

A Message from Mayor Venezia



Friends,

I would like to thank all of our residents for being so kind and understanding during these trying times. It's great to see our community come together and help each other when times are hard. This has not been easy for any of us and my administration is working tirelessly to make sure you are all kept safe and well informed.

We are working diligently to make sure that all residents get the assistance they need whether it's food on the table, financial aid for businesses or simply, answering your questions. These are unprecedented times we are facing and if we continue to work together, we will make it through this stronger than before. We are seeing more positive cases in New Jersey as a result of increased availability of tests but it is our hope that we will soon be able to "flatten the curve."

Residents of all ages should take this pandemic extremely seriously and follow all CDC guidelines including practicing social distancing and frequently washing your hands. I ask that we all continue to do our part and stay at home unless you have to go out for essential reasons. Again, thank you all for doing your part and I look forward to better times.

Fill out the 2020 Census Today!

Bloomfield Mayor Michael Venezia is asking residents who have not yet responded to the 2020 Census to do so as soon as possible. The Census questionnaire takes just minutes to complete and is available online at <https://2020census.gov/en.html>.

The response rate in Bloomfield as of March 24 is 25.3% however, there is still time for those who have not yet filled out the survey to complete it.

Bloomfield Schools Virtual Learning



Bloomfield Public Schools officially embarked on their virtual learning journey on Tuesday, March 17. The entire district, PK-12 officially went online with all academic instruction. The teachers, administrators, and all Bloomfield staff have been amazing in this new form of education.

There has been an overwhelming amount of positive feedback from students, parents, and families. The district was ahead of the online learning curve with its highly successful 1:1 Chromebook initiative for grades 6-12.

Parents have joined their children on this online learning adventure, ensuring their children are logging on, completing assignments, and interacting with their teachers. The district was also able to successfully provide at least one device in households as well as MiFi internet connections before schools were closed. Anyone that is having any difficulties or needs further information in regards to technology can refer to [Technology Assistance](#). Social media has been full of great examples of students learning remotely with their teachers and peers.

Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs

All Activities Cancelled Until Further Notice

The Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department has temporarily suspended all indoor and outdoor programming, classes and special events until further notice. The Civic Center is also currently closed to the public and all private and public meetings are suspended indefinitely. All park permits for soccer, baseball, softball and football have been rescinded. In an attempt to "flatten the curve" all playgrounds in the municipal park system are closed except for passive exercise such as running or walking. This includes swings, slides, basketball courts, tennis courts, skate parks and climbing equipment.

While the public park spaces are open to residents that need some fresh air, physical exercise, or a break from the everyday stresses of the crisis, it is crucial that everyone follow the directives of federal, state, county and local governments and practice healthy habits and social distancing. For residents that have already registered for spring programs, your interest is appreciated however, the programs are on hold until further notice. Direct communications regarding spring programming will be done through the Community Pass registration portal.

Park Improvements

Several park improvements will be taking place during the current down time. Pulaski Park's tot lot playground will be renovated and Felton Field will be getting new walking paths, benches, picnic tables and baseball/softball field upgrades.

Transportation

Core transportation services such as Dial-A-Ride and the Senior Citizen Bus Service are continuing to service the community. Dial-A-Ride will still take seniors to critical appointments such as dialysis, chemotherapy, infusions, heart doctors and for prescriptions/medications. The Senior Citizen Bus schedule had been adjusted to accommodate special senior citizen shopping times from 6:00am to 7:30am at Stop & Shop as well as Shoprite. These trips occur Monday through Friday. Please click [HERE](#) to see the adjusted schedule.

Staying fit at Home

The Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department recently released 12 on-line fitness videos taught by Nicole Gomez to keep residents physically fit as they shelter in place. With outdoor fitness opportunities being extremely limited, the exercises were designed to be performed in the comfort of your own home using the individual's own body weight.

Staff members, with the assistance Bloomfield Public Access Television Station WBMATV are currently working with several program instructors to offer more online videos with a wide variety of genres including yoga, meditation, Zumba and art to name a few. New videos will hopefully be released each week. To view these videos please visit www.bloomfieldrecreation.org or like them on

Senior Tax Freeze

This notice is for senior citizens in the township concerning their senior freeze forms (PTR1 or PTR2) that need to be filled out by the Tax Collection Department.

Unfortunately, Town Hall is currently closed to the general public. Should you need your forms filled out and verified by the office, please either mail, fax, email or drop off the form to the police headquarters with the officer at the front of the lobby. The forms will be prepared and mailed, faxed, or emailed back to you. Also if there are any post tax year income statements that need to be returned to the Tax Collection Department, you can send it the same way as explained above.

ATTN: Animal Owners



Pet Licenses

As a reminder to pet owners, the township requires a license for all dogs and cats within the township limits. Pet renewal notices for the licensing year 2020-2021 will be going out in late April and all pets should have their license issued by June 30, 2020. The applications can be found on the township website or in the Municipal Clerk's Office – Room 214.

You will need to mail in or drop off:

- A copy of the Rabies Vaccination Certificate (Valid until after May 1, 2021)
- Fee: \$22 (Spayed/Neutered) or \$25 (Not Spayed/Neutered) payable only via check or credit card.

If you have any updates regarding your pet, please contact the Clerk's office at 973-680-4015.

Recycling Schedule and News

Biodegradable bag pickup for the season will start Wednesday, April 1. Bags will be picked up on your recycling day. Please



note that bags should not weigh more than 50 lbs and should be free of any garbage, rocks or excessive dirt. There is no need to contact the DPW office to schedule a pickup, but if you put more than 12 bags out at once, a call ahead to **973-680-4127** would be appreciated.

As a result of COVID-19, the township's waste and recycling provider Suburban Disposal has announced that they will be shifting their pick up schedule in an effort to minimize the potential of large groups of their employees. As a result of the change, service in some municipalities that they serve will begin as early as 2:00 a.m. Therefore, recycling and garbage

should be put out the **night before** your scheduled pick up day.

Any changes that are made to the schedule will be communicated with residents in a timely manner. Any updates will be on Bloomfield website www.bloomfieldtwpnj.com

Remember to take advantage of the Recycle Coach App, created by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. helps residents stay organized with custom curbside collection and events calendars, collection reminders, a search tool to find local disposal and collection information, and real-time updates on service disruptions. and much more!

Residents can access Recycle Coach from their desktop computers, mobile devices, or through digital assistants like Amazon Alexa and Google Home. And the best part: it's absolutely FREE.

April Recycling Schedule:

Week of April 6th-mixed paper
Week of April 13th-commingled
Week of April 20th-mixed paper
Week of April 27th-commingled

For more information, visit the DPW Facebook Page or call **973-680-4127**. Their hardworking staff tries to respond to messages 7 days/week.



Public Library

Despite the current emergency situation, Bloomfield Public Library staff are hard at work, from their homes, striving to keep residents entertained with eBooks, eAudiobooks, and eMagazines. Access to databases (Rosetta Stone, Ancestry.com, and Ebscohost, among others) are available 24/7 for reliable information during this crisis.

Librarians are checking their emails and social media during regular library hours to respond to questions. Children's Library staff are providing video story times on the **Bloomfield Public Library Facebook page** daily. Stay tuned to the Facebook page for more virtual programming for kids and adults. Ruby, the library bunny, is collecting photos from neighborhood children who can't come and see her in person. If you would like to share how you are spending your time at home, email photos of your at-home story times and crafts to **Ruby@bplnj.org**. If you are looking for resources for getting out of the house virtually visit the library website at **www.bplnj.org**. Need some help with Genealogy book

recommendations or any reference question? Email Reference@bplnj.org. As soon as a reopen date is announced, it will be shared with residents so that they can once again visit the outstanding Bloomfield Public Library.

Bloomfield Health

The Bloomfield Department of Health and Human Services offers benefit screenings to low-income individuals and families to determine if they are eligible to apply for various assistance programs which may include food stamps, local food pantries, utility assistance programs and prescription assistance programs. Limited rental or mortgage assistance is available for residents who have had a one-time situation but are sustainable going forward. Please call Human Services at **973-680-4017** for a screening over the phone.

The Neighbor to Neighbor Network (NTNN) is currently looking for volunteers to deliver groceries to home bound residents. You do not have to make a weekly commitment, but can volunteer when available. If you are able to help Bloomfield seniors during this very stressful time, call Human Services for more information.

COVID-19

As new information continues to emerge about the COVID-19 Coronavirus, the Township of Bloomfield wants to make sure all residents are well-informed on the steps we are taking to keep everyone safe. If you have questions or need guidance about COVID-19 please call the Bloomfield Department of Health and Human Services at **973-680-4024** or email Health@Bloomfieldtwpnj.com

Additional resources:

The NJ Poison Control Center and 211 have partnered with the State to provide information to the public on COVID-19:

Call: 2-1-1

Call (24/7): 1-800-962-1253

Text: NJCOVID to 898-211

Visit <https://covid19.nj.gov/> or nj.gov/health for additional information

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

Mental Health Support

The Bloomfield Human Services Division is available for families needing mental health support and assessments. Please call 973-680-4017

NJ Hopeline 855-654-6735

Suicide Hotline 800-277-8255

PESS Crisis Hotline- Clara Maass 973-844-4357

Community Bulletin

- **Street Sign Pickup Postponed Indefinitely**

Bloomfield's historic Street sign pick up has been postponed indefinitely as a result of the Covid-19/Coronavirus pandemic. Winning bidders should still submit payment for the signs to the township and make sure that they have their buyer's certificates for each sign. All out of state shipping orders have also been postponed. Out of state winners should still email a copy of their buyer's certificate and their shipping information to daviles@bloomfieldtwpnj.com in the meantime.

- **Bloomfield Residents Now Allowed to Park in Public School Lots**

Bloomfield Mayor Michael Venezia has announced that residents may now park in all Bloomfield Public Schools parking lots as long as schools remain closed for the COVID-19/Coronavirus pandemic. This decision was reached after residents had reached out to the township asking for parking relief due to the extra cars being parked on local streets due to the state's "Stay at Home" order. Alternate side parking rules have also been suspended and meter parking will not be enforced.

- **Live Music in Bloomfield**

The Bloomfield Civic Band is postponing their April 19 concert due to the Covid-19 crisis. A future date for the concert will be selected as soon as we are out of this difficult period. The band will still be holding their Summer concert series "On the Green" every Monday night in July at 7pm across from the Civic Center.

- **Council Meetings and Voting**

Due to the current state of emergency and public health emergency declared by Governor Murphy and in an effort to prevent further spread of COVID-19, the April 6 council conference meeting and April 20 regular council meeting will be closed to the public. These Township Council meetings will be streamed live on Channel 35, (Comcast), and Channel 30 (Verizon), YouTube or Facebook Live beginning at 7pm. A link for the live stream will be posted on the township website, www.bloomfieldwpnj.com.

The public always has an opportunity to make public comment to the Mayor and Council during public meetings. However, with this new format if you have a comment or a question please submit it to the Township Clerk at twpclerk@bloomfieldwpnj.com. The Township Clerk will read on the record your question or comment during the public comment portion of the meeting. You should submit your name, address and state your question or comment. Submissions will be accepted until 6:45 pm on the date of the meeting.

- **Bloomfield Launches Task Force to Help Small Businesses**

Mayor Michael Venezia has created a task force that will help small business owners in the township file for the Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loans or federal grants. The task force will work with small businesses one on one via email and phone to assist them in receiving these emergency funds. If businesses are able to wait, federal grant money could become available that would not need to be repaid; however, businesses may not be eligible for a grant if they get the SBA loan.