents to do the same. I will continue to work with our Health Department, State Department of Public Health and the Emergency Management Team to closely monitor our transmission rate and we will continue to evaluate the numbers and make changes as necessary.

I also want our residents to know that the town is actively working to allow for expanded testing that will be available to residents soon.

The Town has put up signs around town as part of our PSA campaign with the [video](#) we launched last week.



Data

Charts and data on Fairfield cases including age, gender, nursing home statistics, testing results, different trends and university statistics can be found at <https://www.fairfieldct.org/covid19data>. When looking at the data page, please be sure to read the notes around each chart as they offer explanations of some of the changes in the data. The Health Department updates this page daily.

The Health Department also updates the COVID-19 [School Data page](#), which details the school related metrics and is updated each week as the State releases the data. The Fairfield Board of Education also has a dashboard on their homepage at <https://www.fairfieldschools.org/>.

The Universities each have dashboards with their daily testing information, which can be found here:

[Fairfield University's Dashboard](#)

[Sacred Heart University's Dashboard](#)

LOCAL CHARITABLE OPPORTUNITIES

When the holiday season approaches, our calendars are usually filled with community events and charitable activities to help those who are in need of extra assistance. It's unfortunate that COVID-19 has forced many nonprofits to cancel fundraising events which support their mission and operations. Even

volunteering has become more difficult and we will be in this position for the foreseeable future.

Perhaps more now so than ever, these nonprofit's need our support. Beginning this week through the holidays, I will feature a nonprofit with a short write up and a link to learn more or to donate in my newsletter. I hope residents will do what they can to support those in need as we head into winter. The featured **"Nonprofit of the Week"** is featured below my signature.

Likewise, our Human Services Department will not be holding toy drives this year as they have in the past. They will be accepting gift card donations to local grocery stores as a way to help families in need this holiday season. Find more information below in this newsletter.

FLU SHOTS

I would like to remind residents the single best way to protect yourself and those around you from the flu is to get vaccinated. It is recommended that everyone over the age of 6 months receive the flu vaccine every year. It takes about 2 weeks after the receiving the flu vaccine for the body to develop protection against the flu virus so now is a good time to get vaccinated. Click on the blue link to learn how to schedule an appointment with our town's nurses at the [Fairfield Health Department](#). The next clinic is on October 28th from 3-6pm for individuals over the age of 3. This clinic is by APPOINTMENT ONLY. Please call the Public Health Nursing Office at 203-256-3150 to schedule an appointment.



VOTING & ABSENTEE BALLOTS

I would like to bring to the attention of Fairfield voters that some incorrect information regarding absentee ballot deadlines has been distributed by some political campaigns. The Registrar of Voters office has fielded some complaints.



Absentee ballots must be received by Tuesday, November 3rd at 8pm to be counted.

- If you return the ballot to the drop boxes in front of Town Hall, you may submit them at any time up until 11/3 at 8pm and they will be processed and counted.
- If you decide to mail your ballot back, please be aware of the time it takes for mail to arrive -- the Registrar's office has been suggesting that people allow up to a week for their ballots to be delivered via the mail.

The town has taken all precautions to ensure safe in person voting. I have included more information below in this email with links to various resources on voting procedures.

I know that our town being in the red category has caused concern. I want to reiterate once again that I will always put the health and safety of our residents above all else. I will continue to work closely as part of our Town's Emergency Management Team, along with our Health Director, to closely watch our numbers

during this phase. Please, continue to do your part and if you have [symptoms](#), make sure you get tested and stay at home. I hope that you and your family stay safe.

Sincerely,



Brenda L. Kupchick
Fairfield First Selectwoman

NONPROFIT OF THE WEEK

TEAM WOOF GANG & CO. STORE

The mission of Team Woofgang & Co. is to provide vocational training and job skills development to young adults with disabilities, while educating the community about the need for increased job opportunities for these individuals.

Our retail storefront at 1300 Post Rd. in Fairfield allows team members to learn retail, small business, and customer service skills in a real-world setting. Our production site enables them to learn about the operation of a commercial kitchen, supply management, packaging, and quality assurance standards. Jobs are tailored to meet the individual strengths and needs of our team members, all of whom are eager to work and ready to learn.



[LEARN MORE AND DONATE HERE](#)

Fairfield Social Services kicks off its Holiday Giving Program

Fairfield Social Services is committed to continuing our Holiday program, as we know so many families are struggling financially. Many of our clients lost jobs or lost income through reduction in hours, and are struggling in other ways due to COVID. Our social workers and staff work hard to make sure no child, senior or family feels forgotten or invisible during the holidays. The Town of Fairfield, our residents, neighbors, town employees, businesses, clubs, schools and individuals have always been incredibly generous to our Holiday Program over the years and have made a real difference in the lives of the families and seniors we serve. We're hoping we can count on your support again this year.

Rather than collecting wrapped gifts and toys, this year we are requesting gift cards for supermarkets, Target, Walmart, Amazon - anywhere families may shop for their loved ones for the holidays. The ability to select and purchase gifts for their families provides our clients another level of independence in an otherwise difficult time. During this special, yet stressful time of year, our goal is to support parents with gift cards or gift certificates for experiences such as vacation camps, after school programs, art classes, or other activities that may be beyond the reach of struggling families to allow children to participate in extra-curricular enrichment opportunities.

On behalf of the families that receive the support from the Holiday Giving Program, the Town of Fairfield and Department of Human and Social Services would like to thank the community for keeping all our residents in mind for the upcoming holiday season. If you are interested in donating or receiving holiday help, please contact Fairfield Social Services by calling 203-256-3170 or by email at socialservices@fairfieldct.org. Donations are gratefully accepted during business hours 9 AM to 4:30 PM at the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities, 100 Mona Terrace, Fairfield CT 06824.

LEAF PICKUP

The schedule for leaf pick-up in the Town of Fairfield is as follows:

November 9th

November 16th

November 30th

December 7th

More information available at fairfieldct.org/curbsidecollection



FAIRFIELD EATS



Fairfield
EATS

Fairfield Eats is a special promotion to support and celebrate local restaurants, and is being offered in lieu of a traditional Restaurant Week this year. It allows foodies to partake in two weeks' worth of deals. Special offerings include price fixe menus, family meal discounts, take-out options and the chance to win a \$50 gift

certificate from participating restaurants. Read more about the participating restaurants at www.experiencefairfieldct.org/eats.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



What's your story? What's your reason?
DO YOUR PART...Wear a mask!

[Download the video here](#) so you can upload it to social media, or share it from the links below, to continue to remind our residents that part of our civic responsibility to each other is to wear a mask.



HALLOWEEN GUIDANCE

Some of our residents have reached out to me and asked if the town should cancel Halloween. The CDC released guidance for communities to experience a safe Halloween. Let me emphasize that for those who do not wish to celebrate, you have the choice of shutting off your front porch light so that no one will come to your door. You can read more about how to have a safe Halloween by clicking on the image below. Please be safe.

2020 Fairfield Community Safety Guidance

HALLOWEEN

Safer Alternatives to Trick or Treating

LOWER RISK

- Carving/Decorating Pumpkins
- Decorate your Home/Living Space
- Halloween Scavenger Hunt
- Virtual Halloween Costume Contest
- Halloween Movie Night

MODERATE RISK

- Participate in one way trick or treating (goodie bags are ready to grab and go from a distance)
- Hosting a small group, outdoor, open-air costume parade where people can remain at least 6 feet apart
- Visit an open-air, one-way, walk through haunted forest with a mask and where people can remain 6 feet apart
- Visit pumpkin patches or orchards wearing masks, using hand sanitizer and maintaining social distancing
- Have an outdoor Halloween movie night with local family friends while maintaining social distancing

DISCOURAGED:

Large Gatherings,
Indoor Parties,
Trunk or Treat Events

Trick or Treating Guidelines

- Trick or treat in small groups, preferably with family members
- Keep 6 feet of distance between trick or treaters
- Have a talk about family rules to follow when trick or treating. In addition to COVID Safety Guidance, do not forget to bring a light and use caution when walking around
- Use a face coverings when out in the public, this must cover your mouth and nose
- DO NOT USE COSTUME MASKS IN PLACE OF CLOTH MASKS and do not wear a costume mask over a cloth mask as it may be difficult to breathe causing dangerous conditions
- Bring hand sanitizer and frequently clean your hands
- Work to reduce the amount of time you spend at any one location
- Do not share Halloween props
- Do not go inside anyone's home or apartment
- Stay home if you are sick
- Let candy or goodies sit for 24 hours prior to opening it

Make your Home Safe for Trick or Treaters

- Consider putting the treats outside so you do not have to open your door
- Grab and go bags are the best
- Watch through the windows and wave at the trick or treaters
- Do not turn your light on if you do not want to participate in Halloween activities
- If you do open your door, wear a mask and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet

FOR MORE CDC INFORMATION VISIT:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html#halloween>

VOTING

Polls Will be Open:

My office has received many inquiries on voting procedures. As a reminder, Election day is Tuesday, November 3. **Polls will be open from 6 AM to 8 PM. They will be sanitized frequently and will have social distancing measures in place.**



All poll workers will have face coverings, face shields and plexiglass shields to protect the public. Residents shall wear face coverings upon entering the polls. During the primary in September, I visited several polling locations and witnessed the safety procedures and protocols first hand, and feel confident that our residents can vote in person safely.

Over 14,000 absentee ballots have been issued. If you still require an absentee ballot, please put your completed, signed application in one of the ballot boxes outside Old Town Hall as soon as possible. Your ballot will be mailed to you. Your ballot must be received by 8 PM on Election Day to be counted.

Absentee Ballots must be received by 8:00 pm on Election Day. A secure ballot drop box is available in front of Old Town Hall, 611 Old Post Road should you prefer this method over mailing in your ballot.

Absentee ballots are not accepted at polling places; only in the secure drop boxes or through the mail.

To view a sample voting ballot by district, click here: www.fairfieldct.org/ballot
If you have more questions, you can contact the [Registrar of Voters](#) office or visit the [Secretary of State website](#).

Deadlines for registration and other information can be found at fairfieldct.org/electionday.

FAIRFIELD REVALUATION

The Connecticut General Statutes requires each town to do a revaluation every five years. The Town of Fairfield is in the process of a real property revaluation as required for the Grand List of October 1, 2020. This revaluation will correspond to the tax bills that will be due beginning in July 2021. For more information, [click here](#).

Current property information can be found here: <https://gis.vgsi.com/fairfieldct/>

To listen to the presentation from Assessor Ross Murray and Mike Fazio at the Board of Selectman meeting, [click here](#).

Reminder: Business Personal Property Declarations are due by November 2, 2020.
More information can be found here <https://www.fairfieldct.org/personalproperty>

APPLY FOR ENERGY ASSISTANCE

If you need help with your heating bill, Fairfield Social Services can help families with the process. It's important to apply now because the utility moratorium on power/heat shut-offs ends October 1, 2020.W

Fairfield Social Services is now making appointments to assist Fairfield residents with applications for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program. Energy assistance pays for a household's primary heating source such as oil, natural gas, electricity, propane, kerosene, coal, wood and

wood pellets on behalf of eligible households. The amount of heat assistance may not be sufficient to cover a household's entire winter heating cost. Homeowners and renters may apply.



Due to risks associated with Covid-19, there will be no in-person appointments for Energy Assistance. Please call the Social Services office to set up your telephone appointment: 203-256-3170. Don't wait, do it now.

DOGS ON LEASH

As of October 1st, Dogs are permitted on Town of Fairfield Beaches, however, they are prohibited from Boardwalks, Pavilions and playgrounds. Persons responsible for dogs must clean up after their animals while they are on the beach, in open spaces or in the parking areas. Dogs are not permitted in any Town of Fairfield parks or playground areas.

The CDC Guidelines have not changed regarding dogs being leashed at all times and under the control of their owner. I know our town has allowed dogs to be

unleashed at Jennings Beach and at Lake Mohegan, however it would not be responsible for the Town of Fairfield to ignore the CDC guidelines during this pandemic. I hope our Town's dog owners understand that we must follow these guidelines while visiting any Fairfield Parks, Beaches & Open Spaces.

According to the CDC, we should "treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection." The "CDC recommends that pet owners limit their pet's interaction with people outside their household."

In addition, the CDC states that you should "walk dogs on a leash at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from others" and "avoid public places where a large number of people gather."

We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

For the complete text of the Town Ordinance pertaining to dogs on beaches, open space areas, and marinas, go to: <https://buff.ly/34jJsKm>

FAIRFIELD BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN COMMITTEE:

The [Town of Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee](#) has been working to encourage walking and biking for transportation, recreation, exercise and quality of life.



Working with multiple town departments we have established [bicycle routes](#), installed [bicycle repair stations](#), worked to improve pedestrian infrastructure, and authored the [Town of Fairfield Complete Streets Policy](#) (approved by the Board of Selectman in 2018).

With more and more of our citizens using our roads, we would like to provide you with some important safety reminders for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. [View the document here.](#)

TOWN GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sullivan Independence Hall and Old Town Hall are open to the public by appointment only for the safety of employees



and residents. Please visit this summary page for an overview and follow links to specific departments for more information.

Fairfield's Operations During COVID-19



Help is available to Fairfield small businesses that are struggling due to the pandemic. The Fairfield COVID-19 Small Business Assistance Program was established to provide limited, one time direct financial assistance to eligible Fairfield small businesses that have no more than five full-time employees and that have been adversely affected by the public health emergency. Applications are still being accepted by the Office of Community & Economic Development. To learn more or to apply, please visit the website: www.fairfieldct.org/covidsbr.

Eligibility & Application



The Fairfield COVID-19 Relief Fund was established to provide limited, one-time assistance to Fairfield residents who have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Use of the funds must be directly related to the effects of the virus. Donate to the fund or apply for relief by clicking below.

Donate or Apply to the Fairfield COVID-19 Relief Fund

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

If you become unemployed due to coronavirus (COVID-19), you should file for unemployment benefits. Click [here](#) for more information. For frequently asked questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) for workers and employers click [here](#).

ASSISTANCE FOR RENTERS, HOMEOWNERS & RESIDENTIAL LANDLORDS

Governor Lamont announced a comprehensive plan to put more than \$33 million in state and federal resources to work providing emergency assistance to renters, homeowners, and residential landlords impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Rental assistance information can be found [here](#). Further information is below:

- Connecticut Department of Housing: portal.ct.gov/doh
 - Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA): www.chfa.org
 - Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH): cceh.org
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SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services continues to assist by telephone town residents who are experiencing difficulty providing the basic needs for themselves and their families, especially during these unprecedented times. Please call with any questions or concerns: 203-256-3170 or visit at fairfieldct.org/humanservices.

BIGELOW CENTER

Transportation services are running on a limited basis for medical appointments and grocery shopping. Reservations for rides are first-come, first-served for shopping and medical appointments and must be made no less than one week in advance. Please call the senior center for more information: 203-256-3166.

The buses may only transport four riders per trip. For those who do not live in Senior and Disabled Housing, Fairfield Senior Transportation will provide rides Tuesdays or Thursdays each week. Masks must be worn to board the buses. Rides are now available to medical appointments for Fairfield's seniors and people with disabilities on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between the hours of 9:30 – 3:00 PM.

If you or anyone you know are homebound and unable to shop, the Mobile Food Pantry is available every other week and lunches are available for those who are homebound. Please call Social Services for more information: 203-256-3170.

COVID-19 TESTING

Testing capacity has increased in our area. To view locations where to get tested, please visit fairfieldct.org/covid19testing.

Contact Tracing

One of the key tools we have to contain the spread of COVID-19 is Contact Tracing. For this initiative to be successful, the Health Department needs the cooperation of residents who test positive for COVID-19. Both Universities were trained and assisted by our Health Department to manage their own contact tracing for their respective campuses.

The primary purpose of contact tracing is to identify and notify direct contacts of confirmed cases as quickly as possible and to ensure those exposed are self-quarantining. The information provided in the interviews with confirmed cases helps reduce the potential spread of the virus in our community.

Any Fairfield resident who tests positive for COVID-19 and has not received a phone call from the Fairfield Health Department or the Connecticut COVID Tracing system within 24 hours of receiving their result is urged to contact the Fairfield Health Department at 203-256-3022.

OPERATION HOPE FOOD PANTRY

Operation Hope wants to make sure residents of Fairfield are aware that the food pantry remains open and is ready to help by providing food and other basic needs to community residents, as they have for nearly 35 years.

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 10:00-12:00; Thursday from 4:00 -6:00. Visit operationhopect.org.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Fairfield Public Main Library is open for quick browsing and checkout Monday-Saturday afternoons 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm and Tuesday and Thursday evenings

5:00pm – 7:00pm. Learn more about [Library Express](#) service.



Please visit fairfieldpubliclibrary.org for full details regarding [Curbside Pickup](#) at the Main Library and Woods Branch Library. Fairfield Public Library continues to offer 24/7 access to their digital collection of books, music, magazines, movies and databases. Visit the [Library Event Calendar](#) to find a wide and varied assortment of Virtual Programs.

Need a library card? Follow this link fairfieldpubliclibrary.org/my-fpl/library-cards/ and get started today!

Sign up for the library newsletter [here](#).

PEQUOT LIBRARY: WE'RE HERE, WE CARE

Pequot Library's doors may be temporarily closed, but our librarians and staff are still here for you! Enjoy digital programs like story times, author talks, book clubs, and more! Get details on our [website](#) and social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#). Sign up for Pequot Library's [Digital Digest eNewsletter](#) or contact our [Chief Librarian](#) for personalized book recommendations.



PEQUOT
LIBRARY

On Monday, June 22, Pequot will be curbside pickup. Please contact us for more information.

Important COVID-19 Links:

Fairfield Health Department coronavirus website: fairfieldct.org/covid19

For the latest numbers of cases, deaths and those recovered [click here](#)

For additional data and graphs of activity [click here](#)

For guidance and updates on Connecticut's coronavirus preparedness efforts, visit: ct.gov/coronavirus

Contact Information:

For general questions you can call [211](#)

[Hartford HealthCare's](#) COVID-19 Clinical Command Center hotline, staffed by healthcare professionals, is now available to the community. To reach the 24-hour hotline, call [860.972.8100](#) or (toll-free) [833.621.0600](#).

YNHH has a call center number it's 1-833-ASK YNHH that's open from 7am - 7pm.

PREVIOUS UPDATES:

October 15	May 22
October 9	May 14
October 2	May 7
September 25	May 4
September 18	April 23
September 11	April 18
September 2	April 14
August 26	April 10
August 20	April 7
August 12	April 3
August 7	April 1
August 5	March 30
July 31	March 27
July 24	March 25
July 17	March 23
July 10	March 21
July 2	March 19
June 26	March 18
June 19	March 17
June 12	March 14
June 4	March 12
May 28	March 10

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