

## *From the office of the Mayor*

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### O'CONNELL TAKING STEPS TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Taunton, MA...Today Mayor Shaunna O'Connell held a meeting with key city officials and healthcare professionals to ensure open lines of communication and readiness plans are in place to deal with all potential effects of the Coronavirus COVID-19.

"We have been proactive in ensuring the public health is protected and the citizens of Taunton have access to information," said O'Connell.

"Collaboration and communication are essential in keeping our community safe. Our administration is working closely with Taunton Public Schools, Morton Hospital and public safety officials to ensure protocols are in place should there be a diagnosis of Coronavirus within the city," O'Connell said.

School Superintendent John Cabral has been in regular contact with families. Taunton Public Schools are taking precautions to protect students, such as sanitizing schools and buses.

Information has been posted on the City of Taunton website and social media pages. Residents are encourage to check frequently for updates. In addition, Taunton residents are encouraged to sign up for emergency alerts on the City of Taunton website under E-Alerts on the home page.

The risk to Taunton residents of novel coronavirus is very low. However, the risk for Influenza is currently high. Many of the ways that you can help to prevent colds and flu can also help to protect yourself against other respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow
- Stay home if you are sick

The City continues to seek guidance and updates from the Department of Public Health. For more information on the COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus), please visit or just type in <https://mass.gov> and follow the link on the top of the page. Also, the Board of Health page on City Website <https://www.taunton-ma.gov/health-department> has valuable information.

COVID-19 is not currently widespread in the United States, and your immediate risk of being exposed to the virus that causes it is thought to be low. However, if you have recently traveled to any countries of high level transmission (China, Iran, South Korea, Italy, Japan) and have symptoms of respiratory illness and/or fever **or** you have come in contact with someone who meets these criteria, **please call your health care provider.**

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