



## **Governor Ned Lamont**

Frequently Asked Questions  
on the State of Connecticut's actions  
related to COVID-19

Updated 10:00 p.m. on March 18, 2020

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## COVID-19 BASICS

**Question:**

What is the Coronavirus/COVID-19?

**Answer:**

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. There are many types of human coronaviruses, including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans. Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. CDC recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

You can read more information about COVID-19 at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's website, where they offer answers to frequently asked questions about the virus:

<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-issues/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>

## TESTING

**Question:**

How do I know if I should be tested for COVID-19, and where do I go to be tested?

**Answer:**

If an individual has a fever (greater than or equal to 100.0°) and a cough, or shortness of breath, please call your primary care provider for information regarding local testing locations. You will need an order from your primary care physician to be tested for COVID-19. If you do not have a primary care provider, and you have the symptoms of COVID-19 (a fever greater than or equal to 100.0°, and a cough or

shortness of breath) please go to an urgent care center or to a federally qualified health center to get a doctor's order to be tested.

Please do not go to any medical facility unannounced for the safety of all patients and medical professionals. Please note that only individuals who present with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, a fever greater than or equal to 100.0°, and a cough, or shortness of breath, will be tested at this time. Drive-thru testing sites are present on hospital grounds.

If you are displaying symptoms consistent with those of COVID-19, and are unable to get into contact with your primary care physician, please reach out to one of the following hotlines:

- Hartford Healthcare Hotline: **(860) 972-8100**
- Yale New Haven Health: **(833) 484-1200**
- Bristol Hospital Coronavirus Info Line: **(860) 261-6855**
- Stamford Health: **(203) 276-4111**

**Question:**

I want to be tested for COVID-19, but I am I do not have any symptoms **OR** I am having other symptoms consistent with a flu and possibly COVID-19. Are healthcare providers tracking that I requested testing, and will I be able to get testing in the future?

**Answer:**

At this time, healthcare providers are not/not able to track patients who do not present for testing with current symptoms consistent with a case of COVID-19 (a fever greater than or equal to 100.0°, and a cough, or shortness of breath).

**Question:**

Is there a cost to being tested for COVID-19 if I need the test?

**Answer:**

Connecticut residents currently enrolled in Medicaid have access to free testing and treatment for COVID-19. For residents with healthcare plans regulated by the state of Connecticut, there is no cost-sharing for testing. For those with self-funded, private healthcare plans, there is currently a COVID-19 related bill going through the U.S. congress, and dependent upon passage through the U.S. Senate, all individuals with private healthcare plans will have access to free testing. Coverage of treatment under private plans remains a decision of employers.

Additionally, if the COVID-19 bill passes the U.S. Senate, undocumented immigrants and immigrants who are lawfully present but have not reached the five year presence requirement to qualify for Medicaid will qualify for free testing.

For further information from the Department of Insurance, please see: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CID/1\\_Bulletins/Bulletin-IC-39.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CID/1_Bulletins/Bulletin-IC-39.pdf?la=en)

## PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

**Question:**

I am worried about running out of my prescription medication. What should I do?

**Answer:**

Those with health plans regulated by the state of CT, health insurers and health care centers are encouraged to authorize payment to pharmacies for a ninety (90) day supply of maintenance prescription medications for individuals. While the state has not mandated self-funded plans to offer the same 90-day access, we have encouraged employers to follow them lead of the state regulated carriers. Please contact your regular pharmacy and request their assistance to get a ninety (90) day supply.

For further information from the Department of Insurance, please see: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CID/1\\_Bulletins/Bulletin-IC-39.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CID/1_Bulletins/Bulletin-IC-39.pdf?la=en)

## TESTING CAPACITY AND SUPPLY OF PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

**Question:**

What is the state doing to ensure that there is an adequate capacity for COVID-19 testing and a sufficient supply of protective equipment?

**Answer:**

Connecticut recently ordered additional testing kits and personal protective equipment from the Strategic National Stockpile. Due to high demand these items are on back order and the supplies should be arriving in Connecticut in the near future. We are currently working on a plan of action to most efficiently and equitably distribute the equipment throughout the state.

In addition to the Connecticut State Public Health Laboratory, Quest Diagnostics, LabCorp, and Jackson Labs have recently been approved to conduct COVID-19 testing. The majority of acute care hospitals in the state have also been approved for on-site COVID-19 testing.

## CLEANING GUIDANCE

### Question:

How should I clean my home or workspace to limit the risk of infection?

### Answer:

CDC recommends **daily** cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces household common areas (e.g. tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, drawer handles, desks, toilets, sinks, keyboards, cell-phones).

- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- If soap and water are not available, the Centers of Disease Control recommends using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Due to the growing demand for hand sanitizer, Governor Lamont has allowed local pharmacies to produce and sell hand sanitizer. Please check with your local pharmacy to see if they have stock available.

You can read more about the CDC guidance for effective cleaning here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

## MANAGING AT HOME WHEN SOMEONE HAS A CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19

### Question:

What should I do at home if a member of my household has a confirmed case of COVID-19?

**Answer:**

Household members should follow the CDC's home care guidance when interacting with persons with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 and their isolation rooms/bathrooms. That information can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

In the bedroom/bathroom dedicated for an ill person: consider reducing cleaning frequency to **as-needed** (e.g., soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact with the ill person.

- As much as possible, an ill person should stay in a specific room and away from other people in their home.
- Those living in the home should follow the CDC's home care guidance available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html> The caregiver can provide personal cleaning supplies for an ill person's room and bathroom, unless the room is occupied by child or another person for whom such supplies would not be appropriate. These supplies include tissues, paper towels, cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants (examples of such disinfectants can be found at <https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>).
- If a separate bathroom is not available, the bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected after each use by an ill person. If this is not possible, the caregiver should wait as long as practical after use by an ill person to clean and disinfect the high-touch surfaces.

For additional guidance on what to do in caring for someone who is ill, potentially with the COVID-19 virus, please visit the Center for Disease Control website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

## SCHOOL CLOSURES

**Question:**

Is my child's school closed, and if so, until when?

**Answer:**

Governor Lamont has determined that to promote and secure the safety and protection of children in schools related to the risks of COVID-19, all public school classes will be cancelled for all Connecticut

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students effective Tuesday, March 17 until March 31, 2020, and is encouraging private schools to follow the same schedule. Governor Lamont has issued an executive order allowing schools to hold sessions through June 30, 2020 if needed, but he has waived the 180 school-day requirement to ensure that the school year can be completed if the required number of days cannot be met by that date. School districts are able to apply with the Commissioner of Education for approval of distance learning or other alternatives. Schools may close on their normally scheduled end-dates, so long as local and regional boards of education provide opportunities for continuity of education to all students to the greatest extent possible consistent with federal and state guidance.

Please consult with your local school board for information specific to your school system.

While classes are cancelled, school districts can open buildings for any purpose they deem necessary.

Connecticut Unified School District 1, which operates schools inside Department of Correction facilities, Unified School District 2, which operates schools inside Department of Children and Families facilities and institutions, and Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services inpatient facilities are exempted from the previously issued statewide school cancellation order and may continue to operate.

**Question:**

Will my child still be able to graduate on time?

**Answer:**

The Commissioner of Education has received the authority to temporarily waive any requirements he deems necessary to address the impact of COVID-19 and school class cancellations. Please check with your local school system for specific information.

## WAIVER ON STANDARDIZED TESTING IN CT SCHOOLS FOR 2020

**Question:**

Will my child still have to take required standardized tests during the remainder of this school year?

**Answer:**

The State Department of Education (SDE) is seeking a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education for the standardized testing requirements each school is required to complete annually. As the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted classroom learning already this school year, SDE Commissioner Miguel Cardona believes that it is best to waive those requirements for this school year.

## MEALS FOR STUDENTS WHO NEED THEM

**Question:**

How will students who depend on school meals continue to receive this support?

**Answer:**

The State Department of Education continues to aid in the effort to ensure that school districts are able to continue delivering meals to students under the school lunch and breakfast programs. To date, 123 schools have been approved to participate in this revamped, emergency program, which allows students and their parents to pick up their meals at one location, take them away, and then consume them at home. Districts are using a combination of locations for the meals to be picked up, such as schools, parks, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Club, town offices, and other locations.

Families should check with their local schools for instructions on meal distributions.

## LARGE GATHERINGS/EVENTS

**Question:**

I am planning to hold/attend a large event in the next few weeks. Will that event still go on?

**Answer:**

Governor Ned Lamont together with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of New York and Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey have announced a regional approach to combatting COVID-19 throughout the tri-state area. These uniform standards will limit crowd capacity for professional, social, religious, and recreational gatherings to 50 people effective at 8:00 p.m. on March 16, 2020. This follows updated guidance that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued yesterday recommending the cancellation or postponement of in-person events consisting of 50 people or more.

This prohibition on large gatherings does not apply to farmers' markets, food banks, mobile food trucks or food delivery.

NOTE: For those holding events further than 8 weeks out, please check in with updated information and guidelines to ensure that your event is permitted to be held by reaching out to the COVID-19 email: [COVID19.jic@ct.gov](mailto:COVID19.jic@ct.gov), or the COVID-19 website: [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus)

## CLOSURE OF BUSINESSES AND RESTAURANTS

**Question:**

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Are local businesses closed?

**Answer:**

Governor Ned Lamont together with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of New York, and Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey have announced a regional approach to combatting COVID-19 throughout the tri-state area. The three governors announced that restaurants and bars that serve food will temporarily be required to move to take-out and delivery services only. Bars that do not serve food will be required to temporarily close. The Governors have decided to temporarily close off-track betting facilities, movie theaters, gyms and fitness centers, and similar public workout facilities and studios. These measures will take effect at 8:00 p.m. on March 16, 2020.

Indoor portions of large retail shopping malls, amusement parks, and bowling alleys will close by 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 19, 2020 and remain closed through April 30, 2020. Large shopping malls in Connecticut covered by this closure are the following:

- Brass Mill Center in Waterbury
- The Connecticut Post Mall in Milford
- The Crystal Mall in Waterford
- The Danbury Fair Mall in Danbury
- The Stamford Town Center in Stamford
- The Shoppes at Buckland Hills in Manchester
- The SoNo Collection in Norwalk
- The Westfarms Mall in Farmington
- The Westfield Mall in Meriden
- The Westfield Mall in Trumbull

For additional information on this closure of large shopping malls, please refer to the text of the executive order, which can be found here: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7F.pdf?la=en>

Also as of 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 19, 2020 and through April 30, 2020, all places of public amusement, whether indoors or outdoors, such as locations with amusement rides, carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, aquariums, zoos, arcades, fairs, children's play centers, funplexes, theme parks, bowling alleys, and other family and children's attractions shall be closed to the public. This directive does not apply to public parks and open recreation areas.

The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends that dentists nationwide postpone elective procedures and only treat patients in the case of a dental emergency. Such postponements of elective procedures can contribute to reducing the transmission of COVID 19 in our communities, and contribute to the well-being of the public and the dental team.

The Department of Public Health urges all hair and nail salons and other businesses that provide services that require direct contact with customers to cease operations for the time being. This is due to the fact that COVID 19 is spread mainly from person-to-person contact between people who are in close contact

with one another, and the nature of hair and nail salons puts the people working there in direct contact with their clients and customers.

Farmers' markets and farm stands in Connecticut can remain open during the civic preparedness and public health emergency. These entities are not covered by the executive order on restaurants the governor issued earlier this week. A number of farm stands and farmers' markets have already integrated online or order-ahead options with home delivery or curbside pickup. The agency is working with producers to compile an updated listing of farmers' markets and farm stands on [www.ctgrown.gov](http://www.ctgrown.gov).

For the time being, businesses not specifically cited above as having been ordered to close may remain open at the owner's discretion.

This uniform approach to social distancing is meant to slow the spread of COVID-19.

**Question:**

Are bars and restaurants closed?

**Answer:**

Governor Ned Lamont together with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of New York, and Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey have announced a regional approach to combatting COVID-19 throughout the tri-state area. The three governors announced that restaurants and bars that serve food are permitted to continue operating during the pandemic, however they cannot sell alcohol, and any food that is served at these establishments must be for take-out and delivery only, meaning that the food cannot be consumed on-premises. Please note:

- They can still allow customers inside of their buildings to place orders and pick up the food to be taken out and consumed at a different location.
- They can still permit customers to use the restrooms as they normally would.
- The governor encourages these establishments to implement the proper social distancing and cleanliness measures so that staff and customers can protect themselves during the pandemic.
- They can still permit customers to use the restrooms as they normally would.

Bars that do not serve food will be required to temporarily close.

**These measures will take effect at 8:00 p.m. on March 16, 2020.**

Cafeterias at hospitals may remain open.

Onsite workplace cafeterias are not required to close or stop serving food. Employees in general are encouraged to bring their own meals to work if possible rather than using such facilities. To the extent feasible, employers are encouraged to permit or require employees who order food at workplace cafeterias to eat those meals in private work spaces. If employers permit employees to eat food within workplace cafeterias, they should implement appropriate social distancing measures and make every effort to minimize the number of people congregating within a confined space or area.

In addition, workplace cafeterias should stop or limit self-serve food and drinks such as:

- Buffets
- Salad bars
- Soups
- Fountain sodas
- Coffee
- Reusable food and drink containers

Breads, muffins and pastries and other similar items should be pre-wrapped.

Food trucks are not prohibited from operating, but should take steps to practice social distancing/line management.

Farmers' markets and farm stands in Connecticut can remain open during the civic preparedness and public health emergency. These entities are not covered by the executive order on restaurants the governor issued earlier this week. A number of farm stands and farmers' markets have already integrated online or order-ahead options with home delivery or curbside pickup. The agency is working with producers to compile an updated listing of farmers' markets and farm stands on [www.ctgrown.gov](http://www.ctgrown.gov).

**Question:**

Does the closure of bars and restaurants include private clubs and fraternal organization?

**Answer:**

Restaurants and bars that serve food, including private clubs and fraternal organizations, will temporarily be required to move to take-out and delivery services only. Private clubs and fraternal organizations that do not serve food will be required to temporarily close. These measures will take effect at 8:00 p.m. on March 16, 2020.

**Question:**

I have a dental appointment/I am a dentist, is the office required to close?

**Answer:**

The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends that dentists nationwide postpone elective procedures and only treat patients in the case of a dental emergency. Such postponements of elective procedures can contribute to reducing the transmission of COVID 19 in our communities, and contribute to the well-being of the public and the dental team.

**Question:**

I have an appointment/work at a hair/nail salon, is the salon required to close?

**Answer:**

COVID 19 is spread mainly from person-to-person contact between people who are in close contact with one another. The nature of hair and nail salons puts the people who work in hair and nail salons in direct

contact with their clients and customers. Therefore, the risk of transmission of infection in this setting is higher than for professions that do not require direct contact. Some local health districts and departments have already exercised their authority to close local salons during this time. The Department of Public Health urges all hair and nail salons and other businesses that provide services that require direct contact with customers to cease operations for the time being.

## OUTSIDE VISITORS TO CERTAIN FACILITIES

### **Question:**

My relative is in a nursing care facility. Can I visit him or her?

### **Answer:**

Governor Lamont's recent executive order prohibits any visitation in the next 30 days, effective immediately, except for the following categories of individuals:

- First responders, including emergency medical services, law enforcement, firefighting and emergency management personnel;
- At least one family member, domestic partner, or other person designated by the patient, each day;
- A patient's attorney, conservator, or any process server related to matters under the jurisdiction of the Probate Court;
- Persons necessary to conduct hearings under the jurisdiction of the Probate Court; or
- A person authorized by law to oversee or investigate the provision of care and services (e.g. ombudsman).

### **Question:**

My relative is in a psychiatric hospital. Can I visit him or her?

### **Answer:**

All facilities that are operated by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services have imposed a complete ban on all visitors to such facilities for a period of 30 days. The following categories of individuals will retain access to DMHAS facilities:

- First responders, including Emergency Medical Services, law enforcement, firefighting and Emergency Management personnel;
- Family members, domestic partners or other persons designated by a patient only when the Facility's Medical Director, a licensed physician or advanced practice registered nurse has determined such patient to be at the end stage of life with death being imminent;
- Any person authorized by law to oversee or investigate the provision of care and services; and

- Service providers who are required to do maintenance or repair necessary without delay for the Facility's continued operation.

Additionally, many DMHAS facilities serve as public meeting spaces within their communities. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, DMHAS facilities will not be available for public use until further notice. All meetings that are not DMHAS-related are to be cancelled and no public meetings should be scheduled.

Insurance providers are also prohibited from entering DMHAS facilities but are encouraged to use telephone or web-based communication to carry out necessary functions. Individuals who come to a DMHAS-operated facility will be subject to a COVID-19 risk screening and may be refused access if they are deemed to be at risk for COVID-19. Admitted visitors will be required to use appropriate Personal Protection Equipment in accordance with CDC guidelines while in the facility.

**Question:**

My relative is in a residential care home. Can I visit him or her?

**Answer:**

The Commissioner of Public Health may issue restrictions on the number, category and frequency of outside visitors and the screening and protective measures at residential care homes. Individuals permitted to enter these residences include:

- First responders, including Emergency Medical Services, law enforcement, firefighting and Emergency Management personnel;
- Family members, domestic partners or other persons designated by an individual only when the facility's Medical Director, a licensed physician or advance practice registered nurse has determined such patient to be at the end stage of life with death being imminent;
- Any person authorized by law to investigate the provision of care and services; and
- Service providers who are required to do maintenance or repair necessary without delay for the facility's continued operation.

When in attendance of any gathering, please exercise smart public health practices and avoid close physical contact, including shaking hands, hugging, etc.

Insurance providers are also prohibited from entering DMHAS facilities but are encouraged to use telephone or web-based communication to carry out necessary functions. Individuals who come to a DMHAS-operated facility will be subject to a COVID-19 risk screening and may be refused access if they are deemed to be at risk for COVID-19. Admitted visitors will be required to use appropriate Personal Protection Equipment in accordance with CDC guidelines while in the facility.

## CHILDCARE

**Question:**

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Will my child's daycare center stay open?

**Answer:**

The state of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood is not instructing or requiring any program to close. Unless ordered by government officials, programs may remain open by their own determination which may be made considering guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Public Health and/or your local health department or district. Please be in direct touch with your childcare provider regarding plans to stay open or to close.

As information regarding COVID-19 is continuing to evolve, the guidance provided by State Agencies is subject to change.

**Question:**

Where can I find childcare if my child's school is closed?

**Answer:**

Licensed family childcare homes may, within their licensed capacity, provide full-time care to enrolled school age children whose schools have closed due to the COVID-19 virus as done during school vacations.

United Way of Connecticut's 211 Infoline is available to help you locate childcare. You can reach the 211 Infoline by dialing 211 from any telephone, or online at <https://www.211childcare.org>.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

**Question:**

There is a public meeting in my town/city scheduled on (ANY TOPIC). Will this meeting still be held?

**Answer:**

Governor Lamont has suspended in-person open meeting requirements for the time being and in order to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Any public agency may meet and take necessary actions without permitting in-person, public access or to hold such meetings remotely by conference call or video teleconferencing provided that

- (1) the public has the ability to view or listen to each meeting or proceeding in real time, by telephone, video, or other technology;

(2) any such meeting or proceeding is recorded or transcribed, and such recording or transcript shall be posted on the agency's website within seven days of the meeting or proceeding, and made available within a reasonable time in the agency's office;

(3) the required notice and agenda for each meeting or proceeding is posted on the agency's website and shall include information about how the meeting will be conducted and how the public can access it;

(4) any materials relevant to matters on the agenda, including but not limited to materials related to specific applications, if applicable, shall be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty four (24) hours prior and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting, and any exhibits to be submitted by members of the public shall, to the extent feasible, also be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting; and

(5) all speakers taking part in any such meeting or proceeding shall clearly state their name and title, if applicable, before speaking on each occasion that they speak.

Further information on this executive order is available at:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7B.pdf>

## MUNICIPAL BUDGET DEADLINES

### **Question:**

The budget for my town/city/board of education is due to be adopted soon. How will the current public health emergency impact the process of discussing and adopting this required budget?

### **Answer:**

Governor Lamont has issued an executive order allowing additional time for town, cities, and school districts to complete their required budget processes. All deadlines for the preparation of municipal and regional school district budgets for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 that fall on any date prior to and including May 15, 2020 are extended by thirty (30) days.

Any public agency may meet and take necessary actions without permitting in-person, public access or to hold such meetings remotely by conference call or video teleconferencing provided that

(1) the public has the ability to view or listen to each meeting or proceeding in real time, by telephone, video, or other technology;

(2) any such meeting or proceeding is recorded or transcribed, and such recording or transcript shall be posted on the agency's website within seven days of the meeting or proceeding, and made available within a reasonable time in the agency's office;

(3) the required notice and agenda for each meeting or proceeding is posted on the agency's website and shall include information about how the meeting will be conducted and how the public can access it;

(4) any materials relevant to matters on the agenda, including but not limited to materials related to specific applications, if applicable, shall be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty four (24) hours prior and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting, and any exhibits to be submitted by members of the public shall, to the extent feasible, also be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting; and

(5) all speakers taking part in any such meeting or proceeding shall clearly state their name and title, if applicable, before speaking on each occasion that they speak.

On other municipal deadlines, the Office of the Governor is working with towns and the legal community to address assessment appeals, land use statutory deadlines, public voting and comments at hearings, and other issues.

You can find additional information on this executive order here:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7C.pdf>

## DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV):

### **Question:**

I need to go to the DMV for (ANY REASON)? Do I still need to go in person?

### **Answer:**

The Department of Motor Vehicles – acting on the recent Declaration signed by Governor Ned Lamont – now offers an extension period to Connecticut residents with expiring credentials.

Eligible DMV credentials that expire between March 10, 2020 and June 8, 2020 are automatically covered by this extension. No late fees will be assessed for eligible credentials.

The extension includes all Connecticut driver's licenses, learner's permits, and identity cards.

The extension is effective immediately.

For more information, please visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/DMV>

Additionally, in order to streamline all state agency procedures, the Governor has signed an executive order to ensure maximum efficiency and convenience for residents of Connecticut. In the case of the Department of Motor Vehicles, renewal deadlines have been extended by 90 days to reduce crowding.

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSES THAT REQUIRE RECERTIFICATION

### Question:

I have a license to practice my profession, and it is expiring soon. Will I have an automatic extension for recertification?

### Answer:

The Department of Consumer Protection is handling it on a case-by-case basis. If the licensing renewal requirements for a particular profession or occupation can be met through continuing education online by the expiration date, there will be no extension. Since most licenses can be renewed online or by mail, this should not present an issue for most licensed professionals. Please contact the Department of Consumer Protection (<https://portal.ct.gov/DCP/License-Services-Division/License-Division/To-Renew-Online>) or the regulatory authority for your license if you have any questions.

## TRAVEL

### Question:

Can I travel outside of Connecticut?

### Answer:

While there is no official prohibition on interstate travel, Governor Lamont strongly encourages all Connecticut residents to avoid travel out of state, if possible, in order to slow the spread of COVID-19.

If you are scheduled to travel out of the country, or to return to the United States from travel abroad, please consult the U.S. Department of State website specific to travel during this public health emergency at this site:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI)

### FOR EMPLOYEES

**Question:**

How do I apply for Unemployment Insurance benefits or get more information about the process and requirements?

**Answer:**

It is important to file as soon as you become unemployed to avoid being denied benefits. Do not delay filing your claim for unemployment benefits even if your employer has not issued you any paperwork.

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.

If you have any questions, please visit the CT Department of Labor Online Assistance Center at [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com). You may also submit your general question [dol.webhelp@ct.gov](mailto:dol.webhelp@ct.gov). A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume.

**Question:**

If I need to take time off from work because I come down with COVID-19 and have no paid time off through my employer, can I collect unemployment benefits?

**Answer:**

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically able and available for full time work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits (unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work).

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found here <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/HP/UC-62TwithBabel3-2020.pdf>, but do not delay filing if you do not have it.

If you have any questions, please visit the CT Department of Labor Online Assistance Center at [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com). You may also submit your general question to [dol.webhelp@ct.gov](mailto:dol.webhelp@ct.gov). A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume.

**Question:**

If I get terminated from my job because I test positive for COVID-19 can I collect unemployment benefits?

**Answer:**

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically able and available for full time work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits (unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work) .

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

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**Question:**

My employer is requiring that I self-quarantine for 14 days even though I am not sick, and I am not getting paid. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

**Answer:**

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.

If you have any questions, please visit the CT Department of Labor Online Assistance Center at [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com). You may also submit your general question [dol.webhelp@ct.gov](mailto:dol.webhelp@ct.gov). A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume..

**Question:**

My employer closed its doors and is requiring all employees to stay home for 14 days. My employer does not offer teleworking, and we are not getting paid. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

**Answer:**

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found here <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/HP/UC-62TwithBabel3-2020.pdf>, but do not delay filing if you do not have it.

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**Question:**

I am unable to work because of a family member's illness. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

**Answer:**

If you are not currently employed, and are unable to work, you are most likely ineligible for Unemployment Insurance until you are able to work. However, you may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

If you have any questions, please visit the CT Department of Labor Online Assistance Center at [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com). You may also submit your general question to [dol.webhelp@ct.gov](mailto:dol.webhelp@ct.gov). A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume.

**Question:**

If my employer only permits me to work part-time rather than my full-time hours, will I be able to collect unemployment benefits?

**Answer:**

You should file for benefits as you may be eligible for partial unemployment.

Please note: when working and filing, all hours and gross earnings must be reported. A portion of your gross earnings will be deducted from your weekly benefit rate. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found here <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/HP/UC-62TwithBabel3-2020.pdf>, but do not delay filing if you do not have it.

If you have any questions, please visit the CT Department of Labor Online Assistance Center at [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com). You may also submit your general question to [dol.webhelp@ct.gov](mailto:dol.webhelp@ct.gov). A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume.

**Question:**

If I have a full time and part time job and my full-time employer closes because of COVID-19, will I be able to collect while still working part time?

**Answer:**

You should file for benefits as you may be eligible for partial unemployment.

Please note: when working and filing, all hours and gross earnings must be reported. A portion of your gross earnings will be deducted from your weekly benefit rate. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

To file your claim, please go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com).

- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found here <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/HP/UC-62TwithBabel3-2020.pdf>, but do not delay filing if you do not have it.

If you have any questions, please visit the CT Department of Labor Online Assistance Center at [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com). You may also submit your general question to [dol.webhelp@ct.gov](mailto:dol.webhelp@ct.gov). A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume.

**Question:**

My employer may have retaliated against me because I filed for unemployment benefits. Is there any recourse?

**Answer:**

Yes. It is illegal for an employer to retaliate against individuals who have exercised their rights under the Connecticut Unemployment Compensation Act. Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-226a provides individuals who believe that they have been retaliated against with an opportunity for a hearing.

## FOR EMPLOYERS:

### **Question:**

Can I require my employees to stay home if they are sick with COVID-19?

### **Answer:**

Yes, you can require your employee to stay home. However, you should issue the employee an Unemployment Separation Package, found at: <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/HP/UC-62TwithBabel3-2020.pdf>.

Your employee may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning their eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically able and available for full time work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits.

### **Question:**

If I have to close the doors of my business for 14 days because an employee is sick and other employees need to be isolated, how do my employees file for unemployment benefits?

### **Answer:**

Please direct your employees to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com) and click the blue button to file their new claim for unemployment benefits.

For ongoing weekly continued claims filing, employees should go to [www.filectui.com](http://www.filectui.com) and click the green button.

The agency issues important emails throughout the initial claim filing process. Please advise your employees to look for these emails and read them carefully for next steps.

### **Question:**

If I have to close the doors of my business for 14 days because an employee is sick and other employees need to be isolated, will I be liable for unemployment benefit charges?

### **Answer:**

You will be liable in the same way you would be for a layoff or a shut down.

If the President declares a disaster that includes Connecticut and your company, it is possible you may not be liable.

### **Question:**

Is there an alternative to laying off my employees if business has slowed down as a result of COVID-19?

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**Answer:**

Yes. The Department of Labor offers a **SharedWork** program ([http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/bussrvce/shared\\_work/index.htm](http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/bussrvce/shared_work/index.htm)) which is a smart alternative to a layoff. The program allows employers to reduce the hours of full-time employees by as much as 60 percent, while their workers collect partial unemployment benefits to replace a portion of their lost wages.

All employers with two or more full-time or permanent part-time employees can participate in the program, which is not designed for seasonal separations. To qualify, the business' reduction of work cannot be less than 10 percent or more than 60 percent.

## PAID SICK LEAVE (PSL) AND OTHER ABSENCES

**Question:**

Does the Paid Sick Leave (PSL) law cover my absence due to COVID-19?

**Answer:**

For covered service workers and employers with 50 or more employees, PSL will cover certain absences caused by COVID-19. PSL provides up to 40 hours of leave for certain workers per year for the following reasons:

- A service worker's illness, injury or health condition
- The medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service worker's mental illness or physical illness, injury or health condition
- Preventative medical care for a service worker
- A service worker's child's or spouse's illness, injury or health condition
- The medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service worker's child's or spouse's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition
- Preventative medical care for a child or spouse of a service worker

**Question:**

My employer, who has 20 employees in CT, sent me home because I had a fever and then terminated my employment. Can he do that?

**Answer:**

Employees in CT are generally considered at-will employees, which means that either the employer or the employee is free to end the relationship at any time unless there is an applicable contract or collective bargaining agreement.

Therefore, in most cases, an employer who is not covered by the CT FMLA (over 75 employees in CT), federal FMLA (50 or more employees in a 75-mile radius) or CT's Paid Sick Leave law (50 employees in CT) may terminate an employee for any reason as long as such termination is not based on an

employee's protected status such as the employee's race, color, religious creed, age, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness or status as a veteran or any other applicable contract or law.

The employer may institute a more lenient absenteeism policy.

## WAGES AND HOURS

### **Question:**

If my employer decides not to open the business for the day or my specific work shift, and notifies me not to report for work, must I be paid?

### **Answer:**

If you are a non-exempt "hourly" employee, no. An employer is not required to pay a non-exempt employee for the time in which he or she performs no work.

If you are an exempt employee and you have worked for any portion of the week, yes. The employer is required to pay you the full weekly salary if you work for any portion of the week.

Also, it is not permissible for the employer to make any deduction for the time that the exempt employee is absent from work from the employee's accrued Paid Time Off ("PTO") benefits, because Conn. State Agencies Regs. § 31-60-14(b)(2)(A) does not permit a deduction "of any kind" when a lack of work is occasioned by the operating requirements of the employer.

### **Question:**

If an employer decides to keep the business open, but the employee elects not to report for work, must the employee be paid?

### **Answer:**

No. For the non-exempt employee, an employer is not required to pay a non-exempt employee for the time in which he or she performs no work. For the exempt employee, the employer may make a deduction in pay in full-day increments pursuant to Conn. State Agencies Regs. § 31-60-14(b)(1)(B) because the employee is asking for the day off for personal reasons.

### **Question:**

I am shutting down my business for 14 days. Do I have to pay a non-exempt or exempt employee who does not work at all during the 14 days?

**Answer:**

No. Employees are not required to be paid for any work week in which he or she performs no work at all during the week.

**Question:**

If I need to send one of my employees home during her shift because she is coughing but I am requiring her to work from home, must I pay that employee?

**Answer:**

Yes, in the same manner as she was paid when she worked on the employer's premises.

If she is a non-exempt, "hourly" employee, she must be paid for the actual amount of time that you are requiring her to work. You are not required to pay a non-exempt employee for the time in which he or she performs no work.

If she is an exempt "salaried with qualifying duties" employee, the employer is required to pay her the full weekly salary if she works for any portion of the week. No deductions can be made from the exempt employee's Paid Time Off (PTO) fringe benefit leave banks to cover the time off, pursuant to Conn. State Agencies Regs. § 31-60-14(b)(2)(A).

## FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

**Question:**

Does the CT FMLA protect my job if my employer sends me home because I have a fever?

**Answer:**

You may be protected if:

- You are an eligible employee, who worked for the employer for at least 12 months and 1,000 hours in the past year
- The employer is a covered employer for FMLA purposes (75 or more employees in CT) and you have FMLA time available
- Your employer may require you to submit a medical certification from your health care provider, in order to determine if this is a serious health condition under the FMLA.
- If your health care provider substantiates a serious health condition, FMLA will protect your job. Also, your employer may institute a more lenient medical certification policy if it so wishes.

See the CT FMLA Website here: <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/fmla.htm>

**Question:**

Does the FMLA protect me if my employer sends me home because I told him that my 17-year-old daughter just returned from travel to a Level 3 country and has a cough and a fever?

**Answer:**

You may be protected if:

You are an eligible employee, the employer is a covered employer for FMLA purposes, and you have FMLA time available.

Your employer may require you to submit a medical certification from your daughter's health care provider, in order to determine if she has a serious health condition under the FMLA.

If her health care provider substantiates a serious health condition, the FMLA will protect your job. Also, your employer may institute a more lenient medical certification policy if it so wishes.

**See the CT FMLA Website here:** <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/fmla.htm>

**Question:**

If I send an employee home because he told me that his 17-year-old daughter just returned from travel to a Level 3 country but she has no signs or symptoms of COVID-19, does FMLA protect his job?

**Answer:**

- At this time, if his daughter does not have a serious health condition under the FMLA, then his job will not be protected. You may institute a more lenient absenteeism policy if you so wish.

**More information about COVID-19 and federal FMLA is available from the USDOL Wage and Hour Division here:** [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/pandemic](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/pandemic)

**See the CT FMLA Website here:** <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/fmla.htm>

## RENEWAL OF APPLICATION FOR TANF BENEFITS

**Question:**

My cash assistance/Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) requires an in-person appointment to recertify my eligibility – do I need to have this appointment right now to continue my benefits?

**Answer:**

Governor Lamont has authorized the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) to waive the requirement for in-person recertification at the present time. Instead, please call the DSS Benefit Center to have an interview over the phone.

Phone access is available through the DSS Client Information Line and Benefits Center at this number:

1-855-6-CONNECT (1-855-626-6632)

(TTD/TTY 1-800-842-4524 for persons with speech or hearing difficulties)

Please follow the prompts to get the information you need.

Additionally, please be aware that if you were scheduled for a TFA orientation meeting for Jobs First Employment Services, you do not need to come in person to the JFES office for that orientation at this time.

**Question:**

How do I apply for cash assistance (Temporary Family Assistance), Medicaid, SNAP, or other benefits?

**Answer:**

Please visit the CT Department of Social Services benefit application page at <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Common-Elements/How-to-Apply-for-Services/How-to-Apply-for-Services/How-To>.

## EMERGENCY PROVISIONS REGARDING EVICTION

**Question:**

My landlord has started the process to evict me. Will this move forward?

**Answer:**

Evictions and foreclosures will not be issued through March 27, 2020, and this may be extended further given the current public health emergency. Any evictions that were issued prior to that date will not move forward. This means that even if your landlord has started the process to evict you, you will not be forced to leave your current home at this time. Please note: tenants are still responsible for paying the rent as agreed in their lease.

Please check back for updates to this information.

**Question:**

Is there help available if I am concerned that I will not be able to pay my mortgage on the home I own due to the Coronavirus?

**Answer:**

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As of March 18, 2020 and to help borrowers who are at risk of losing their home, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) has directed Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to suspend foreclosures and evictions for at least 60 days due to the coronavirus national emergency. The foreclosure and eviction suspension applies to homeowners with single-family mortgage backed by either Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Earlier this month, FHFA announced that mortgage payments for such loans would be suspended for up to 12 months due to hardship caused by the coronavirus.

Borrowers affected by the coronavirus who are having difficulty paying their mortgage, should reach out directly to their mortgage servicers to discuss their possible options.

## HEALTH INSURANCE OPTION FOR PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE IT

### **Question:**

What options do I have if I do not have health insurance at present?

### **Answer:**

Connecticut's health insurance marketplace Access Health CT today announced that a new special enrollment period will be available Connecticut residents who are uninsured (do not have health insurance). The special enrollment period begins Thursday, March 19 and ends on Thursday, April 2. Coverage for those who enroll during this period will begin April 1, 2020.

The only way to sign up for this special enrollment period is via telephone by calling 1-855-365-2428 (TTY: 1-855-789-2428). Telephone enrollment is available Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Individuals who lose coverage due to unemployment, experience certain other qualifying life events, or qualify for Medicaid/Children's Health Program (CHIP), can always enroll online, in-person or over the phone and all help is free.

For more information on this announcement, please visit this website:

<https://agency.accesshealthct.com/access-health-ct-announces-a-new-special-enrollment-period-for-uninsured-connecticut-residents>

## JUDICIAL BRANCH COURT CLOSURES

### **Question:**

Are the courts closed?

### **Answer:**

The Judicial Branch has announced that starting on March 19, 2020 it is limiting the types of cases being heard and reducing the number of courthouses that will hear these cases. All jury trials (civil and criminal) are suspended with the exception of jury trials already in progress and criminal jury trials necessitated by the filing and granting of a speedy trial motion.

Courthouses that will remain open can be found at this website:

<https://jud.ct.gov/HomePDFs/CourthousesOpened.pdf>

The following case types will continue to be heard:

- Criminal arraignments of defendants held in lieu of bond and all arraignments involving domestic violence cases;
- Juvenile Detention hearings;
- Family orders of relief from abuse;
- Civil orders of relief from abuse
- Civil protection orders
- Ex parte motions
- Orders of temporary custody (Juvenile Matters)
- Orders to appear (Juvenile Matters)
- Emergency ex parte order of temporary custody
- Juvenile detention operations for detainees held for juvenile court
- Termination of parental rights
- Domestic violence victim notification
- Civil and family capias mittimus execution and bond reviews

## ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES/NONPROFITS

### **Question:**

My small business/nonprofit is struggling with the loss of revenue. What assistance is available?

### **Answer:**

Effective immediately, the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services has extended the filing deadlines for certain annual tax returns due on or after March 15, 2020, and before June 1, 2020, by at least 30 days. In addition, the payments associated with these returns are also extended to the corresponding due date in June.

The impacted returns and the associated filing dates and payment deadlines are set forth below:

- 2019 Form CT-1065/CT-1120 SI Connecticut Pass-Through Entity Tax Return: Filing date extended to April 15, 2020; payment deadline extended to June 15, 2020
- 2019 Form CT-990T Connecticut Unrelated Business Income Tax Return: Filing date extended to June 15, 2020; payment deadline extended to June 15, 2020

- 2019 Form CT-1120 and CT-1120CU Connecticut Corporation Business Return: Filing date extended to June 15, 2020; payment deadline extended to June 15, 2020

Additionally, the CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) is extending by 90 days payments due on loans extended through Small Business Express, and is offering accommodations on other programs. Please contact DECD for further information at <https://portal.ct.gov/DECD>.

Finally, the federal Small Business Administration has made available an emergency loan program for small businesses and nonprofits. These loans are available at interest rates of 3.75% for businesses and 2.75% for nonprofits and for principal amounts of up to \$2 million with a loan term of up to 30 years. Please visit <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/> for further information.

The state of Connecticut requests that you reach out to other lenders before applying through the SBA for this assistance.