



February 4, 2021

Township Video News



TVN's Question of the Week | When Will Township Employees Be Vaccinated?

As Pennsylvania starts rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine, township employees have secured a place in line. Learn more about the commonwealth's vaccination schedule here. Also, [click here](#) to catch up on previous Questions of the Week. (1:07)

Latest News

National Homemade Soup Day

February 4th heats up with National Homemade Soup Day. In every cuisine, soup provides a rich basis of flavor and history. Many soups also offer medicinal properties. What was once considered a wife's tale, chicken soup now has the backing of the scientific

community. Yes, chicken soup helps relieve the symptoms of the common cold. How? Well, scientists believe that a bowl of the soup may reduce inflammation of the lungs. It is thought that chicken soup slows down the activity of white blood cells that can cause inflammation.

Speaking of Soup....Another Budget Address, Another State Police Tax Proposal

Yesterday, Gov. Tom Wolf gave his annual budget address and, once again, proposed a State Police tax. Like last year, this proposal is called a “fair service fee” which, if enacted, would be a tax assessed on all municipalities to pay for the costs of Pennsylvania State Police services in their community. The proposal, if enacted, is anticipated to raise \$168 million.

The governor’s proposal claims that this tax should be assessed on every municipality in the commonwealth, because services are provided to all, regardless of the level of municipal police coverage and cites 2020 as a year in which extensive PSP resources were deployed to assist statewide, often in areas served by full-time municipal police departments. A complex formula based on a State Police developed schedule of station coverage costs, including incidents and coverage area. It then gives “credits” for low population and low income, as well as whether a municipality already provides full or part-time police services. To learn more and to find the proposed cost for your township, [click here](#). [Read full story](#).

House Health Committee Holds Hearing on Vaccine Distribution

The state House Health Committee held a hearing yesterday on Pennsylvania’s COVID-19 distribution. Testifiers noted that communication over the amount of vaccine that they will receive, and when, is a challenge for scheduling appointments and administering the vaccine and that the amounts delivered often vary from the amount requested.

While weeks of planning went into preparing for the distribution plans announced in December, the mid-January change to allow those 65 and older and those with serious health issues to receive priority for the vaccine created havoc. The change meant careful plans were now irrelevant and that providers were overwhelmed by individuals anxious to schedule their vaccine. Providers are also concerned that individuals are scheduling appointments with multiple locations and not cancelling, taking appointments that could be used by others, as well as out of county travel for vaccines. [Read full story](#).

Commonwealth Adding New COVID Testing Sites

Tomorrow, February 5, the state Department of Health is adding COVID-19 regional testing sites in Blair, Columbia, Elk/Cameron, Sullivan, and York counties. The sites in Blair and Elk/Cameron will have both drive-thru and indoor walk-in testing available, while Columbia, Sullivan, and York are drive-thru only. Testing will be available 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at these sites until Tuesday, February 9. Tests are free and do not require preregistration. [Click](#)

[here](#) for exact locations. If your township needs to find a testing site in another county, [click here](#) to find the closest one.

Commonwealth COVID-19 Enforcement for Week of January 24

Pa. Department of Agriculture: Inspectors closed three more restaurants after confirming they were operating in violation of COVID-19 orders. The Bureau of Food Safety performed 669 total inspections, 19 of which were COVID-19-specific complaints, and received 170 food facility COVID-19-related complaints, 32 of which were referred to local and county health jurisdictions. [Click here](#) for more.

Pennsylvania State Police: Officers issued 51 warnings and 31 violations for failing to follow COVID-19 requirements after visiting 1,553 licensed liquor establishments. That brings the total violation count to 677 over the last 216 days (*3.1 per day statewide*). For more, [click here](#).

Pa. Department of State: The Bureau of Enforcement and Investigation performed 519 inspections of licensed professions' compliance with COVID-19 mitigation requirements, opened 20 COVID-19-specific investigations, and distributed nine warning letters and five compliance letters. [Click here](#) for more.

Pa. Department of Labor and Industry: The Bureau of Labor Law Compliance assigned 409 cases on employee complaints COVID-19 safety complaints to its investigators and completed 13 investigations which were forwarded to the Department of Health. [Click here](#) for more.

Legislation & Policy



The House and Senate will be in session today, February 4th. Watch session live [here](#).

Senate Republican Leaders Respond to Governor's Proposed Budget

Senate Republican leaders called Governor Wolf's massive tax and spend budget

proposal “dead on arrival” in the Senate, saying it is out of touch with Pennsylvanians and small businesses that are struggling to survive during the COVID-19 crisis.

Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman (R-34), Senate Majority Leader Kim Ward (R-39) and Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Pat Browne (R-16) said his plan to increase spending by more than \$3 billion – the largest proposed increase in history – is unacceptable and could further hurt the state’s struggling economy. His personal income tax hike would increase the amount of state tax paid out of many Pennsylvanians’ paychecks by a staggering 46 percent, at a time when many residents are barely making ends meet.

House Republican Leaders Respond to Governor’s Proposed Budget

The Pennsylvania House Republican Caucus discussed its prioritization of COVID-19 relief and ensuring robust vaccine deployment while Gov. Tom Wolf unveiled a budget proposal that “increases the state’s Personal Income Tax by 46%—or \$7 billion annually—on working Pennsylvanians and small businesses.”

House Majority Leader Kerry Benninghoff said “No matter how you slice it, today Gov. Wolf proposed a massive tax increase on working Pennsylvanians and small businesses—the very same Pennsylvanians who have been unfairly targeted by overbroad and inconsistent economic shutdowns over the past year. Tax increases are not the answer to our current problems.”

House and Senate Democratic leaders indicated support of the Governor’s proposals.

Learn

Webinar - COVID-19 Vaccines: What Municipal Employers Need to Know - postponed to 2/5/21

In this webinar, Ryan J. Cassidy, Michael McAuliffe Miller and Scott E. Blissman of Eckert Seamans' Labor and Employment Group will present a focused discussion of the relevant factors municipal employers should consider when implementing vaccination policies, maintaining employee morale, handling enforcement issues and managing accommodations requests. Topics to be addressed include:



- ADA and religious accommodation requirements
- Current legal standards implicated by mandatory vaccine policies in the public sector
- Whether public employers can (or should) require employees to be vaccinated and how to handle employee refusals
- Collective bargaining issues

Eligible for 1 PMGA Administration Points.
 Eligible for 1 Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Credit (additional fee). [Click here](#) to register.

Webinar - Take Advantage of Market Conditions While You Can for Updated/New Facilities- 2/11/21

This webinar will cover the benefits of planning, financing, building and renovating township facilities during an economic downturn by taking advantage of lower interest rates, lower construction bids, stimulus funds, grants and other initiatives. Presenters will include planners/architects, a finance professional who specializes in securing funds for municipal projects, an expert in the real estate market and a grant writer who will together be a complete planning resource for you and your township. Eligible for 1 PMGA Public Works point. [Click here](#) to register.

QuickBooks for the Beginner - Virtual Class - February

This four-session virtual class is designed to provide each student with a fundamental understanding and working knowledge of QuickBooks Accounting Software, and is intended to demonstrate the application of QuickBooks and QuickBooks Pro to assist in municipal accounting. The sessions will review how to set up your company files and create your DCED Compliant Chart of Accounts. From



start to finish, how to write a check, make a deposit and reconcile your checking account. You will learn how to set up vendors and customers for all of your information that you could possibly need to replace that old rolodex. (note: no payroll will be addressed in this class) [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Webinar - Positive Impacts of Trail Planning on the Community - 2/18/21

Trails and greenways create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible, and low-or no-cost places to cycle, walk, hike, jog or skate Trails help people of all ages incorporate exercise into their daily routines by connecting them with places they want or need to go. Communities that encourage physical activity by making use of the linear corridors can see a significant effect on public health and wellness. In this webinar, you will learn ways in which your township can become more trail-friendly. Eligible for 1 PMGA Planning/Zoning point. [Click here](#) to register.



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