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November 18, 2020

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## Latest News

### **Don't Miss PSATS Town Hall – Personnel Management During COVID-19**

Join PSATS and attorneys from Eckert Seamans for a free PSATS Town Hall tomorrow, November 19 from 3-4 p.m. focused on helping townships navigate the many personnel challenges raised as a result of COVID-19. Get answers to all sorts of personnel questions, including whether your township employees need to quarantine if they are a “close contact” of someone with COVID-19, whether your township can or should require employees to get COVID-19 tests if they are not feeling well, or how the township should be handling PTO requests from employees with children in virtual school or relatives who are sick.

If you have questions that you would like to raise with the presenters, please email them to [scoburn@psats.org](mailto:scoburn@psats.org). For those seeking CLE credits, there is a \$15 fee.

[Click here](#) to register.

### **Secretary of Health Signs Revised Mask Order, Travel Restrictions**

Due to continued escalation of COVID-19 positive cases and hospitalization, Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine signed four mitigations orders yesterday. Levine continues to state that the commonwealth has no plans to shut the state down. The mitigation orders include:

A **revised mask order** is now in effect and requires masks indoors or in enclosed spaces

where other people who are not in the individual's household are in the same space, irrespective of physical distance. In addition:

- Masks are required outdoors with non-household members if unable to maintain sustained physical distance of at least six feet;
- Masks are required to participate in an indoor/outdoor event, gathering or group setting if someone is present who is not a member of your household; and
- Businesses must require all to wear a mask or face shield and take reasonable steps to enforce these provisions.
- There is an exception for "working alone," which includes someone inside an office or inside a cubicle "with walls high enough to block the breathing zone of all people walking by, and the worker's activity will not require anyone to come inside of the worker's workspace."

When asked about enforcement, Levine said that businesses were required to enforce the orders, however, not when it is unsafe to do so or when it would escalate a situation.

Keep in mind that a number of the exemptions from the earlier mask order remain in place, including, individuals with medical conditions, where wearing a mask would create an unsafe working condition, an individual working alone, individuals communicating with the hearing impaired or another disability, and children under two years.

Face covering is broadly defined in the order and includes any covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps or loops over the ears or wrapped around the lower face. Face shields continue to be acceptable as an alternative to a face covering. The July 15 Face Covering order has been rescinded by the new order. [Click here](#) to read the new order.

Levine issued an order that will take effect **Friday, November 20** and will **require anyone who visits from another state to have a negative COVID-19 test** within 72 hours of entering the commonwealth or to quarantine for 14 days. This requirement **also applies to Pennsylvanians who visit other states**. There are exceptions for commuting to work, medical needs, military personnel, and travelers passing through Pennsylvania. This replaces the travel quarantine recommendation and list of states. When questioned about enforcement, Levine did not provide an enforcement mechanism, but emphasized that the commonwealth does not want Pennsylvanians or others to travel during the holiday season and understands that this will be a sacrifice. [Click here](#) for the travel order.

Levine also issued a [memorandum to acute care hospitals](#) outlining commonwealth expectations to care for Pennsylvanians who need care during the pandemic. Hospitals are to work through existing coalitions and partnerships to support one another if a hospital

becomes overwhelmed. Hospitals are also asked to move up elective procedures necessary to protect a person's health and to be prepared to suspend elective procedures if the health system becomes strained. Current modeling from the University of Washington estimates that Pennsylvania will run out of intensive care beds in December if ICU admissions continue at the current rate.

The state departments of Health and Education issued [recommendations for colleges and universities to implement a testing plan](#) for when students return to campus following the holidays, including routine protocols for testing and capacity for isolation and quarantine.

[Philadelphia issued new mitigation rules](#) effective November 20 through January 1, 2021 that include prohibitions on in-person instruction for schools and colleges, indoor dining, theaters, and indoor gatherings involving persons from more than one household. They have asked all contiguous county health departments/commissioners to consider joining their implementation plan (Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware, Chester).

### **Pennsylvania Announces Record Turnout for Nov. 3 Election**

The Pennsylvania Department of State reported that turnout in the November 3 election appears to have set a record, exceeding turnout in every presidential election since at least 1960, with more than 6.9 million Pennsylvanians voting by mail ballot or in person at the polls. The election also appears to have set a record for the highest percentage of participation by Pennsylvania's voting-age population at 70.93%. The previous record of 70.3% was set in 1960. [Click here](#) for more.

### **DEP Lifts Drought Watch in Ten Counties**

The state Department of Environmental Protection has lifted a drought watch for ten counties, including Armstrong, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Clarion, Erie, Fayette, Huntingdon, Indiana, and Mifflin counties.

A drought watch remains in effect for Bradford, Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Columbia, Cumberland, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Juniata, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, Union, Warren, and Wyoming counties. Three counties remain on a drought warning: Clinton, McKean, and Potter. Water suppliers in these counties must monitor their supplies and be prepared to update drought contingency plans as necessary.

Residents in counties with a drought watch are asked to reduce their individual water use by 5 to 10%. Residents in drought warning counties are asked to reduce their individual water use by 10 to 15%. [Click here](#) for more information, including tips for reducing water use.

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## Legislation & Policy



The House and Senate are scheduled to be in session today, November 18. Watch session live [here](#).

## Learn

### [Quickbooks - Getting Ready For The Township Audit 11/19/2020](#)

[Part of the PSATS Summer/Fall 2020 QuickBooks Series](#)

In this session, we will discuss what to look for, how to ensure that your financial records are correct, and how to close down the book for the year. [Click here](#) to register.

### [Webinar - Claims Of Racism At Your Doorstep: What Is A Township To Do? - 12/2/20](#)

What happens when a claim of racism is made against your police department and the newspaper and TV reporters appear at your meeting? What should you do before such a claim is made; what should you do when a claim is made; and what should you do going forward? This webinar will leave you better prepared for what might appear at your township. Eligible for 1 PMGA Public Safety Point. [Click here](#) to register.



## [Webinar - Are You Prepared For Your 2021 Organizational Meeting? - 12/16/20](#)

If you are unsure whether you have everything ready for your township's 2021 Organization Meeting, required to be held the first Monday of January, then make sure to attend this webinar. Holly Fishel of PSATS will review best practices and checklists to help ensure that your township has a smooth organization meeting. Eligible for 1 PMGA Administration Point. [Click here](#) to register.



For full list of webinars and classes please visit <https://learn.psats.org>.

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Missed yesterday's PSATS Morning News? No problem! A [PSATS Morning News Library](#) is available online for your viewing pleasure!

We're excited about this new concept and want to hear what you think. Email comments and suggestions to [morningnews@psats.org](mailto:morningnews@psats.org).

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