

West Hartford Declares State Of Emergency

For Immediate Release

West Hartford, CT (March 15, 2020, 7:30PM) -- West Hartford Mayor Shari G. Cantor announced today that she has declared a State of Emergency in West Hartford in response to the global pandemic of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”).

“Our public health and safety officials are already fully mobilized and taking the necessary steps to protect West Hartford residents from the effects of COVID-19,” Mayor Cantor said. “This additional step is intended to reinforce the seriousness of the public health crisis, and to make sure Town government has maximum flexibility and the authority to quickly respond as conditions change.”

“The reason these measures need to be followed is so we can flatten the curve of the spread of the virus,” said Aimee Krauss, acting director of West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District. “This means taking precautions even by people who are not sick or at high-risk to help mitigate a surge in cases that could overwhelm the hospital system.”

The goal is no longer to prevent the virus from spreading freely from person to person, instead, the objective is to spread out the inevitable infections so that the healthcare system isn’t overwhelmed with patients.

In making the emergency declaration, Mayor Cantor said she is asking West Hartford residents and businesses to take the following steps to prevent community spread of COVID-19:

- Families should keep young children and students at home to the extent feasible
- Religious organizations are encouraged to conduct services in a virtual mode and limit in-person services to reduce the occupancy by 50% to create adequate spacing between seating, in accordance with CDC recommendations
- Businesses should require their employees to work from home, wherever feasible
- Businesses should consider staggering or reducing hours of operation
- Food Service Establishments/Restaurants should cut their occupancy rate by 50% to create adequate spacing between seating, in accordance with CDC recommendations
- Food Service Establishments/Restaurants should encourage patrons to use their take-out service instead of dining-in
- Grocery stores should discontinue offering samples and providing self-service stations (ex: soup and salad bars)
- Restaurants and establishments should cancel all gatherings and special events and celebrations
- Official and unofficial sports activities, including games and practices, should be canceled

Town Manager Matthew W. Hart said that Town public safety officials and officials with the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District are working closely with state and federal authorities to coordinate the response. He noted that Governor Ned Lamont has already issued several Executive Orders to prevent community spread, including a prohibition on large gatherings.

“This is a historic and unprecedented public health crisis, the likes of which the world has not faced in more than a century,” Mayor Cantor said. “But West Hartford is a resilient community that has properly invested in public safety infrastructure, and we have planned and drilled for the most serious contingencies. With the cooperation of our residents, we will endure and emerge stronger.”

For more information, visit our web site: www.westhartfordct.gov/covid19.

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