



# TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Thursday, March 19, 2020

Dear Town of Palm Beach Residents and Community Stakeholders:

There is voluminous information on COVID-19 that government officials are tasked with reviewing each day in order to make the best decisions for their communities. As the Town Manager of Palm Beach, your safety is my primary concern and the measures we are taking are geared toward reducing the risk of an outbreak here in Palm Beach. We are receiving public comments ranging from 'you are not doing enough' to 'this is completely overblown.' I am not surprised by these responses. My job as the Town Manager is to make decisions that will mitigate the exponential increase of cases. We know what will happen here if we don't take this seriously – we have Asia and Europe as proof. Every decision we make is through this lens and we know no matter what policies we put in place, if our residents do not follow them, we won't be successful. No plan a government can enact can be successful without the full cooperation of its citizens.

As Americans, we value our freedoms and with those freedoms comes much personal responsibility. That is why I am asking each resident of Palm Beach to be personally responsible and take this crisis seriously with the practice of social distancing and limiting interaction with others outside of those with whom you are already in regular contact.

The actions we have taken thus far, including the ENCOURAGEMENT of sheltering in place, are to prepare you for future actions if they are deemed necessary. The phrase 'shelter in place' is generally viewed as a more rigorous form of social distancing and means to stay in your home and not leave unless necessary for one of the designated exceptions such as:

- Engaging in or performing tasks essential to health and safety, or the health and safety of family/household members. This includes pets. Examples include picking up medicine, visiting a doctor or getting supplies to work from home.
- Obtaining necessary supplies or to deliver supplies to others. Grocery shopping, pharmacy visits, medical supply store visits and the like.
- Going for a run, hike or other outdoor activity, as long as proper social distancing is observed.
- To care for a family member or pet in another household
- To perform work at an essential business (see below) or perform minimum basic operations

The actions we have taken were not to cause panic but to elevate the urgency to practice measures that will relieve the burden of our health care system, protect first responders, and ultimately, save lives. Bold, decisive, steps must be taken by federal, state and local governments. The Town's Emergency Operations Center is activated and many decisions need to be made in the coming days and weeks. We won't always get everything perfect, but we expect and appreciate your cooperation. Be mindful that some of your fellow residents may be scared or confused. Take extra care to be kind and thoughtful. Palm Beach is the finest town in America and we expect our outstanding residents to meet this challenge. Thank you in advance for all you will do to help mitigate this virus during this unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

Kirk Blouin, Town Manager