



# The Auburn Account

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Community Message

Greetings Auburn Residents, Businesses and Property Owners:

As we all continue to adjust and adapt to the changes in our lives resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, I want to reassure the Auburn community that your local government officials and administration are working diligently to promote the health, safety and well-being of our citizens while continuing to provide critical and essential services and programs to support our residents. Your local officials, both elected and appointed, are committed to providing the leadership and informed guidance to the community necessary to ensure that we collectively take all measures available to curb the spread of Coronavirus.

While the Town has developed and implemented solid emergency management plans for Auburn over the past few years, a global pandemic such as this has never happened in our lifetimes. There is no playbook and the data about the virus is unfolding hourly, thus our responses and plans need to continually evolve as more data becomes available. Regular briefings at both the State and Federal level impact our operations at a local level so we need to be nimble and adapt quickly. We strive to keep the public informed on the most recent changes, orders, regulations, laws and guidance related to Covid-19. You can visit our website at <https://www.auburnguide.com/669/Coronavirus-Health-Alerts> for regular updates and links to Covid-19 resources.

Looking back to early March when Covid-19 erupted, the Auburn community has once again been resilient and strong, displaying acts of kindness, neighborly compassion, and community spirit as we forge through this new reality and fight the Covid-19 battle together.

Since March, the Town has developed several new initiatives to combat the spread of the virus, assist our residents and support our most vulnerable populations. We have redirected and reallocated our resources, adapted to new laws and regulations, and put into place measures to curb the spread of Covid-19.

*Continued on next page...*

**Sign up today** to receive electronic communications and updates on a variety of issues, including *The Auburn Account*, emergency and road work updates from the Town of Auburn. Visit our web site at [www.auburnguide.com](http://www.auburnguide.com) or [click here](#) to sign up now!

Volume 10, Issue 2 April 2020



Auburn Town Hall  
104 Central Street  
Auburn, MA 01501

[www.auburnguide.com](http://www.auburnguide.com)

### Important Contact Information (508) 832-

<b>Town Manager</b>	<b>7720</b>
<b>Board of Selectmen</b>	<b>7720</b>
<b>Building Inspector</b>	<b>7719</b>
<b>Clerk</b>	<b>7701</b>
<b>Fire</b>	<b>7800</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>7703</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>7790</b>
<b>Planning</b>	<b>7704</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>7777</b>
<b>Public Works</b>	<b>7814</b>
<b>Senior Center</b>	<b>7799</b>
<b>Treasurer/Collector</b>	<b>7705</b>
<b>Veterans</b>	<b>7706</b>

### Hours of Operation

#### Town Hall:

Monday	8:00AM-7:00PM
T, W, Th	8:00AM-4:00PM
Friday	8:00AM-1:00PM

#### Senior Center:

Mon & Fri	8:00AM-3:00PM
T, W, Th	8:00AM-4:00PM

#### Library:

Mon—Thurs	9:30AM-8:30PM
Fri	9:30AM-5:30PM
Sat	9:00AM-1:00PM

***In this issue: Covid-19, Recycle Reminder, Animal Care, Town Elections, New Employees, A Retirement and much more...***



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

We have closed Town buildings, Auburn Public Schools, playgrounds, and all basketball and tennis courts to the public. The School Committee has closed all school fields, playgrounds and grounds to the public due to observations of large groups of 40 or more gathering to play on the fields and lack of social distancing. Town parks remain open to the public, with the understanding that the public will follow all State orders by keeping gatherings to less than ten people and social distancing is practiced, with six feet between each individual; allowing everyone to enjoy their recreation safely. This decision will be revisited if there is evidence of non-compliance.

Our regulatory boards and commissions are continuing to do their work through remote meetings. Access to those meetings is posted on each meeting notice so that the public can watch the meetings and participate in public hearings. Our Covid-19 website explains the platforms we use for remote meetings and includes guidance on accessing those platforms.

Local government has many critical services that we need to continue to provide in addition to public safety. These include, but are not limited to, Information Technology, certain building inspections, certain DPW functions (fleet maintenance, sewer pump stations, plowing, cemetery), food distribution for children (through the school department), Meals on Wheels, Board of Health functions, Animal Control, certain Town Clerk functions, regulatory boards and commissions, certain tasks in the Treasurer/Collectors Office, and financial functions. Most of our employees are working limited hours in municipal buildings and working at home for the remaining hours. These staggered shifts and work-at-home decisions were made to protect our employees and curb the spread of Covid-19.

During this time, we ask the public to contact town administration through the following phone lines which will be staffed through our Call Center:

General Inquiries: 508-832-7720

Board of Health, Solid Waste, Animal Control: 508-832-7703

Building Inspections: 508-832 7719

Planning, Zoning, Conservation, Economic Development: 508-832-7704

These lines will be manned by personnel who will forward any questions or issues to the appropriate department or employee for response. Responses will be prioritized to address critical and time sensitive issues. We ask for your understanding and patience as town administration implements these and other measures to enable us to provide a continuity of services to the public while keeping our employees and the public as safe as possible.

Auburn Public Library has created two new websites for adults and children to learn, interact and read remotely. Stay Connected is a website for children that we launched in early April. We add content to this website several times each week, and we will continue to do so until our building is once again open for full services. APL Virtual is a website was developed to provide information regarding virtual museum programs, COVID-19 information and resources, access to digital books, magazines, and audio books, how to download and use Libby and Overdrive, and more.

## Community Message (continued from page 2)

The Auburn CARES initiative (Community Assistance Relief Effort Strategy) has been underway since April 8th. Auburn CARES is a coordinated effort to provide outreach and assistance to our vulnerable populations and those severely impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis. Auburn CARES consists of two outreach and assistance programs: ***Our Seniors Matter*** and ***the Auburn Connection***.

Under the ***Our Seniors Matter*** initiative, town and school department employees are calling seniors to check on them regularly and guide them to qualified staff at the Senior Center who can provide technical and referral assistance and link those seniors with available resources. The seniors have been very receptive to the program and the overall feedback has been very positive.

Through ***the Auburn Connection***, we set up a telephone HOTLINE (508-832-CARE or 2273) for residents to call with non-emergency, COVID-related inquiries or concerns. Our employees will work to connect residents to available resources. This includes state assistance programs, food pantries, meal programs, utility information, and support agencies and organizations. This line is staffed from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM Monday through Friday.

We are thrilled to be working collaboratively with the School Department on many of these initiatives. School nurses are working with our Board of Health and public health nurse to track and monitor Covid-19 cases. Teachers and other school department employees are working on Our Seniors Matter, identifying contact information for seniors and making calls. We also have a number of teachers who volunteered to sew masks for our employees.

We are proud of the partnerships we have with the school department, Auburn Youth and Family services, Elder Services of Worcester Area, and local businesses to assist those in need. Auburn is a strong community and we will collaboratively battle Covid-19.

Thank you to all of our employees who continue to work every day on behalf of the Auburn community – both those you do see and those you don't see. Whether first responders and emergency personnel on the front lines or those behind the scenes, the employees are dedicated to providing quality services to the community. Thank you also to those essential businesses and organizations whose employees continue to provide services that we all need, from health care to groceries to pharmaceuticals and more. Please keep all of these employees in your thoughts and prayers. To those individuals who are suffering from Covid-19, we wish you a quick recovery. For those who have lost loved ones during this crisis, our heartfelt sympathies are with you.

We will continue to marshal our resources, collaborate with our partners at all levels of government, and focus our efforts on providing quality services to this community. In return, we ask that each of you take every precaution that you can to protect yourself, your family, your neighbors and your fellow citizens from Covid-19. We are fighting a war on a virus that has affected us globally, nationally and locally. Together we will get through this. Auburn Strong.

Warm Regards,

Julie A. Jacobson

Town Manager



On April 8th, Town administration announced our new Covid-19 initiative, Auburn CARES (Community Assistance Relief Effort Strategy), which is a coordinated effort of town administration to provide outreach and assistance to our vulnerable populations and those severely impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Auburn CARES consists of two outreach and assistance programs: Our Seniors Matter and the Auburn Connection.

Under the Our Seniors Matter initiative, town and school department employees are calling thousands of Auburn seniors aged 60 and over to check on them and, if needed, to provide information on available resources in the region and the State. Seniors seeking assistance can also call the Senior Center at 508.832.7799 between 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM Monday through Friday.

The second program under the Auburn CARES initiative is the Auburn Connection. Town employees will work with residents of all ages who are in need to identify and connect them to available resources. This includes state assistance programs, food pantries, meal programs, utility information, and support agencies and organizations.

We have set up a telephone HOTLINE for residents to call with non-emergency, COVID-related inquiries or concerns. The Hotline telephone number is 508-832-2273 or 508-832-CARE. This line will be staffed from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM Monday through Friday. Please do not use this hotline for medical or other emergencies! This number is for residents in need of assistance or access to available resources. Depending on the nature of the request, the resident will be referred to the appropriate town employee or agency that can provide the requested assistance.

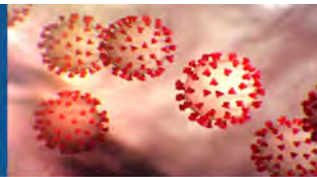
Please share these telephone numbers with your neighbors and friends.

The Town urges all residents to continue to be vigilant and take all precautions to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, including frequent hand washing, social distancing and staying at home other than obtaining or providing essential services.

For more details, visit the Town's Covid-19 web site at <https://www.auburnguide.com/669/Coronavirus-Health-Alerts>.

## COVID-19 Updates and Information

Everything you need to know about COVID-19 in Massachusetts.



Feeling unwell? [Check your symptoms](#)

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ✓ [Daily updates](#)
- ✓ [Call hotlines, get text updates, and more](#)
- ✓ [What you should do](#)
- ✓ [About COVID-19](#)
- ✓ [Regulations & guidance](#)
- ✓ [Get help](#)
- ✓ [Help out](#)
- ✓ [Affected government services](#)

## Daily updates

### COVID-19 cases in Massachusetts →

46,023 Confirmed cases

195,076 Individuals tested

[View the latest COVID-19 Dashboard](#) (updated 4/23/2020)

[CDC case counts](#) across the United States

[more →](#)

### Latest news →

Latest update from Governor Baker, state officials:

[Friday, April 24, 2020, 2:00 PM: Watch Here](#)

Past updates:

[Video Updates](#) | [Press Releases](#)

[more →](#)

### Most requested →

[State of Emergency](#)

[Unemployment](#)

[School closures](#)

[List of essential businesses](#)

[PPE during COVID-19](#)

[Learn about testing](#)

[Help with contact tracing](#)

[more →](#)

## Call hotlines, get text updates, and more

### Call hotlines, get text updates, and more




[Table of Contents](#)

- [Envie COVIDMAESP](#) at 888-777
- For non-emergency questions and help: [Call 2-1-1](#) or [live chat](#)
- Questions about [nursing home or rest home care](#): Call (617) 660-5399
- Domestic violence and sexual assault hotlines:
  - In Massachusetts [Call SafeLink](#) at (877) 785-2020
    - Deaf and hard-of-hearing callers can reach SafeLink via video relay service using the main number (877)785-2020, or by TTY at (877) 521-2601.
  - National Domestic Violence Hotline 24/7 Crisis Hotline: (800) 799-7233
  - National Sexual Assault Hotline 24/7 Crisis Hotline: (800) 656-4673
- [Use this form to email](#) or Call the Governor's Office at (617) 725-4005
- [Check your symptoms](#) online



# Check your symptoms for COVID-19 online

Massachusetts has launched a new resource that residents can use to assess symptoms and find the right care.

 Check your symptoms and find the right care in minutes

Check your symptoms online ➔

THE DETAILS

### What you need

**Buoy's online tool is not to be used in place of emergency medical care. If this is an emergency, call 911 or visit the nearest emergency room.**

Massachusetts residents can visit [www.Buoy.com/mass](https://www.Buoy.com/mass) to get advice from an online health assistant safely at home, for free.

Buoy will connect you with the appropriate health care resource based on your symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19.

Here's how it works:

1. Tell Buoy about your symptoms and risk factors
2. Figure out if you should be tested for COVID-19
3. Get directed to the most appropriate health care resource
4. Learn about the virus, access prevention tips, and more


[Use Buoy's online health tool](#)

### Fees

The Buoy online health tool is free for Massachusetts residents.

CONTACT

### COVIDMA Text Alerts

 **Phone**

To get up-to-date alerts, text COVIDMA to 888-777

Get the latest info about the Coronavirus in Massachusetts sent right to your phone

**Spanish-language text alerts Envíe COVIDMAESP al 888-777**


What you need

Fees

How to check

Contact

## How to check

 Online +

## Contact

COVIDMA Text Alerts +

Massachusetts 2-1-1 +

## Important information Regarding Your Tax Bill

**Under “An Act to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities Resulting From COVID-19,” Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, the town has adopted local options to extend due dates for real and personal property tax payments and applications for exemptions and a waiver of interest on certain municipal tax and other bills paid by June 30, 2020. See below.**

The due date for applications for property tax exemptions has been extended to June 1, 2020. June 1, 2020 is the new due date even if the due date for applications on your enclosed or previously mailed tax bill is April 1, 2020.

This extension applies to applications for the exemptions listed in the third paragraph of G.L. c. 59, § 59, including exemptions under clauses 17, 17C, 17C1/2 and 17D (seniors, surviving spouses, minor children of deceased parent); 18 (financial hardship – activated military, age and infirmity); 22, 22A, 22B, 22C, 22D, 22E, 22F and 22H (veterans, surviving spouses and surviving parents); 37 and 37A (blind persons); 41, 41B, 41C and 41C1/2 (seniors); 42 and 43 (surviving spouse and minor children of firefighter/police officer killed in line of duty); 52 (certain eligible seniors); 53 (certain eligible properties with septic systems); 56 (National Guard and reservists on active duty in foreign countries); and 57 (local option tax rebates). This extension also automatically applies to applications for residential exemptions under G.L. c. 59, § 5C, for small commercial exemptions under G.L. c. 59, § 5I and for deferrals under G.L. c. 59, § 5, clauses 41A (seniors) and 18A (poverty or financial hardship due to change to active military).

The town/city has also voted to waive interest and other penalty for late payment of any excise, tax, betterment assessment or apportionment thereof, annual sewer use or other charge added to a tax for any payments with a due date on or after March 10, 2020 where payment is made late but before June 30, 2020. This applies to late payments of bills that have a due date of March 10, 2020 or after, when such bills are paid late but paid on or before June 30. This waiver of interest does not apply to bills with due dates before March 10, 2020 or if the bill is not paid by June 30th.

NOTE - If the municipal offices are closed on the June 1, 2020 extended due date for tax payments or filing of exemption applications as a result of the outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus or the declaration of a state of emergency issued by the governor on March 10, 2020, the due dates for tax payments and applications for exemptions are not extended – they will be due on June 1, 2020 even if the municipal offices are closed. (See section 10(b) of the Act.)

Exemption Applications can be mailed to:

Assessor's Office  
104 Central Street  
Auburn MA 01501

For additional information or if you have questions call the Assessor's Office at 508-832-7708 or via email at [assessor@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:assessor@town.auburn.ma.us). You may also email your applications and supporting documentation to that address.

To make a payment, please pay online at [www.auburnguide.com](http://www.auburnguide.com), mail payment to 104 Central Street, Auburn, MA 01501 or drop payment off at the drop box located at the back door of the town hall. For any questions regarding payments, please call the Treasure Collector at 508-832-7705.

## Board of Selectmen



Select Board meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays each month as well as potentially on the 5th Monday of the month when necessary. If a holiday falls on a Monday, meetings are held the following Tuesday. Minutes and agendas are available on the Town's web site. Meetings are televised live on Auburn Cable Television.

To contact the Board of Selectmen during regular Town Hall business hours:  
Phone: 508-832-7720                      Fax: 508-832-4270

### To reach individual members of the Board of Selectmen:

Doreen M. Goodrich  
21 Hill Street  
Cell: 508-951-9157  
Email: [dgoodrich@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:dgoodrich@town.auburn.ma.us)

Kenneth Holstrom (Chair)  
273 Central Street  
Cell: 508-320-4564  
Email: [kholstrom@town.aubun.ma.us](mailto:kholstrom@town.aubun.ma.us)

Dan Carpenter (Vice Chair)  
33 Goulding Drive  
Cell: 508-277-9519  
Email: [dcarpenter@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:dcarpenter@town.auburn.ma.us)

Tristan LaLiberte  
7 Rock Ave  
508-721-9974  
Email: [tlaliberte@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:tlaliberte@town.auburn.ma.us)

Lionel Berthiaume  
13 Rochdale St  
508-245-9334  
Email: [LBerthiaume@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:LBerthiaume@town.auburn.ma.us)



# Covid-19 Precautions and Resources

Given the increasing serious risks associated with COVID-19, the Town of Auburn reminds all residents to take every precaution to keep yourselves, your family members and the community safe. Each individual plays an important role in this public health crisis and we ask that you do your part by following these precautions, in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus:

Wash your hands often and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds

Cover your cough and sneezes

Stay home and self-isolate from others in the household if you feel unwell

Avoid touching your face, eyes, and nose with your hands

Clean and disinfect commonly touched items, such as your phone and doorknobs

Avoid gatherings of more than ten people and always practice social distancing

Wear face coverings or masks when out in public

For the latest local information, you can visit the Town of Auburn website -[www.auburnguide.com](http://www.auburnguide.com) or go to our Covid-19 website at [www.auburnguide.com/669/Coronavirus-Health-Alerts](http://www.auburnguide.com/669/Coronavirus-Health-Alerts) or call the Auburn Board of Health at 508-832-7703.

For State information, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health 2019 novel coronavirus web site, which is, updated frequently – [www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus](http://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus).

You can also call the State's informational hotline with any questions by dialing 2-1-1.

If you would like to receive information by text alerts, please text COVIDMA to 888-777.

Additional details and guidance regarding the novel coronavirus, is available from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website - [www.CDC/covid-19](http://www.CDC/covid-19).

## UTILITIES INFORMATION

### Eversource

To decrease any financial hardship our customers are facing due to the COVID-19 impacts, we have postponed disconnections for nonpayment. Our customer service team is available to help customers with financial programs we offer, such as setting up a payment plan.

We have online and mobile tools to help you conduct business with us as usual, including customer service agents to speak with by phone. Our mobile app, available in the App Store and Google Play, allows you to easily check your account, pay your bill and more at your convenience.

The COVID-19 outbreak has led to an increase in scam activity. Be wary of any unsolicited calls that threaten to disconnect your utility service and that demand payment by unusual means. Eversource will never ask for your personal information over the phone in this manner and does not accept payments via gift cards or other common tools used by scammers.

### National Grid:

As a result, National Grid is temporarily suspending collections-related activities, including service disconnections, to lessen any financial hardship the COVID-19 pandemic may have on our customers. These policies are effective immediately and will be in place through the end of April. We will evaluate their continued need at that time. Please note that regular billing will continue for all customers.

To conveniently manage your account, you can do so online and avoid longer than usual wait times in the call center. You can also continue to pay your bill or find assistance through a variety of online tools. Please visit [ngrid.com/billpay](http://ngrid.com/billpay) to explore convenient options including:

- Paperless Billing
- Pay by Bank Account
- Pay by Credit Card (fees apply)
- Automated Payments
- Budget Plan
- Assistance Programs

*This information was current on April 24, 2020. Given the fluid Covid-19 situation, information may have changed since the printing of this newsletter.*

# Newsletter from the Town Clerk



**CENSUS** – 2020 census forms were mailed the first week of January. **Please fill out and return if you have not already done this, even if there were no changes.** There are many households who have not answered the census. Voters are made inactive in June of each year if the census is not updated. This creates long lines at the elections; because each inactive voter must fill out a form and provide proof that they still live at their Auburn address.

**US CENSUS 2020**— The US Census is done every 10 years. Remainders were mailed out in March for residents to be able to answer online or over the phone. If no response paper copies will be mailed out for residents to be able to fill out and return.

**Dog Licensing** – The office is currently licensing dogs for 2020. Last year's license expires as of March 31, 2020. If your dog has been licensed in the past and is up to date on rabies and would prefer to license on-line, use [https://www.mapsonline.net/auburnma/dog\\_licensing](https://www.mapsonline.net/auburnma/dog_licensing)

Otherwise if you go to [http://www.auburnguide.com/Pages/AuburnMA\\_Clerk/index](http://www.auburnguide.com/Pages/AuburnMA_Clerk/index)

Town Clerk Department, Dog Licenses & Information, the Dog license application can be printed and mailed in. Please verify that the rabies on file is current or send a copy with the application or your census form. If your dog can not get a rabies vaccine owners will need to submit a letter. Letters need to be submitted annually to be reviewed by the Animal Control Officer and the Board of Health for acceptance, per MGL Chapter 140 Section 145B, (i). Owners will not receive a license for unvaccinated dogs without approval of their exemption letter.

**Resident Listing Books** for 2020 will be available by mid-June. The cost varies depending on the form of media requested. Details and payment may be made through the website – Town Clerk Department – Listing Book.

For more information on any of the above items, please contact the Town Clerk's office at 508-832-7701.

## Election Calendar 2020

### Annual Town Meeting

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020  
(Postponed from May 5th)  
7:00 PM at the High School

### Annual Town Election

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2020  
8:00 AM to 8:00 PM  
High School Gym



There are precincts with Town Meeting Member seats available. Although it is past the date to file for nomination papers – you can always do a write in. If you are interested in becoming a Town Meeting Member have residents that live in **your** precinct write your name in as a write in on the Town Election Ballot. Call the Clerk's Office if you would like more information on becoming a Town Meeting Member.

## VOTER REGISTRATION SESSION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2020

**Last day to register voters** before the Annual Town Election. Registration in the Town Clerk's office will be held from 8:00 AM until 8:00 PM.



Auburn residents 18 years of age by Election Day, MAY 19, 2020, or older may register to vote in the Town Clerk's office. A resident may register to vote by mail but the mail-in form must be postmarked on or before APRIL 29, 2020 for the voter to be eligible to vote at the annual town election.

You can also register online - <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>

# YOUR VOTE MATTERS



### ELECTION

### DAY OF ELECTION

### DEADLINE TO REGISTER

State Primary

Tuesday  
September 1, 2020

Wednesday  
August 12, 2020

State Election

Tuesday  
November 3, 2020

Wednesday  
October 14, 2020

## Billing, Exemptions, and Discounts...



4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Real Estate and Personal Property Tax Bills have been mailed. The bills are due on May 1, 2020. Under recent Legislature, the Town of Auburn has opted to enact a local option that will allow you to pay your fourth quarter real estate and/or personal property bill without incurring interest or penalty until June 30, 2020. Some motor vehicle excise and sewer bills are impacted by this date change as well. If you have any questions please refer to the notice on the home page for the full notice, and list of the types of bills that are affected by this new legislation. If you have any questions please contact the Treasurer/Collectors Office at 508-832-7705 for assistance.

The deadline for Exemption Applications for seniors, surviving spouses, blind persons, disabled veterans, National Guard and reservists deployed in foreign countries, as well as small commercial exemptions and tax deferrals has been extended through June 1, 2020. For a complete listing of applications types affected by the change please see the notice on the auburn-guide.com home page for complete details. For questions regarding exemption or deferral applications please contact the Assessor's Office at 508-832-7708.

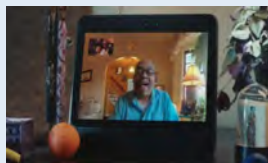
Town of Auburn property record cards are available online using the MapsOnline and Assessing Data link that is available from the assessor's page on the website. We recommend that all taxpayers periodically review their information for accuracy, and notify us if there are any discrepancies on their records.

Final notices for Income and Expense requests have been mailed. If you are a business in Auburn that has not submitted your questionnaire to the Assessor's Office, it is due.



## Veterans Services

A partnership between the [Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\)](#), Facebook and the American Red Cross will make more than 7,400 Portal from Facebook devices available to veterans and their caregivers, according to a new release.



The devices are being made available to those enrolled in VA's Caregiver Support program and VA's Geriatric and Extended Care Services program. Organizers hope the devices help reduce isolation while improving social connectedness for veterans and their caregivers who might currently be experiencing new levels of isolation.

The Facebook Portal devices allow video calls through Facebook messenger or WhatsApp, music, video and game streaming, web searches and have Amazon Alexa built in.

The devices are available to those who qualify on a first come, first serve basis. There is a limited supply of 7,400 devices available under this program, so if you believe you or a family member are eligible and can benefit from having one, you should apply as soon as possible.

Once the VA has verified your eligibility you can expect to receive the Portal in four to six weeks, officials said in the release.

The Portal devices come in a set of two -- one for the eligible veteran and the other for the veteran's designated caregiver or family member.

[You can request your very own Portal from Facebook via the Red Cross website. https://www.tfaforms.com/](https://www.tfaforms.com/)

The partnership is a result of the President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS) program.

"Veterans, families and caregivers will benefit through an increased support system," VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said in the release. "Our goal is for veterans to feel less isolated through more communication. We believe this technology will help veterans who might otherwise be unreachable."



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



On December 30, 2019 the AFRD swore in two new members as career Firefighter/Paramedics. James Sylvia who recently finished four years in the United States Marine Corp. had been serving as a Call Firefighter for the Town of Auburn for the past two years. William O'Connor who started his full time career in Auburn in 2007 as a Firefighter/Paramedic left the department in 2013 to join the Westborough Fire Department. Bill always felt like this was his home and has returned. We are so happy to have both of these outstanding people working for us.



In a swearing in ceremony held at Town Hall on January 31, 2020, Nick Talbot and Taylor Belsito were sworn in as career Firefighter/Paramedics by Town Clerk Deb Gremo. The new members were hired to fill two vacancies that were created within the department. Firefighter Talbot comes to us from the Westborough Fire Department and Firefighter Belsito came from the Uxbridge Fire Department where they both served as full time Firefighters. We are so happy to have the both of them on board with the AFRD.



January 29, 2020 was the last day of work for Jeff Mitchell as we sent him off into retirement. Jeff was both the Assistant DPW Director and Call Fire Captain with the AFRD. Jeff Joined the department as an Auxiliary FF in 1974, was promoted to Call FF in 1978, Lieutenant in 1990 and Captain in 1995. Jeff served the AFRD for 45 years. He was a well-respected Firefighter and Officer who served in many capacities over the years, most recently as a Tender for the Regional Dive Team. Enjoy your retirement Captain Mitchell, it is well deserved and you will be missed.





# PUBLIC SAFETY NEWS



## FBI-LEEDA Course

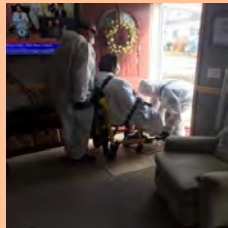


The week of January 20<sup>th</sup> through the 25<sup>th</sup> AFRD Chief Stephen Coleman attended the FBI-LEEDA course, Media & Public Relations, held at Wheaton College. Public Information Officers and leaders from Fire & Police agencies from several states including MA, CT, ME and MI attended the course to learn how to effectively work with the media and the public in managing communications during a crisis situation.

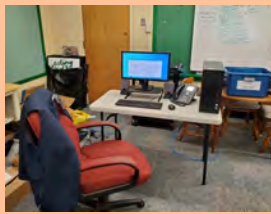
## COVID-19 AFD



COVID-19 has changed all of our lives for the time being. As a community, a state and a nation we have had to take "unprecedented action" in managing this global health pandemic. For the first time in the Auburn Fire Rescue Departments history, the doors were closed to the public and off duty firefighters. Having the doors of the fire stations



closed is not how we do business and it has been very odd over the past 4 weeks not having people in the station conducting business, having visitors, station tours, etc.



Our operation today looks very different than it did just 30 days ago. Administration has moved out of HQ and occupying temporary office space in the school administration building, we are not conducting inspections, our off duty members are not allowed in the station, conducting online meetings and our firefighters are working a very different schedule. The new schedule is designed to separate our on duty and off duty staff members from each other, in addition to allowing adequate time away to develop symptoms without exposing the rest of the department. Even stations are not co-mingling in the ways we normally would. FF's are working a schedule of 4 days on (96 hours) and 12 days off. Some of our members have not seen each other in 30 days.

We have continued to respond to COVID related calls daily, and as of the writing of this article we have transported over 50 suspected and positive cases of COVID-19 by Ambulance. We have the necessary equipment at this time to keep our members as safe as possible. I am extremely proud of all of our staff here at the AFRD and town wide for their efforts and sacrifices. Our BOH has been working 7 days a week and doing a great job of keeping our town and its first responders in the know with critical information.



We see a light at the end of the tunnel and we are hoping that come May we will be able to resume some normalcy, or at least a new norm. Even though we haven't seen you in a while, one thing remains the same, we stand ready, and we are here for you.

# Business and Economic Development...



## Resources for Businesses Impacted by Covid-19

Town Administration understands the importance of supporting local businesses, especially during economic uncertainty. Listed below are resources for businesses impacted by Covid-19. Additionally, we have included a few ways you can support your favorite local businesses during these uncertain times. Town Administration will continue to post updates regarding available aid for impacted businesses. If you have any questions or concerns about your business please email Shannon Regan, Economic Development Coordinator at: [sregan@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:sregan@town.auburn.ma.us).

### Baker-Polito Administration- \$10 Million Small Business Recovery Loan Fund

The \$10 million Small Business Recovery Loan Fund will provide emergency capital up to \$75,000 to Massachusetts-based businesses impacted by COVID-19 with under 50 full- and part-time employees, including nonprofits. Loans are immediately available to eligible businesses with no payments due for the first 6 months. Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) has capitalized the fund and will administer it.

For more information and the application please go to: <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-10-million-small-business-recovery-loan-fund>

### Small Business Administration's Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Program

Small businesses, private non-profit organizations of any size, small agricultural co-operatives and small aquaculture enterprises that have been financially impacted as a direct result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) since Jan. 31, 2020, may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred. Eligibility for Economic Injury Disaster Loans is based on the financial impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The interest rate is 3.75 percent for small businesses. The interest rate for private non-profit organizations is 2.75 percent. SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years and are available to entities without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship.

For more information please go to: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>

The Baker-Polito administration is committed to partnering with the business community to navigate the outbreak of COVID-19. They have created a website dedicated to business resources. This includes links to state and federal programs and resources. Programs include The SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Advance, the SBA Express Bridge Loan Program, the SBA Debt Relief Program, and information on Federal Tax Relief Provisions.

The web site is updated regularly. Visit the site at:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-resources-and-guidance-for-businesses>

# Chamber of Commerce

## Worcester Chamber of Commerce

In response to the ongoing impact of Covid- 19, the Worcester Chamber of Commerce extended chamber services to all businesses in Greater Worcester, regardless of membership. Those interested in learning about government programs available to businesses can contact Alex Guardiola, director of government affairs and public policy, at [aguardiola@worcesterchamber.org](mailto:aguardiola@worcesterchamber.org) or call him at 508-753-2924 ext. 222.

For more information please go to:

<https://www.worcesterchamber.org/covid-19-coronavirus-response-assistance/>

## Auburn Chamber of Commerce

Our local Chamber is always available for business support and guidance. The Chamber is actively staying up to date on all available resources for businesses impacted by Covid-19. They are also asking any businesses who are running promotions during the shut-down such as offering take-out, gift cards or special hours to please contact the Chamber so they can update their website with your information.

For more information please go to: <https://auburnchamberma.org/>

## Ways to Support Local Businesses During Covid-19

### Curbside/Take-Out/Delivery

Many restaurants are still open for take-out during the mandatory shutdown. Take-out is a great option for still enjoying your favorite restaurants while staying safe and avoiding crowds.

### Buy a Gift Card

Another way to still support local businesses that may not be open during Covid-19 is to buy a gift card that you can use once social distancing is no longer needed.

### Leave a Positive Review

Do you have a favorite local business? If so, this is a great time to leave a positive review to encourage business owners and help direct traffic to their business once the threat of COVID-19 subsides.

## Premeer Realty Ribbon Cutting

On February 21<sup>st</sup>, Premeer Realty held their ribbon cutting at their new location, 1 Saint Mark Street. This is their third location in New England and we are thrilled that they joined the Auburn community. They are a company that focuses on building strong connections with their clients and community. They are involved with many charities and non-profits and plan on being an active business partner in Auburn. Welcome!

## Mary D. Stone Receives Low-Income Housing Tax Credits



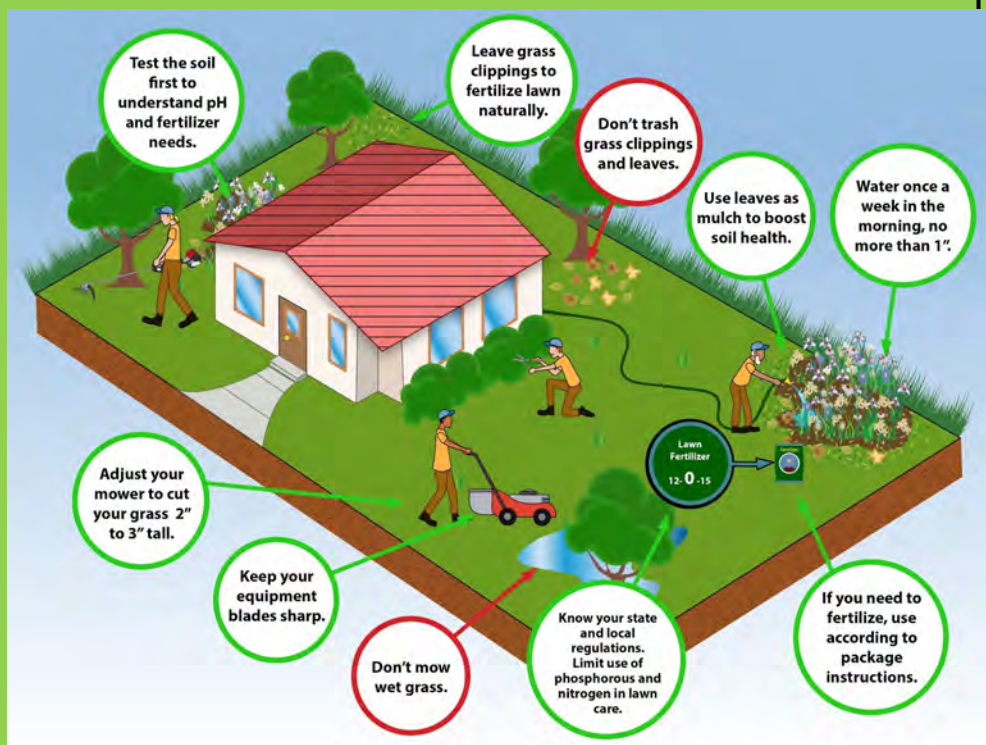
Town Manager Julie Jacobson and Economic Development Coordinator Shannon Regan attended an exciting announcement at the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center where Governor Charlie Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and

state and local officials announced the affordable housing awards for eleven projects across the Commonwealth. These awards will advance the development of 587 new rental units, including 443 rental units affordable for low and extremely low-income households. Mary D. Stone Elementary School redevelopment project was one of the recipients of the low-income housing tax credits announced at the press conference. Securing this financing was a key component to allow this project to move forward. The project has been awarded both State and Federal Tax Credits including Historic Tax Credits. Pennrose is expected to officially take over ownership of the property in June, with construction beginning in July. The project is expected to be completed by September 2021. This housing project will fill a significant need for more affordable senior housing units in Auburn. When construction is complete, the former elementary school building will offer 55-units for seniors, including 45 affordable-units for seniors with incomes below 60% of area median income (AMI). Six of the affordable units will be further restricted for seniors earning less than 30% of AMI. We would like to thank the Baker-Polito Administration for their advocacy for affordable housing and for their strong support for this critical housing project in Auburn. We are grateful to Lieutenant Governor Polito for meeting with us over the past couple of years and working tirelessly to support affordable housing for seniors in Auburn and across the State. We also thank the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Massachusetts Historic Commission for their support of the Mary D. Stone redevelopment project. We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the local elected officials, boards and commissions and town staff that expressed their strong support of this project. Your advocacy truly made this project possible. Town Administration will continue to keep residents updated as the project moves forward. Thank you for your ongoing support.





## Lawn and Garden Tips to Help Curb Stormwater Pollution



Under Massachusetts law, only apply fertilizer with phosphorus if:  
A soil test shows that phosphorus is needed; or  
During the first growing season for a newly established lawn.

Contact the UMass Cooperative Extension Soil Nutrient Testing Laboratory to learn how to conduct a routine soil test: <https://ag.umass.edu/services/soil-plant-nutrient-testing-laboratory/ordering-information-forms>

**We can all do our part to keep Massachusetts' waterways clean!**

Interested to see what Auburn is doing to manage stormwater?

Visit <https://www.auburnguide.com/668/Stormwater-Management>



# ANIMAL CONTROL



## HAPPY EVER-AFTER!

Roxanne came into Animal Control as a very pregnant stray cat with medical needs that had to be addressed in order to save her and her unborn kittens. It may have meant there were some sleepless nights but it was all worth it when we were able to safely welcome her three healthy kittens into the world!

The little family stayed under our care until her kittens were old enough to find their fur-ever homes. There's nothing we enjoy more than being able to make a positive impact on so many lives and new families!

## Spring Pet Safety



### PLANTS

Lilies and other seasonal plants can be toxic.



### ALLERGIES

Seasonal plants can cause allergies  
Talk to your vet if you notice irritation.



### SPRING CLEANING

Household cleaning products are a poison threat.



### PREVENTATIVES

Talk to your vet about parasite prevention.



### MICROCHIP

More outdoor time equals greater risk of a lost pet. Be safe, microchip 'em.



### PESTICIDES

Lawn care and gardening products can be hazardous.





# Senior Center and Elder Affairs News

**Due to Covid 19, all programs and times are subject to change – please call the senior center to confirm!**

**Auburn Senior Center  
4 Goddard Drive  
(508) 832-7799**

Due to COVID-19, the Lorraine Gleick Nordgren Senior Center remains closed to the public until further notice.

Through the Elder Services of Worcester Area Meals on Wheels Program, meals continue to be delivered to seniors. If you would like to participate in the meals on Wheels Program, please contact the Senior Center at 508-832-7799 to determine your eligibility and sign up.

We thank the Elder Services of Worcester Area and all of the volunteers who continue to work to keep the Meals on Wheels Program operational.

Staff at the Senior Center can connect seniors with available resources. Don't hesitate to call for assistance!

Our town and school employees continue to call Auburn seniors to check on their well-being and offer assistance through the new Auburn CARES program and its Our Seniors Matter initiative. (See article in this newsletter for details).

## Contact Information for Assistance

Below is a list of agencies and the attachments are from Elder Services of Worcester with resources:

SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders) 1-800-243-4636  
Auburn Youth and Family Services – 1-508-832-7677  
Fuel assistance - Worcester Community Action Council – 1-508-754-1176  
Department of Transitional Assistance, Food stamps – SNAP – 1-508-767-3100  
Tri-Valley Elder Services – (meals on wheels) 1-800-243-5111  
Central Mass Agency on Aging – 1-800-244-3032  
Central Mass Housing – 1-508-752-5519  
Transportation - WRTA 508-752-9283  
National grid- 1-800-322-3223  
Department of Veterans Affairs - 1-800-827-1000  
Attorney General Office – 1-508-792-7600  
Mass Legal Help – 617-338-0695  
Social Security – 1-800-772-1213  
Prescription Advantage – 1-800-243-4636  
VNA of Southern Worcester – 1-508-943-0612  
Long term Care insurance 1-877-563-4467  
Mass Health – 1-800-841-2900  
Medicare -1-800-633-4227  
Alzheimer's Association – 1-800-272-3900

Patrick Morris, certified SHINE counselor is available at the Auburn Senior Center (except during Stay at Home Order) to assist with health care options for seniors. Appointments are by appointment only, please call 508-832



## **Thank you to all of our Volunteers**

April is National Volunteer Month. We are extremely grateful to everyone who volunteers at the Auburn Senior Center. The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of commitment to make a difference in the lives of others. Volunteer appreciation week is about inspiring, recognizing, and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. It's about working together to accomplish our goals. Thank you for all you do to make a positive difference in the lives of the Auburn residents.

We truly thank you for the countless hours that you volunteer your time. Whether it be answering phones, calling bingo, delivering meals on wheels, knitting baby blankets, preparing the newsletter, making crafts for holidays, helping in the kitchen, answering health care questions, preparing birthday cards, watering plants or just taking the time to listen.

Volunteer is more than just a word. It is a world filled with people dedicated to serving others. Volunteers lift up the hearts of others. Thank you, dear volunteer for... sharing the tears, calming the fears, going that extra length, providing inner strength, encouraging progress, never accepting less, cheering small victories, and always having a smile ready. With our volunteers help we accomplished -

- 8,355 congregate meals were served in the dining room
- 24,363 meals were delivered to the meals on wheels homebound seniors
- 19,200 copies of the Flag Town Flyer were edited, proofread, sorted and distributed
- 80 low and moderate income seniors had their taxes completed from volunteers from AARP tax-aide program
- The SHINE program assisted 85 clients with health insurance information and assistance
- Volunteer receptionists answered a variety of calls and questions from residents and provided valuable information daily to assist seniors
- Volunteers knitted items for those in need including nursing home residents, newborn and Veterans
- Volunteers coordinated many weekly programs for both day and evening programs

Thank you to Shaw's Supermarket of Auburn for their generous donation of breads and pastries to the Auburn Senior Center.

# News from the Auburn Public Library



## Library Card Scanner

### No more lost or forgotten cards!

In mid-March we debuted our library card scanners at the circulation desk. Patrons can download a free app to load the interactive library card image on their mobile devices. The scanners can then detect the card and the borrower. The same services offered from a physical card are available from the virtual card. Our new scanners are configured to scan both the physical card and the virtual one from mobile devices. A virtual card is not required!

**\*A reminder that a library card is a legal document and is not transferable. Use of someone else's library card, in any format is strictly prohibited.**

There are number of free 'rewards card wallet' apps you can use to for this purpose. We suggest using one of the following :

- **Stocard** You can find more information at - <https://stocardapp.com/en/au>
- Link for apple store: - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/stocard-rewards-cards-wallet/id444578884>
- **KeyRing** - <https://keyringapp.com/>
- Link for apple app store - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/key-ring-reward-cards/id372547556>
- Link for android store: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.froogloid.kring.google.zxing.client.android>

Additional information will be available from our upcoming [www.aplvirtual.org](http://www.aplvirtual.org) website. Library 'tech services' staff are also available to assist you with inputting your library card.

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## Upcoming Programs

Although the COVID-19 crisis has compromised the role of libraries as the social hub in a community, we are working hard at creating alternatives to meeting in the physical space.

**Butterflies:** We will still hold the monarch butterfly program, although it will be a virtual program. The butterflies will be available for pick up during a designated time at the Library. This program will be limited to Auburn residents. Details will be available from our usual promotional platforms toward the end of April (can't rush the cocoons!)

**Virtual Back yard:** We are working with one of our children's presenters, Heather, from *Hands on Nature* for a virtual 4 week series focused on exploring the backyard. This will be our first, but not our last, foray into using Zoom to bring experiences to the public. In this situation, we are partnering with the Auburn Public Schools to integrate the program into the virtual curriculum.

**Library stories:** Our new, supplemental website for children was developed and launched to keep children connected with stories, and with Library staff! The site includes more than 50 stories read and video taped by Library staff members, as well as activities, how-tos, literacy worksheets, and more.

**Adult Programs:** We are also working on virtual adult programs. Presenters participate in our *Auburn Public Library Public Education Series*: they do not charge a fee. These are presenters with whom we have partnered many times before, and they now want to ‘give back’ by not charging for the presentation.

**Summer Reading Program:** We are still planning to offer a full six-week summer reading program in July – August. Although much content may be conducted virtually, we will be ready and able to engage our young readers no matter what platform we use!

Winter Programs

Our winter programs were presented to very appreciative audiences.  
Some of those programs were:



Our 50+ Job Seekers Networking Series program, partnered with The Council on Aging, Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, AARP, and Melody Beach Consulting Group has been very successful. Although the impact from the COVID-19 crisis made it necessary to move the program to a virtual platform, with patrons still registering through the Library, there were no negative repercussions to the program. The program serves a need, now more than ever, and the number of registrations has increased steadily.

**Specially Designed Websites for  
Virtual Resources During COVID-19**  
**For Children: Stay Connected | [www.apl-stayconnected.org](http://www.apl-stayconnected.org)**

*Stay Connected!*

*You can't come to us – so we will come to you!*

\*\*\*\*\*

Log into our new website for children at

[www.apl-stayconnected.org](http://www.apl-stayconnected.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

This unique, customized website was developed at the Auburn Public Library to encourage continued reading, literacy, energy-release activities, and fun for children during this time of physical separation.

*Enjoy!*



# Auburn Public Library

**We began development of two supplemental websites as soon as the shut-down began on March 16. The first site, Stay Connected, a website for children, was launched in early April. We add content to this website several times each week, and we will continue to do so until our building is once again open for full services.**

## Content

- Ongoing additions to stories
- Ongoing additional energy-release activities and puppet shows
- How-to videos, instructions, and downloadable materials, such as making paper chains, making paper airplanes, making 'cootie catchers', flip books, and more!
- Access to virtual programs from external presenters: Upcoming: **Hands on Nature**
- Additional, fun Literacy / Activity sheets
- Reading logs

***\*Patrons who do not have options for downloading or printing materials are offered options for contacting the Library for materials' pickup, or for mailing, depending upon materials, at no cost to the patron.***

**For Adults: [APLVirtual](http://www.aplvirtual.org) | [www.aplvirtual.org](http://www.aplvirtual.org)**



This website was developed to provide information regarding virtual museum programs, COVID-19 information and resources, access to digital books, magazines, and audio books, how to download and use Libby and Overdrive, and more.

**We continue to serve the public during the stay-home mandate!**



We are very happy to once again partner with Auburn Youth and Family Services! We developed and provided several hundred themed literacy packets, collected and delivered approximately 100 books that were recently removed from our collection, and created nearly 1,000 literacy / activity worksheets.

Packets contain crayons, art supplies, stick puppets, literacy materials and worksheets, and craft materials. Materials are picked up by AYFS staff or are delivered to AYFS by Library staff. The packets and other materials are delivered to children when meals are delivered by AYFS during this period of time when children are not able to receive meals at school. We will continue to provide materials throughout the shut-down period, and likely beyond.



Town of  
*Auburn*  
Massachusetts

To subscribe to the quarterly municipal newsletter, *The Auburn Account*, visit our website to submit an electronic sign-up form or [click here](#). Our next edition will be released in July 2020.

Question or comments? Contact us at [townmgr@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:townmgr@town.auburn.ma.us) or call (508) 832-7720.