

TOWN OF ATHOL



STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION

WHEREAS, a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate public action has arisen within the Town of Athol, namely, an emergent threat to public health and welfare posed by the 2019 novel Coronavirus;

WHEREAS, the disease caused by the 2019 novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”) is a contagious, and at times fatal, respiratory disease;

WHEREAS, symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, and the disease can spread from person to person via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes;

WHEREAS, both travel-related cases and community contact transmission of COVID-19 have been detected in the Commonwealth and such transmission is expected to continue;

WHEREAS, the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 and the effects of its extreme risk of person-to-person transmission throughout the United States, the Commonwealth and the Town of Athol significantly affect the life and health of our people, as well as the economy, and is a disaster that impacts the health, security, and safety of the public;

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts declared a State of Emergency to facilitate and expedite the use of Commonwealth resources and deployment of federal and interstate resources to protect persons from the impacts of the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared the COVID-19 outbreak a national emergency;

WHEREAS, as of March 13, 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), there are more than 1,600 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States, and 41 of those cases have resulted in death;

WHEREAS, as of March 14, 2020, according to the World Health Organization, there are more than 142,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide, and over 5,300 of those cases have resulted in death;

WHEREAS, as of March 15, 2020, there are 45 confirmed cases, and 119 presumed positive cases, of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, it is critical to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and welfare of the people of the Town;

WHEREAS, the Town of Athol's Chief Administrative Officer, upon the advice of the Town's Public Health Agent, Emergency Management Director and Chief of Police, has determined that COVID-19 poses a present and reasonably imminent danger to public health, safety or general welfare of the people or their property;

WHEREAS, the Chief Administrative Officer has determined that immediate public action is needed to prevent, minimize or mitigate damage to the public health, safety or general welfare of the people of Athol or their property which may otherwise result from COVID-19 and that taking the time required to comply with the various state and local procurement laws would endanger the health or safety of the people or their property;

WHEREAS, the Chief Administrative Officer has determined that a state of emergency be declared in the Town of Athol;

WHEREAS, the people of the Town of Athol should be able to depend upon guidance from their chief executive officer, the Athol Board of Selectmen, and their chief administrative officer, the Town Manager, as the official agent for the Board of Selectmen;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Shaun A. Suhoski, Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Athol, Massachusetts, hereby declare that a STATE OF EMERGENCY exists within the Town of Athol effective at 1800 hours on March 15, 2020.

This declaration of emergency shall remain in effect until further notice is given by the undersigned, or by the Athol Board of Selectmen, that the STATE OF EMERGENCY no longer exists.

Dated: March 15, 2020

By: 
Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
Chief Administrative Officer