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# City of Somerville, Massachusetts

###### **Joseph A. Curtatone**

###### **Mayor**

*Contact: Natasha Perez, 617-504-7428* *media@somervillema.gov*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 20, 2020

**SOMERVILLE UPDATE:**

**COVID-19 Closures and Guidance**

***Personal Service and Retail Business Suspensions;***

***Construction Requirements Issued;***

***Call for New England Coordination Issued***

SOMERVILLE, MA –Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone and the Somerville Board of Health today announce additional orders intended to slow the spread of novel coronavirus. The following includes orders regarding the personal service and retail sectors as well as interim requirements for construction. Previous orders have closed schools, limited events, closed playgrounds, suspended team sports, and closed restaurants and bars except for pickup and delivery.

With the guidance of the City’s Board of Health, epidemiologists, and information provided by health agencies worldwide, the City has been methodically and swiftly working to determine which activities, businesses, and service sectors pose the greatest risk during this health crisis and they are being addressed in that order. The community should however expect further measures in the very near future in addition to those announced today.

“The region, the northeast, and the nation, must act now to prevent unnecessary loss of life,” said Somerville Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone. “In the face of slow federal action, the entire northeast must unite to swiftly roll out clear and consistent rules for the region. We’ve seen Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey set the example for how to coordinate across state lines. I am calling for Massachusetts to join Rhode Island, Maine, and New Hampshire to implement uniform bold measures including a Stay at Home order. This is no time for half measures and there is no time to delay. Municipalities can start this process but the region must complete it. Our measures today are a small but critical step. Absent broader action, we will be announcing more. But our hope is that New England will bring its famous grit, determination, and leadership to bear on this crisis. New England must together break the cycle of this virus before it is too late.”

**Personal Services and General Retail**

By order of the Board of Health and Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone, effective at 12:01 a.m. Sunday, March 22, all personal services and general retail provided in person shall temporarily cease operation. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* Hairdressers and barbers
* Nail salons
* Massage services
* Body Art
* Body Work
* Spa services
* General Retail

This order does NOT include childcare services, which have been addressed via a [statewide order](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/guidance-related-to-early-childhood-education-programs), or services provided by a licensed healthcare provider such as, but not limited to, physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy. In addition, this does NOT include stores that sell groceries, hardware stores, liquor stores, bicycle shops, laundromats, dry cleaners, or stores that sell essential household goods and cleaning products. This Emergency Order shall remain in effect until notice is given, pursuant to the Board of Health's judgment that the Public Health Emergency no longer exists.

**Construction**

Interim requirements for construction are included here and further measures should be expected. As of now, construction in Somerville must adhere to updated public health and social distancing guidelines in order to continue.

OSHA has categorized construction as a Low-Risk occupation, the lowest of their four categories. For example, utility work typically isolates equipment operators, truck drivers, and laborers, all of whom work outdoors at significant distances. However, not all activities are as inherently safe.

Consequently, the City is requiring all contractors to submit a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) and Site-Specific Safety Plan (SSSP) for continued operations during the emergency declaration. For private building construction, the Inspectional Services Department is reviewing those plans and requiring additional measures as appropriate. For City contractors and utilities, the Infrastructure & Asset Management Department is restricting specific activities and has developed COVID-19 protection plans. For example, utilities will be allowed to work within the public roadway, but will not be allowed to complete service connections that require property entry until after the crisis is over. In addition to the plans mentioned, we have instituted a required regular call with all City contractors, utilities, and the Green Line Extension team to evaluate efforts.

**For further information**

More information on COVID-19 and prevention measures can be found at <www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus>, which is updated frequently. Somerville residents are also reminded to sign up for City alerts in all methods they can receive – phone, text, and email. To sign up for City alerts visit www.somervillema.gov/alerts or call 311 (617-666-3311).

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MAYOR AND BOARD OF HEALTH**

**EMERGENCY ORDER REGARDING RETAIL AND PERSONAL CARE SERVICES**

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has declared a State of Emergency on March 10, 2020 due to the virus that causes Coronavirus 2019 (“COVID-19”) pandemic;

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor of the City of Somerville has determined that the threat of coronavirus poses a present, real and imminent danger to public health, safety, and general welfare of the people of Somerville and as such declared a State of Emergency in the City of Somerville on March 15, 2020;

**WHEREAS,** COVID-19 is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to protect the ability of public and private health care providers to handle the influx of new patients and safeguard public health and safety;

The Board of Health, acting by and through its agent, pursuant to 310 CMR 11.05 and all other authorizing statutes and regulations, along with the Mayor hereby order that on March 22, 2020 at 12:01 AM all personal and retail services offered to the public in person (as opposed to delivery) are hereby discontinued in order to further encourage social distancing among members of the public. This includes, but is not limited to, the following, hairdressers and barbers, nail salons, massage and spa services, body art, body work, and general retail stores.

This order does NOT include childcare services or services provided by a licensed healthcare provider such as, but not limited to, physical therapy, speech therapy, or occupational therapy. In addition, this does NOT include stores that sell groceries, hardware stores, liquor stores, bicycle shops, laundromats, dry cleaners or stores that sell essential household goods and cleaning products. This Emergency Order shall remain in effect until notice is given, pursuant to the Board of Health's judgment that the Public Health Emergency no longer exists.

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Somerville Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Doug Kress, Director of Health and Human Services, Acting Agent of the Board of Health

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Date: March 20, 2020