



POWHATAN COUNTY COVID FAQ FOR WEBSITE AND PHONE RESPONSE

Listed by Department

Abstract

This document is intended as a resource for those who interface with Powhatan County residents. It provides answers to anticipated questions during the COVID Pandemic of 2020

Contents

General Questions.....	2
COVID Health Questions	2
Daily Living Questions.....	3
Powhatan County Administration	3
The Powhatan County Circuit Court Clerk’s Office.....	4
Commissioner of the Revenue	4
Commonwealth’s Attorney.....	4
Community Development.....	4
Planning and Zoning	4
Building Inspections.....	5
District Court	6
Economic Development.....	7
Extension Office	8
Fire & Rescue	10
Library.....	10
Public Information Officer	11
Public Safety- 911	11
Public Works	11
Utilities.....	11
Convenience Center	11
Parks & Recreation	12
Office of Elections & Voter Registration	12
Schools.....	13
Sheriff’s Office.....	13
Social Services.....	13
Treasurer.....	14
INFORMATION LINKS.....	14

General Questions

COVID Health Questions

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 (“Coronavirus Disease 2019”) is an infectious respiratory disease caused by a new (novel) coronavirus that initially emerged in Wuhan Province, China in December 2019.

What are the symptoms?

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases. Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 develop fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing). Some people with the infection have no symptoms.

How is it spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads person to person. At this time, it appears that COVID-19 spread is caused primarily through respiratory droplets (meaning moisture that comes from coughing and sneezing). It may also be spread by contaminated surfaces. Symptoms typically appear 2-14 days after exposure.

I am feeling sick. What is my first step?

Call your doctor before going to any medical facility to avoid infecting yourself or others unnecessarily.

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

Where can I go to be tested?

Call your doctor for information.

I have more questions about COVID-19.

Specific Questions may be directed to the [Virginia Department of Health](#) (VDH) at 877-ASK-VDH3 (877-275-8343)

Virginia Department of Health Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/frequently-asked-questions/general-questions/>

Daily Living Questions

I'm a senior citizen and I need groceries. Where may I obtain assistance?

Department of Social Services has a team of volunteer drivers through Ride Assist Services that will deliver some groceries to your door. Our seniors can stay in and avoid exposure. Call 804-698-0438.

What should I do if I cannot pay my mortgage, rent, bills, or auto payment?

Call your lenders and ask for delayed payments.

Will my electricity be cut off I cannot pay my bill?

No, Dominion Power and Southside Electric have stated that they will not terminate due to nonpayment during the outbreak.

Where do I apply for unemployment?

<http://www.vec.virginia.gov/covid19>

What can we do to prepare for an outbreak in my community?

For more information check out the publication at these links:

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-2.pdf

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-3.pdf

- A. Clean Your Hands Often: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-4.pdf
- B. Wash Hands: Fight Disease-Causing Germs: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/348/348-965/FST-362.pdf
- C. What to do if You are Sick: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-1.pdf

Powhatan County Administration

Operational Status:

Powhatan County Administrative Buildings will be closed to the public until further notice.

Please call ahead to see if your request can be handled remotely or to schedule a time to come in, at (804) 598-5612 or administration@powhatanva.gov. A list of departments and their contacts can be found at <http://www.powhatanva.gov/35/Departments>. For a comprehensive list of County closings, check the Powhatan COVID-19 page at <http://powhatanva.gov/1687/COVID-19-Information>. Specific information on various departments and Constitutional Offices can be found below:

The Powhatan County Circuit Court Clerk's Office

Operational Status:

The Circuit Court Clerk's Office is open to the public with regular business hours. We ask that customers contact us at 804-598-5660 for appointments for probate, marriage licenses and to see if we can handle your needs remotely.

How may I obtain a marriage license?

Call 598-5660 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. We will email the application to complete and return. Once the application is received, we will contact you to schedule an appointment.

Commissioner of the Revenue

Operational Status:

We are open for all services. In response to the CDC guidelines and in helping contain the spread of the COVID-19, the Powhatan Commissioner of the Revenue office requests you call first to see if we can complete your business over the phone or email. (804) 598 5619. We will accept late filings for the Tax Relief program for the Elderly and Disabled. We will also be accepting phone verification of income and assets in order to encourage the target population to stay home during this uncertain time.

Commonwealth's Attorney

Operational Status:

Open, can be contacted by phone as usual. Will remain open to serve law enforcement and courts. Citizens can call in for assistance. 804-598-5668

Community Development

Planning and Zoning

Operational Status:

Services are being provided by phone or via email, with customers calling first [(804) 598-5621] to see what services are available remotely and where information can be found online. In-person meetings with staff members is discouraged, but applications can be dropped off in a dropbox outside of the Community Development Department at the Administration Building. In response to CDC guidelines and to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, public meetings (including Planning Commission meetings) are being held, with participants wearing masks and social distancing.

Where can I find information about the zoning for my property?

Visit www.powhatanvarealestate.org.

Are applications for subdivision plats and site plans being accepted?

Yes. There is a box in the hall in front of the Community Development Office where application materials can be dropped off. Fillable applications are available online at www.powhatanva.gov/284/Application-Information

Building Inspections

Operational Status:

The Building Department is following current CDC guidelines when performing both office and field duties. All meetings will be postponed until further notice. We are open and available at the counter and have also placed a drop off box outside of our office for permits, amendments, and other paperwork. Please leave all information that you feel necessary when leaving paperwork. Permit applications left will not be processed until fees have been paid. Please DO NOT place money in the Treasurer Drop Box attached to the building. A valid email address is necessary for all permits so that we can reach out to you regarding any necessary items noted on review, please be sure it is legible on any paperwork that you leave. If there is not a line for an email address, please leave your email address at the bottom of the application. Proffer amounts can be requested 5 days prior to the request of a final inspection but payment cannot be made until final inspection pass and must be paid prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Inspectors may refuse to inspect portions of buildings occupied by individuals diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, exposed to others with the virus or display symptoms of illness. Anyone on an inspection site is asked to maintain a minimum six feet distance from County staff and have limited communication with them while they are on site. Any inspection that requires interior access of an occupied structure can be performed via a Virtual Zoom Meeting, please see our website for more information regarding this. Please check back frequently to view any updates that may take place to ensure the protection of County staff.

The public may leave a voicemail if they do not reach us at 804-598-5622 #2 or email us using the email directory on our County page. We will continue to update our website page with timeframes to expect for services such as permit review time. If you are mailing in a permit, you can request the amount due by emailing jhammond@powhatanva.gov or calling 804- 598-5622 #2. Thank you again for working with us throughout this unique pandemic we are facing.

Is a check the only form of payment you can accept right now?

No, cash or credit card can be used, you must call in advance so a receipt is ready for your pickup that you can use to pay the treasury department. Please see their policy on their availability.

How can I pick a building permit up?

Please call us in advance we will have it out there at our drop box table for you to pick up.

How will I know you have received what I have dropped off?

We are trying to process everything the same business day, you will receive an email with any information regarding payment or information that is missing that is needed before we can enter it into our system.

What is the current Permit turnaround time?

We are currently at 10 Business Days for permit review.

District Court

How do I find out if I should come to Court for my case?

You can call the clerk's office during regular business hours Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. 804-598-5665.

You can look up your case if it is a General District Case at www.courts.state.va.us.

You will have to call if it is a Juvenile and Domestic Relations case.

Also, you will be mailed a notice when to come court if your case was continued by the court. Be sure your correct address on file with the court. You can either fax your correct address and include all parties' names including children if it is a custody and visitation case to 804-598-5648. You can mail, bring to the office, or call the office at 598-5665 to provide an updated address.

How may I make a payment?

You can pay on-line at www.courts.state.va.us.

You can mail a payment to 3880 D Old Buckingham Road, Suite D, Powhatan, VA 23139.

You can call during normal business hours Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and pay with a credit card over the phone.

Where do I get forms?

At this point we can only allow one person in the District Court waiting area, but we do have forms on a table in the waiting area or you can ask for one at the counter during normal business hours Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

You can access the forms online at www.courts.state.va.us.

How do I submit the forms?

Via fax, if payment is not needed, to 804-598-5648.

Via mail 3880 D Old Buckingham Road, Suite D, Powhatan, VA 23139.

In person with only one person coming into the District Court Clerk's office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Visit the following website or call Legal Aid for assistance in selecting and procuring the correct form.

<https://selfhelp.vacourts.gov/>

Legal Aid 804-862-1100

Economic Development

FAQ for Businesses:

What are the resources for financial assistance during COVID-19?

[SBA: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources](#)

[SBA: Press Release 03-19-2020- Working Capital Loans Available Due to Coronavirus](#)

[Facebook Small Business Grants Program](#)

Are there tax delays for businesses?

The Virginia Department of Taxation is extending the due date of payment of Virginia individuals and corporate income taxes. While filing deadlines remain the same, the due date for individual and corporate income tax will now be June 1, 2020.

The Federal due date for individual and corporate income tax will now be July 15, 2020.

What is considered an essential business?

For a list of Essential Businesses by Industry visit

https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA_Guidance_on_the_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workforce_508C_0.pdf

Are there penalties to keeping business running as usual?

No penalties unless the business breaks the Governor's mandate of 10 or fewer occupants. The penalty is a misdemeanor and loss of operating license for violating orders that the Governor invoked relating to public.

Extension Office

Is Coronavirus a concern at grocery stores?

CDC, FDA and USDA are not aware of any reports at this time that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. Current evidence shows the biggest risk of transmission of COVID-19 is being around individuals who are symptomatic. More information can be found at the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-17.pdf

Food businesses should be following employee health policies and local health department recommendations to keep symptomatic individuals home. For more information for grocery stores related to:

- i. Cleaning and disinfection check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-6.pdf
- ii. Receiving and food packaging, check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-7.pdf
- iii. General questions and employee health, check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-8.pdf

My child wants to attend 4-H camp this summer. Are you still accepting registrations?

No decisions have been made for the 2021 camping season. It will depend on the status of COVID in the county or city each 4-H center is based. For now, we're planning to have camp but just don't have specifics at this point. Typically, the registration opens by March 1. Residents may want to contact the Extension office or check the website for updates around this time: <https://powhatan.ext.vt.edu/>

I need to get a soil test for my garden, lawn, pasture or crop field. Can I pick up a sample box while your offices are closed to the public?

Sample forms and boxes may be picked up at the rear of the Powhatan Village Building at the Extension Demonstration Garden.

Master Gardener Volunteers are available to answer your gardening questions. However, the Master Gardener Help Desk volunteers are working only virtually at this time. We continue to have limited, or no ability, to send samples to the plant disease, weed ID or insect ID labs at Virginia Tech. Please contact our main office (804) 598-5640 or email gpmastergardener@gmail.com with inquiries or to send photographs of plants.

Is Coronavirus a concern with takeout food?

CDC, FDA and USDA are not aware of any reports at this time that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. Current evidence shows the biggest risk of transmission of COVID-19 is being around individuals who are symptomatic. More information can be found at the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-18.pdf

Food businesses should be following employee health policies and health department recommendations to keep symptomatic individuals home. For more information for foodservice establishments related to:

- iv. Cleaning and disinfection, check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-9.pdf
- v. Receiving and food packaging for foodservice check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-10.pdf
- vi. General questions and employee health: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-5.pdf

Is Coronavirus a food safety issue?

CDC and USDA are not aware of any reports to this time of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. However, it is always important to follow good hygiene practices (i.e., wash hands and surfaces often, separate raw meat from other foods, cook to the right temperature, and refrigerate foods promptly) when handling or preparing foods. More information can be found at the publication at this link:

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-15.pdf

How does Covid-19 affect our community garden?

A: For more information for garden managers and gardeners check out the publication at this link:

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-16.pdf

How does Covid-19 affect shopping/running a Food Bank?

A: For more information for Food Banks related to receiving food and cleaning check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-11.pdf

For more information for Food Banks related to best practices and communication, check out the publication at this link: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-12.pdf

How does Covid-19 affect my U-Pick farm operation?

For more information for farm managers check out the publication at this link:

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-13.pdf

How does Covid-19 affect Farmers Markets?

For more information for markets and market managers, check out the publication at this link:

https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/FST/fst-368/FST-368-14.pdf

Fire & Rescue

Operational Status:

The Fire and Rescue office is open to the public during normal business hours, M-F 8:30am to 5pm. First responders continue to actively serving the community.

Library

When will the Library be open to the public?

During the pandemic, Powhatan County Public Library is open to the public Monday – Thursday and Saturday from 10 AM-4 PM. The library is closed on Friday and Saturday. Library WiFi and e-branch resources are available 24/7. For Library assistance, please contact 804-598-5670 or library@powhatanlibrary.net.

Library WiFi and e-branch resources <http://www.powhatanva.gov/1650/E-Branch> are available 24/7.

To stay updated on the most recent Library information, visit our webpage <http://www.powhatanva.gov/247/Library/> or like us on Facebook.

I have library materials due, can I return them? Will I be charged fines for overdue materials?

Library materials can be placed in the book drop or inside the library in marked bins under the Books to Go tables. Due to quarantine safety measures, fines are waived until further notice.

I don't have a library card, and the library is closed. Can I still use library resources? Can I get a card online?

Visit <http://www.powhatanva.gov/253/Getting-a-Library-Card>. Complete the online registration form to receive your library card.

Can I contact the library with research questions or for information about library resources?

Library staff are available 8:30 AM-5 PM Monday-Thursday and Saturday via phone, 804-598-5670 or email, library@powhatanlibrary.net or online chat.

There's a book I want to read, and it's not currently available via e-book from the library. Can the library help me obtain it?

Visit www.powhatanlibrary.net to complete our online request form.

Public Information Officer

Where can I find WIFI access?

All county buildings have free WIFI 24/7 available in the parking lots.

Comcast XFINITY has opened hotspots at businesses for the public's free use. See <http://wifi.xfinity.com/#find-a-hotspot> for details and instructions.

How do I sign up for the Powhatan Citizen Alert System?

Go to <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/BF56CA5324BA>

Public Safety- 911

Will Public Safety/911 still respond to calls?

Yes, all calls will be prioritized and dispatched accordingly.

Public Works

Utilities

Operational Status:

Normal.

Convenience Center

Is the Convenience Center open?

Yes. Tues-Sunday 8:00 am-6 pm. In an effort to control the spread of COVID-19, it is highly

encouraged that face coverings be worn and that you practice social distancing when possible.

Parks & Recreation

What is the status of fields and parks?

All Sports Leagues, Teams, and Activities have been suspended on County and School fields and facilities. County parks are still open to the public, please abide by Federal and State guidelines, such as social distancing and do not gather in groups of 10 or more. All restrooms will be locked.

Office of Elections & Voter Registration

Operations Status:

The Office of Elections & Voter Registration is operating at normal capacity and is opened from 9 AM – 5 PM, Monday – Friday. We encourage anyone who visits the office in-person to wear a face mask and also to respect social distancing standards.

How can I register to vote or apply for an absentee ballot for the upcoming June and November Elections?

Citizens can register to vote and also apply to vote-by-mail by utilizing our online resources for electronic voter registration and absentee ballot requests. Our website can be reached via: <http://www.powhatanva.gov/310/Voter-Registrar>. Citizens can also register to vote and/or apply to vote-by-mail by coming in person to the office to request the necessary applications. Citizens can also call or e-mail the office to ask to have the needed applications mailed or e-mailed to them.

How can I register or apply for an absentee ballot if I don't have online access?

If the online resources offered are not a feasible option, then the public can request to have election documents mailed to them for the purposes of returning completed documents by mail. If special accommodations need to be made for any Election/Voter Registration service; please contact the office (804) 598-5604.

What do I do if I have questions about upcoming elections in Powhatan County?

You can get most answers to your election related questions by visiting our website at <http://www.powhatanva.gov/310/Voter-Registrar> or by calling the office at (804) 598-5604. There will be staff in the office from 9 AM – 5 PM to answer your calls.

How can I safely vote this November while COVID is still a concern?

Early Voting for the November General Election began on Friday, September 18th at 9 AM. In an effort to reduce COVID exposure, the Office of Elections will be providing Drive-Thru Voting for voters who wish to vote before Election Day. Voters can vote from the safety and comfort of their cars instead of standing in a long line. *No reservation or application is needed. *Proper identification is still mandatory. *Only vehicles in line by 5:00 PM will be permitted to vote that day. Early Voting via the drive-thru tent will be offered every Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM (closed on Columbus Day). It will also be offered at the same times on the two Saturdays prior to the Election (Oct. 24th & Oct.31st). Call the office of Elections with your questions about this new

process.

Schools

Powhatan Schools will be closed through the end of the school year. ALL PCPS Facilities will be closed as of 3.23.20. Detailed COVID-19 information regarding student meals, community resources, and communication archives are available on the PCPS webpage <http://www.powhatan.k12.va.us/groups/79021/covid19/covid19>

Powhatan County Public Schools main website <http://www.powhatan.k12.va.us/>

How can I receive meals for my children?

Please contact the PCPS Food Service Department at foodservice@Powhatan.k12.va.us or contact the Food Service Director, Dorothy Kohler, at 804-635-0001 if you are interested in having free healthy breakfast & lunch meals provided for your child/children.

Sheriff's Office

Operational Status:

Normal

Social Services

Operational Status:

Staff has been given permission to work remotely from home, however some admin processes will require someone in the office. Although the lobby is closed to the general public, we will still conduct business.

Phone calls will be forwarded to an agency cell phone and will be answered during normal work hours. Messages and voice mail will be forwarded to staff as needed.

The mail and drop off box will be checked several times daily and processed or distributed as necessary. Outgoing mail will be checked and placed in mailbox for pickup daily.

Applications will continue to be processed in office by Benefits Program Specialists intake.

Emergency EBT cards will be issued by Admin staff by appt. Benefits Program Specialists will contact Administration staff as needed to process.

Invoices, checks and deposits will be processed in office as needed or at the normal processing time at the end of the month.

Who do I contact if I need a replacement EBT card?

Call: **1-866-281-2448**

Who do I contact if I need a replacement TANF Way2Go card?

Call: 1-888-929-2460

Treasurer

Operational Status:

Office is open 8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Call first to see if we can complete your business over the phone or email. (804) 598 5625.

<http://www.powhatanva.gov/316/Treasurer>

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Powhatan County is working diligently to maintain the health and safety of its citizens and employees. At this time, we will be open to the public during the November 5, 2020 deadline, provided no alternative orders are mandated. **We highly advise taxpayers to use either our online payment option (www.powhatanva.gov), our drop boxes located at the County Administration building or mail in your Personal Property and Real Estate tax payments to limit exposure in the building.** Penalty and interest will **not** be waived for untimely payments.

Should you find it necessary to pay in person, we will be adhering to social distancing guidelines. You may encounter long lines in person that could possibly require waiting outside the building. We ask that you refrain from visiting our building if you are displaying any symptoms related to COVID, such as fever, sore throat, cough or have been exposed to anyone with coronavirus. If you must visit in person and are able to wear a face covering, please do so upon entering. If you need assistance, you may call our office at (804) 598-5625 and someone will be available to guide you through any issues you may encounter.

INFORMATION LINKS

Virginia Department of Health <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

State of Virginia <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus-updates/>

Powhatan County COVID webpage <http://powhatanva.gov/1687/COVID---19-Information>

Powhatan County Website <http://powhatanva.gov/>

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