March 13, 2020

To: Vinalhaven Community

Given all the recent news regarding COVID-19, or coronavirus, the Town of Vinalhaven is sharing this update:

Our primary goal is to protect the health of our employees and our community. The best way to do that is to provide factual information in a timely manner.

The facts we know as of today:

- As of March 13th, at 11:15 AM, the Maine CDC reports that there is one confirmed case of COVID-19 in the state.
- You can carry the virus for up to two weeks without showing symptoms and be contagious.
- The virus may be able to live on surfaces (Counter tops, writing instruments, door handles, faucets and toilets etc.) up to 48 hours.
- Young and healthy populations are affected the same way the flu or cold would affect them. Elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions can experience a serious effect from this virus.

What are we doing?

- Vinalhaven's healthcare, public health, and emergency management providers have been preparing and coordinating our efforts to meet the needs of our community.
- Our team has had meetings with the school and eldercare administration to discuss plans to respond if COVID-19 becomes a closer reality.
- We will continue to meet as a team and with key community partners.
- We are on calls several times each week and are doing all we can to stay informed with what is happening in Maine and the nation.
- We will be reaching out to individuals in the community that are most vulnerable to provide information about self-care and what to do if you are experiencing symptoms.

Things everyone can do:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning spray
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and throw it in the trash
- Wash hands frequently; soap and water are as effective as hand sanitizer
- Stay home if you are sick
- Have food and extra medicine on hand
• If you are sick and need care, call your healthcare provider for further steps and direction
• To minimize the spread of the virus or your chance to contract the virus, please minimize your activity in public spaces.

What about my committee or social group?
• The CDC recommends that gatherings over 250 people should not happen.
• We would urge you to consider cancelling any size gathering that is not necessary for the next 30 days.
• Look to have the meeting using virtual technology if you can.

Continued Services
We are making plans to continue providing services to the community but may need to seek modifications to how they are delivered. For now, you can expect the following from town facilities:
• We will not be shaking your hands or sharing writing instruments.
• We will be attempting to maintain a social distance (6’) while conducting business.
• We will be wiping down common touch surfaces more frequently.
• We will be providing hand sanitizer at the front counter.
• Updates or changes to town services will be posted on our website, our Facebook page, and with printed notices at various public locations.
• In the event that the offices and town facilities are closed, we are working on plans to continue to deliver services to the best of our abilities and will share that at another time.

Eighty percent of people who get this infection recover at home and don't require medical help. Staying informed and following the advice above will go a long way in reducing the amount of infection in our community and will help protect all of us.

To stay informed we recommend using the following sources:

For general questions about the coronavirus, please call 2-1-1.

Please contact Andrew Dorr for general questions about town services at 863-2042. Visit the Town’s Facebook page or the Town website for up-to-date info about our services.

If you have the symptoms or a good reason to think you have been exposed, call ICMS at 863-4341.

Sincerely,

Jen Desmond, Andrew Dorr  Kerry McKee  Marc Candage
Public Health Officer  Town Manager  Ambulance Director  Fire Chief