



## **PERQUIMANS COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES**

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### **Press Release-COVID-19 Response**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – DISTRIBUTE WIDELY**

**March 16, 2020**

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Today, leaders from Albemarle Regional Health Services, Perquimans County, the Town of Hertford, the Town of Winfall, and Perquimans County Emergency Services met to coordinate our local response to COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus 2019. Over the last few days, things in our nation have drastically changed, and we find ourselves in unprecedented territory. We are currently under a U.S. and N.C. State of Emergency. In an effort to encourage social distancing in North Carolina, Governor Cooper's Executive Order included two major points:

- All NC Public School Systems are closed for two (2) weeks from March 16- March 27.
- A prohibition of mass gatherings (100 persons).

On Sunday morning, Perquimans County Emergency Services Staff joined Pasquotank-Camden EMS, Pasquotank County, the Elizabeth City Fire Department and Sentara Albemarle Hospital to set up a Triage Tent at Sentara Albemarle Medical Center. Even though there are no reported cases of COVID-19 in Perquimans County or surrounding counties, this measure has been proactively implemented to provide isolation if a patient presents with virus-like symptoms until testing can be completed.

Local Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Facilities have implemented precautional measures that include restricting visitors and monitoring staff/residents for increased body temperature.

Our 911 Center has increased training and are asking callers specific questions outlined by the N.C. Office of EMS. Callers requesting EMS and Law Enforcement assistance will be asked to meet first responders outside when possible, in an effort to minimize exposure risk.

Our EMS staff have been trained on the latest N.C. Office of EMS guidance, which includes additional patient screening. Any patients presenting to EMS with a fever and respiratory symptoms should expect to be asked to wear a surgical mask provided by EMS staff. Patients will be transported to Sentara Albemarle Medical Center or Vidant Chowan Hospital, where they will be isolated from other patients until testing can occur.

Perquimans County Judicial System - All criminal matters scheduled for CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURT on MARCH 18, 2020, are hereby continued except for Probable Cause Hearings and First Appearance Hearings. All civil matters, with the exception of Small Claims Court, scheduled for this date will be heard. Continuance notices with new court dates will be mailed to defendants, at the address on file with the Clerk of Court's Office.

- Any questions or concerns may be directed to the Perquimans County Clerk of Superior Court's Office at telephone number 252-404-5000.
- Clerk's office hours are Monday - Friday, 8am - 5pm

The Perquimans County Senior Center has suspended most activities through the end of March. Leaders will meet to determine the best way to formulate a plan to continue meal delivery services.

Both Senior Center and Perquimans County Recreation Department sponsored activities will be discussed at a special called meeting of the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, March 17, 2020.

Perquimans County Library will be closed for two (2) weeks beginning today.

WiFi Hotspots are available through Inteliport in downtown Hertford parking areas and outside of local school buildings for students.

Inter-County Public Transit Authority (ICPTA) transports are postponed until further notice except for dialysis and critical care cancer patients.

All Perquimans County Offices are encouraging their customers to conduct business with the county either electronically or by telephone if possible.

We understand that this is a uncertain time for everyone, and we are working with local, state and national partners to minimize the impact in our community. We ask that our citizens also practice preventative and safety measures at home.

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water often.
- Please avoid touching your face.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or in the crook of your elbow while sneezing or coughing.
- Practice social distancing, avoid handshakes, hugs and other close contact.
- Remember to wipe down surfaces that are frequently touched such as doorknobs, steering wheels and cell phones.

There is a lot of information currently being shared, and it is not all accurate. We encourage you to visit the following websites for the most credible information:

Albemarle Regional Health Services - <http://www.arhs-nc.org/>  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services - <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/>  
Center for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/>  
Perquimans County - <https://www.perquimanscountync.gov>  
Town of Hertford – <https://www.townofhertford.com>

For updated information, please continue to visit Perquimans County Emergency Services Facebook page for additional updates. – <https://www.facebook.com/PerquimansEmergencyServices/>

We also encourage you to enroll in our Code Red or Reverse 911 System by visiting the Perquimans County Website, <https://www.perquimanscountync.gov> and clicking on the Code Red button on the left side of the page. This is a notification system that will allow us to reach you by phone, text, or email once you enroll.

Guidance for Local, State, and Federal responses are changing daily. We will be making updates as often as possible, but we ask that you also use the websites above to continue gathering additional information.

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