



THE LAWRENCE COUNTY GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

June 10, 2020

Summary

The following report details the Lawrence County Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This document includes information related to county PPE distribution, election security, business and community support, and communication efforts. Furthermore, the report provides the increased safety measures implemented at the Lawrence County Courthouse and other county-owned facilities as well as a comprehensive list of remote and online services for each county department.

Lawrence County Board of Commissioners

Morgan Boyd, Chairman

Daniel Vogler

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Lawrence County Government COVID-19 Response

In collaboration with Court Administration and the elected row officers, the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners has taken several steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Lawrence County. With the success of these mitigation efforts, the Board of Commissioners is now focused on facilitating the safe transition of Lawrence County from the red phase of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania back to normal operations.

Timeline of Events

The following is a summary timeline of Lawrence County's response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

March 6, 2020 – The first two COVID-19 cases are reported in Pennsylvania.

March 13, 2020 – The Lawrence County Prison starts implementing COVID-19 precautions.

March 16, 2020 to March 18, 2020 – The Board of Commissioners conducts a series of meetings with department heads, row officers, and court administration to determine how Lawrence County operations should be conducted in the event of a county-wide shutdown.

March 16, 2020 – The President Judge of the Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas issues two court orders regulating court operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

March 17, 2020 – The Board of Commissioners declares a preemptive Disaster Emergency for Lawrence County, allowing for greater access to state emergency funding and enhancing the ability of county government to respond to the health crisis.

March 18, 2020 – The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania issues an emergency order requiring the Pennsylvania Court System to scale back operations to essential functions only.

March 19, 2020 – The Governor orders all non-life-sustaining businesses to close their physical locations.

March 20, 2020 – The Lawrence County Courthouse and all county-operated facilities are closed to the general public. Non-essential Lawrence County employees are laid off.

March 24, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners extends the deadline for property owners to pay their property taxes at the face value rate from July 7, 2020 to August 10, 2020.

March 25, 2020 – The first COVID-19 case is reported in Lawrence County.

March 27, 2020 – Federal, state, and local officials request that the Governor consider utilizing the closed Ellwood City Hospital as a COVID-19 overflow facility.

March 28, 2020 – The first COVID-19 death is reported in Lawrence County.

March 30, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners recommends to the Governor that Lawrence County be placed under a stay-at-home order.

March 30, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners activates Lawrence County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (L.C.C.O.A.D.) and provides \$5,000 in start-up funding.

March 31, 2020 – The Governor places Lawrence County under a stay-at-home order.

April 17, 2020 to April 18, 2020 – The Lawrence County Courthouse undergoes a deep cleaning by a third-party company. All other public county-owned facilities are also deep cleaned over the next month.

April 28, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners extends the deadline for property owners to pay their property taxes at the face value rate from August 10, 2020 to September 14, 2020.

April 28, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners increases ACTS funding to ensure the program's solvency through the COVID-19 pandemic.

April 29, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners recommends to the Governor that Lawrence County move into the yellow phase of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania.

May 5, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners appropriates \$40,000 in COVID-19 CDBG funding to food insecurity through the ACTS TEAM program.

May 8, 2020 – Lawrence County moves into the yellow phase of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania.

May 11, 2020 – The Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas expands court operations.

May 13, 2020 – Lawrence County is appropriated \$81,906.15 by the Pennsylvania Department of State to offset increased election costs as a result of COVID-19.

May 14, 2020 – Lawrence County is appropriated \$159,506 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

May 21, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners recommends to the Governor that Lawrence County move into the green phase of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania.

May 29, 2020 – Lawrence County moves into the green phase of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania.

May 29, 2020 – The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners receives notification that the county will be receiving a \$7.7 million grant for countywide COVID-19 financial relief.

June 1, 2020 – All Lawrence County employees return to work.

June 4, 2020 – The Lawrence County Courthouse and most other county-operated facilities reopen to the general public.

PPE Distribution

Early into the COVID-19 crisis, the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety worked to secure PPE and other preventative equipment from different local and national suppliers, as well as the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. Throughout the crisis, the Department of Public Safety opened additional supply channels and coordinated the distribution of PPE throughout Lawrence County.

The following spreadsheet details current PPE inventory and total PPE distributed by the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety, as of June 1, 2020:

	Distributed to Public	Inventory as of June 1
Masks	11,745	6,520
Face Shields	284	4
Gloves	23,490	19,640
Gowns	320	20
Coveralls	219	0
Hand Sanitizer	80	80
Goggles	24	0
Protective Eyewear	15	0

Election Safety

With the 2020 Primary Election postponed until June 2, 2020, the Lawrence County Board of Elections and the Lawrence County Department of Voter Services worked diligently to ensure the safety of Lawrence County voters while facilitating an effective, efficient, and secure election.

In terms of voter safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Elections authorized the procurement of PPE and other mitigation materials for each election precinct in Lawrence County. Each election precinct received the following materials:

- Masks for all election workers
- Face shields for all election workers
- Gloves for all election workers
- Hand sanitizer
- Sanitizing spray
- Individual, disposable pens for all voters
- Mobile plexiglass shields to provide barriers between election workers and voters
- Marking tape to ensure voters are six feet apart

Additionally, the Board of Elections has consolidated the following election precincts due to election worker concerns related to COVID-19:

- New Castle 2-4 and New Castle 2-5 had one set of election workers and voted at St. John Lutheran Church.

- New Castle 5-1 and New Castle 8-1 had one set of election workers and voted at the New Castle Playhouse Annex.
- Pulaski 1 and Pulaski 3 had one set of election workers and voted at the Pulaski Fire Hall.
- Shenango 2 and Shenango 3 had one set of election workers and voted at the New Shenango Fire Department.
- Slippery Rock 1 and Slippery Rock 2 had one set of election workers and voted at the Slippery Rock Township Building.
- Union 1 and Union 2 had one set of election workers and voted at the Union Township Fire Department.
- Union 3 and Union 4 had one set of election workers and voted at Washington Union Alliance Church.
- Wilmington 1 and Wilmington 2 had one set of election workers and voted at New Life Baptist Church.

Finally, the Department of Voter Services provided a dropbox at the entrance to the Lawrence County Courthouse for voters to drop off their mail-in or absentee ballots without having to interact with the public or utilize third-party mail carriers.

At the same time the Department of Voter Services was working to ensure the safety of all voters and poll workers, the department was also processing an unprecedented number of mail-in and absentee ballots. The Board of Elections advocated for mail-in and absentee ballots as a safe and secure alternative to in-person voting during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following are the statistics related to mail-in and absentee ballots received, as of June 2, 2020 at 8:00pm:

	Applications Issued	Ballots Returned
Democratic	6130	5277
Republican	3409	2743
Total	9539	8020

The Director of the Lawrence County Department of Voter Services was one of three county election officials from across Pennsylvania asked to testify in front of the Pennsylvania Senate State Government Committee regarding COVID-19 election policy. This testimony was provided at a Pennsylvania State Senate hearing held on April 30, 2020.

Business and Community Support

The Board of Commissioners has directly allocated \$40,000 to alleviating food insecurity throughout Lawrence County during the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding is provided through Lawrence County emergency CDBG funds and will be administered by the ACTS TEAM program. The Board of Commissioners has also distributed \$5,000 to the United Way of Lawrence County as start-up funding for United Way’s COVID-19 assistance programs. Furthermore, the Board of Commissioners has adjusted the rate schedule for Lawrence County’s MATP subsidy to the ACTS bus program, ensuring the financial solvency of the program.

Additionally, the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners received notification on May 29, 2020 that \$7,722,491.00 in federal CARES Act funding has been appropriated to Lawrence County for use under the following purposes:

1. Offsetting the cost of direct county response, planning, and outreach efforts related to COVID-19, including the purchase of personal protective equipment.
2. Small business grant programs to support businesses with fewer than 100 employees with priority given to those businesses that did not receive a loan or grant through the Federal Paycheck Protection Program or the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program established under the CARES Act and to support businesses that are engaged in the tourism industry, regardless of the number of employees the business has.
3. Grant or loan programs to support the following entities for costs related to assisting businesses during the COVID-19 disaster emergency:
 - a. Certified Economic Development Organizations.
 - b. Local Development Districts.
 - c. Industrial Resource Centers.
 - d. Small Business Development Centers.
4. Assistance to cities, boroughs, incorporated towns, or townships located within the county for response and planning efforts related to COVID-19, including the purchase of personal protective equipment.
5. Behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment services.
6. Nonprofit assistance programs for entities that are an exempt organization.
7. Broadband Internet deployment with priority given to unserved or underserved areas.

This funding is expected to be released by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to Lawrence County by July 15, 2020. Over the next few weeks, the Board of Commissioners will determine an appropriations plan for distributing this funding.

The Lawrence County Regional Chamber of Commerce has provided active support to Lawrence County businesses with regards to state and federal COVID-19 financial relief programs. Specifically, the Regional Chamber of Commerce was able to provide assistance to 54 businesses and non-profits in Lawrence County and helped those businesses secure \$1,721,300.00 in state and federal emergency funding.

Communication Efforts

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners, the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety, and other county-level organizations and departments have been in constant contact with local, state and federal partners. These partners include, but are not limited to, the following entities:

Government Officials and Departments

- Governor Tom Wolf
- U.S. Senator Bob Casey
- U.S. Senator Pat Toomey
- State Senator Elder Vogel

- State Representative Aaron Bernstine
- State Representative Chris Sainato
- Lawrence County Municipal Officials
- Lawrence County School Districts
- Pennsylvania Department of Health
- Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- Pennsylvania Department of State
- Pennsylvania Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
- The Administrative Offices of the Pennsylvania Courts

Lawrence County Community and Nonprofit Organizations

- The Lawrence County Regional Chamber of Commerce
- The Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce
- The Lawrence County Tourist Promotion Agency
- The New Castle Area Transit Authority
- The Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission
- Lawrence County Community Action Partnership
- United Way of Lawrence County
- Arts and Education at the Hoyt
- DON Services

Other Community Partners

- UPMC Jameson
- County Commissioners' Association of Pennsylvania
- The West-Central Job Partnership
- The Pittsburgh Regional Alliance
- The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
- The Northwest Commission
- Local Nursing Homes and Care Facilities
- Local Businesses
- Local Fire Departments and EMS Services

The Board of Commissioners is also working to ensure that the community is kept informed and updated of all COVID-19 developments in Lawrence County. The Board of Commissioners utilizes the following mixed media outlets to distribute information to the community:

- The New Castle News
- The Ellwood City Ledger
- The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
- The Beaver County Times
- The Erie Times-News
- The Pittsburgh Business Times

- CBS Pittsburgh
- ABC Pittsburgh
- 1200 WKST
- 90.5 WESA
- Social Media (Facebook and YouTube)
- The Lawrence County Website

All official actions taken by the Board of Commissioners are livestreamed on YouTube and archived for public consumption.

Employee Policies

The safety of Lawrence County employees is of the utmost concern to the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners and Court Administration. At the same time, the Board of Commissioners has a fiduciary responsibility to Lawrence County taxpayers and must provide responsible financial stewardship of county tax dollars. To this end, the Board of Commissioners facilitated layoffs of non-essential staff from March 23, 2020 to May 29, 2020. The purpose of these layoffs was to minimize the potential of staff to be exposed to COVID-19 while adhering to court orders from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and recommendations by the Governor of Pennsylvania to limit county operations. While non-essential staff were laid off without pay, they received the following benefits:

- All employees continued to receive county-provided healthcare benefits regardless of layoff status.
- Lawrence County covered the cost of the employee contribution to their healthcare plans from the initiation of the layoff to June 4, 2020.
- Contractual perfect attendance bonus requirements were waived until June 30, 2020.
- All employees received normal pay or a compensatory day for the Good Friday and Memorial Day holidays regardless of layoff status.
- The final day for employees to utilize carry-over vacation days has been moved from April 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020.
- All employees continued to accumulate sick and vacation days for the duration of the layoffs.
- Any employee who contracts COVID-19 or is waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test will receive full pay for the duration of their quarantine.

While the Board of Commissioners determined that laid off employees should not receive normal pay as it would be unfair to employees who were considered essential, the county worked to ensure that there were no disruptions in employee healthcare benefits, no violations of the county's contractual obligations to employees, and limited reduction in ancillary benefits due to the COVID-19 pandemic being no fault of county employees. The Department of Human Resources worked with all laid off employees to ensure the receipt of unemployment benefits for the duration of their layoff.

Mitigation Policies for Lawrence County Facilities

The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners and Court Administration have developed and implemented numerous policies to facilitate the safe reopening of the Lawrence County Courthouse and other county-operated facilities. These policies will remain in place until the termination of Lawrence County's Declaration of Disaster Emergency, or at the discretion of the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners.

All public county-operated buildings and most county-owned vehicles have been professionally and thoroughly sanitized by a third-party company.

The Lawrence County Board of Commissioners contracted with The MAD Unit, which provides professional sanitation services, to sanitize the following facilities:

- The Lawrence County Government Center
- The Albert P. Gettings Annex Building
- The Domestic Relations and Adult Probation Building
- The Lawrence County Joint Operations Center
- The Lawrence County Central Court Building
- The Lawrence County Children and Youth Services Building
- All Lawrence County-owned Magisterial Buildings

The MAD Unit also generously provided sanitation services to clean all Lawrence County Sheriff cruisers, as well as vehicles utilized by the Department of Maintenance and the Department of Children and Youth Services. All other county-owned vehicles are scheduled for sanitation.

The Lawrence County Maintenance Department has substantially increased their cleaning protocols and is focusing on sanitizing high-traffic public areas.

The Department of Maintenance has shifted all available manpower to janitorial services and has substantially increased cleaning in public areas of the Lawrence County Government Center and all ancillary buildings. Furthermore, the Department of Maintenance has allocated a larger portion of its FY2020 budget to cleaning materials, such as sanitizing spray and wipes. Public sanitizing stations are available throughout the Lawrence County Government Center with hand sanitizer. Members of the public are encouraged to utilize these stations.

All visitors will undergo a temperatures screening before being permitted to enter county-operated facilities.

Any visitor to any public county-operated facility must undergo a temperature screening before they will be allowed to enter the facility. Any visitor who tests at a temperature of 100.4°F or more will be turned away. This temperature has been determined by Lawrence County medical professionals. For any visitor who is scheduled to appear at a court-related hearing or other proceeding, that proceeding will be rescheduled if a visitor is turned away due to a temperature screening.

Thermometers are being distributed to all department heads to regularly monitor the temperatures of county employees.

As with visitors, county employees will have their temperature taken each day to ensure that employee does not present a medical risk. Any employee who tests at a temperature of 100.4°F or more will be sent home until they can provide a doctor's excuse proclaiming them fit to return to work. The employee will receive normal pay on the day which they are sent home but will be required to utilize sick days until they are cleared to come back to work. After the second day of using sick days, the employee must provide a doctor's excuse to continue utilizing paid sick leave. It is the responsibility of the department heads to ensure their employees are being test for temperature.

Masks will be available at the entrance to county facilities for any visitor who wishes to take one, however masks will not be required for access to most county facilities. Masks are required in Court of Common Pleas and Magisterial facilities, as well as the Lawrence County Correctional Facility.

As the Lawrence County Government Center and other ancillary facilities are generally open to the public, the Board of Commissioners will not limit access to such facilities solely on the virtue of refusing to wear a mask. At the same time, masks will be provided to members of the public at the entrance to county-operated facilities in the event that individuals would like to take one. By order of the President Judge of the Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas, masks will be required when visitors are in judicial facilities on the third floor of the Lawrence County Government Center, the Lawrence County Central Court building, or a Magisterial District building. Furthermore, the Lawrence County Correctional Facility is requiring visitors, employees, and inmates to wear masks as to minimize the potential for exposure to COVID-19 in a contained correctional facility.

Barriers are being installed at public points-of-contact with county offices.

During the 2020 Primary Election, the Lawrence County Board of Elections purchased 70 plexiglass barriers for use at polling precincts. With the conclusion of the election, the Board of Commissioners is repurposing those plexiglass barriers for use in county-operated facilities. The Board of Commissioners and Court Administration are currently installing these barriers in areas of county-facilities where the public and staff interact which are not currently segregated by a glass partition, as well as those areas where staff are in close proximity to other staff.

Lawrence County employees will not be permitted to travel to any county still in the red or yellow phases of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania or comparably restricted counties in other states.

Staff will only be permitted to travel to counties which are in the green phase of the Governor's COVID-19 Plan for Pennsylvania, so as to minimize the potential of infection and an outbreak of COVID-19 as the result of county travel. Necessary court-related functions, public safety functions, and the Lawrence County Department of Children and Youth Services are exempt from this policy. Additional exemptions may be made by the Board of Commissioners.

County Departmental COVID-19 Policies and Remote Services Assessment

- Department Description:** The Lawrence County Assessment Department is responsible for the valuation of real property for ad valorem tax purposes. The department also maintains all real estate and personal records, helps facilitate deed transfers, and reviews existing construction projects within Lawrence County.
- Contact Information:** Chief Assessor: J.R. Hardester
Phone: (724) 656-1938
Email: chardester@co.lawrence.pa.us
- Remote Services:** All assessment information is available online at courthouseonline.com. All online information is free of charge for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- All assessment-related forms and applications are available electronically at co.lawrence.pa.us/departments/assessment-office-lawrence_county/. Completed forms may be emailed to chardester@co.lawrence.pa.us or mailed to the Assessment Department at 430 Court St., New Castle, PA 16101.
- Tax map information is available at co.lawrence.pa.us/departments/assessment-office-lawrence_county/lawrence-county-gis-data/. This information is available free of charge.
- COVID-19 Policies:** For individuals who do not have access to online services, the Assessment Department has installed public computers at the exterior of the office to limit in-person public interaction with staff.
- While field assessments will resume starting June 1, field assessors will be required to wear masks and adhere to all CDC and DoH guidelines when interacting with the public.
- Board of Assessment Appeal hearings will be conducted in-person and members of the public will be able to attend such hearings. However, all hearings will be livestreamed and members of the public are encouraged to participate remotely.

Board of Commissioners

Department Description: The legislative and executive arm of the Lawrence County government is the three member Board of Commissioners. The management of all county property and the preparation, adoption, and execution of the annual budget rests with the commissioners. The commissioners name all department heads, as well as members of the various county boards and authorities. Each member also serves on the county's Salary Board, Retirement Board, and Prison Board.

Contact Information:

Board Chairman: Morgan Boyd
Phone: (724) 656-2178
Email: mboyd@co.lawrence.pa.us

Commissioner: Dan Vogler
Phone: (724) 656-2163
Email: dvogler@co.lawrence.pa.us

Commissioner: Loretta Spielvogel
Phone: (724) 656-2165
Email: lspielvogel@co.lawrence.pa.us

County Administrator: Joe Venasco
Phone: (724) 656-2175
Email: jvenasco@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: While members of the public are able to attend in-person board meetings, public meetings of the Board of Commissioners are livestreamed through YouTube, as are public meetings of the Salary Board, Retirement Board, and Prison Board. The livestream can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG7mDgF4JjTmsk9_2A2P0Zg.¹

Public comment for all board meetings may be submitted electronically to mboyd@co.lawrence.pa.us or through mail to 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101. Remote comments will be recorded for the record for the duration of the county's disaster declaration.

¹ The livestream will only be available when the Board of Commissioners meets at the Lawrence County Government Center.

Court of Common Pleas

Department Description: The Lawrence County Maintenance Department is responsible for the upkeep of all county-owned property. The Maintenance Department also oversees the repair and routine maintenance associated with county-owned bridges and manages county liquid fuels appropriations.

Contact Information: Director of Children and Youth Services: John Bout
Phone: (724) 656-2138
Email: fpiccari@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Most meetings can be conducted over-the-phone or through teleconference.

COVID-19 Policies: The Maintenance Department has shifted the focus of non-custodial staff to custodial services. For the duration of the county's declaration of disaster emergency, the top priority of all maintenance staff is to sanitize and thoroughly clean high-traffic areas of county-owned facilities.

The Maintenance Department is coordinating third-party sanitation services for county-owned facility deep cleaning protocols on an as-needed basis.

In conjunction with the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety, the Maintenance Department is responsible for the procurement of PPE and other COVID-19-related equipment for county-owned facilities.

District Attorney

Department Description: The mission of the Lawrence County District Attorney's Office is to pursue justice and protect the people of Lawrence County and the State of Pennsylvania by aggressively and fairly prosecuting those who violate the law.

Contact Information: District Attorney: Joshua Lamancusa
Phone: (724) 656-1915
Email: jlamancusa@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: The following hotlines are available for individuals wishing to submit an anonymous tip:

- Crime: (855) 896-6476
- Animal Abuse: (855) 870-8081
- Drug: (855) 564-6116

Anonymous tips may also be submitted online at
<https://lawrencecountydistrictattorneyoffice.com/anonymous-tips/>.

Domestic Relations

- Department Description:** The Lawrence County Domestic Relations Office is responsible for working with families to establish and collect support for children and spouses.
- Contact Information:** Director of Domestic Relations: Tracy Hromyak
Phone: (724) 656-2179
Email: tracyhromyak@pases.com
- Remote Services:** Child support payments, direct deposit information updates, and in-county complaint filing can be done at www.humanservices.state.pa.us/csww/home_controller.aspx?Preference=Desktop&owner=client/.
For out-of-state or out-of-county complaints, you can contact the Domestic Relations Office at (724) 656-2122.
- COVID-19 Policies:** When staff members from the Domestic Relations Office are interacting with the public at an off-site location, they will be required to wear masks and adhere to all CDC and DoH guidelines related to social distancing.

Human Resources

Department Description: The Lawrence County Human Resources Department handles many of the matters pertaining to the employees of Lawrence County, such as benefits management, union relations, and policy compliance.

Contact Information: Director of Human Resources: Karen King
Phone: (724) 656-2164
Email: kking@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: All Lawrence County job postings are available through <https://www.indeed.com/> and are posted on the county's website at http://co.lawrence.pa.us/employment-lawrence_county/.

An online employment application can be found at http://co.lawrence.pa.us/employment-lawrence_county/ and online employment applications can be submitted to lcapps@co.lawrence.pa.us.

Job interviews may be conducted through Zoom, Skype, over-the-phone, or other remote means.

Maintenance

Department Description: The Lawrence County Maintenance Department is responsible for the upkeep of all county-owned property. The Maintenance Department also oversees the repair and routine maintenance associated with county-owned bridges and manages county liquid fuels appropriations.

Contact Information: Director of Maintenance: Frank Piccari
Phone: (724) 656-2138
Email: fpiccari@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Responses to maintenance-related RFPs can be submitted through mail to 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101.

COVID-19 Policies: The Maintenance Department has shifted the focus of non-custodial staff to custodial services. For the duration of the county's declaration of disaster emergency, the top priority of all maintenance staff is to sanitize and thoroughly clean high-traffic areas of county-owned facilities.

The Maintenance Department is coordinating third-party sanitation services for county-owned facility deep cleaning protocols on an as-needed basis.

In conjunction with the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety, the Maintenance Department is responsible for the procurement of PPE and other COVID-19-related equipment for county-owned facilities.

Mental Health and Developmental Services

Department Description: The Lawrence County Department of Mental Health and Developmental Services coordinates services for those residents who have mental health issues, as well as those residents with behavioral or developmental issues.

Contact Information: MHDS Administrator: Scott Baldwin
Phone: (724) 856-7207
Email: sbaldwin@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: BHRS and ID intakes have transitioned to tele-conferencing and Zoom sessions. State-level regulations governing county-level mental health services currently require all MHDS services to be provided via teleconference.

Any necessary meetings with mental health providers can be conducted over teleconference or Zoom session.

COVID-19 Policies: In keeping with state-level regulations relating to county mental health departments, access to the Lawrence County Department of Mental Health and Development Services is currently limited to MHDS staff, as well as the county Maintenance Department.

Planning and Community Development

Department Description: The Lawrence County Department of Planning and Community Development provides professional planning and technical assistance to Lawrence County's 27 municipalities, including comprehensive land use planning, ordinance development, land development reviews, and grant assistance. The department also supervises the county's appropriation of CDBG funds and maintains county parks.

Contact Information: Director of Planning: Amy McKinney
Phone: (724) 656-2193
Email: amckinney@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Lawrence County Planning Commission meetings are currently conducted over Zoom. Any member of the public wishing to participate in these meetings should contact the Department of Planning and Community Development.

While all public meetings for the Lawrence County Redevelopment Authority, the Lawrence County Municipal Authority, and the Lawrence County Land Bank are being conducted in-person with public access, members of the public are encouraged to participate using the county's livestream at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG7mDgF4JjTmsk9_2A2P0Zg.²

All county GIS maps are available at <http://lawcopa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d57d06f987304d3e9af0a71dc911e78e> and are free of charge to members of the public.

COVID-19 Policies: When staff members from the Department of Planning and Community Development are doing site visits or interacting with the public at an off-site location, they will be required to wear masks and adhere to all CDC and DoH guidelines related to social distancing.

² The livestream will only be available when county boards and authorities meet at the Lawrence County Government Center.

Prothonotary

Department Description: The Lawrence County Prothonotary maintains accurate indices, case dockets, record keeping security, and provides user-friendly access to the same for the public. The Prothonotary also maintains all criminal records for the Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas and handles all marriage licenses, adoption records, and first and final accounts and petitions for incapacitated persons. In Lawrence County, the Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts, and Orphans' Court Administrator are consolidated into one elected office.

Contact Information: Prothonotary: Jodi Klabon-Esoldo
Phone: (724) 656-2143
Email: jesoldo@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Legal filings may be submitted by mail, along with the requisite filing fee, to the Prothonotary at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of documents and receipt.

Genealogical searches can be processed through the mail. Please send all pertinent information, along with a money order or certified check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Prothonotary at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101.

COVID-19 Policies: All marriage license applications will be processed by appointment-only. Please call the Prothonotary's office at (724) 656-2440 to schedule an appointment.

Passport applications will be facilitated by appointment-only. Please call the Prothonotary's office at (724) 656-2126 to schedule an appointment.

Public Defender

Department Description: The Lawrence County Public Defender's Office is responsible for representing indigent persons in juvenile delinquency proceedings, critical pretrial identification proceedings, habeas corpus proceedings, Court of Common Pleas trials, Superior Court and Pennsylvania Supreme Court appeals, post-conviction proceedings, preliminary hearings, criminal extradition proceedings, PFA contempt hearings, probation and parole proceedings, and other situations where constitutionally required.

Contact Information: Public Defender: Larry Keith
Phone: (724) 656-1904
Email: lkeith@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Answers to frequently asked questions related to the Public Defender's Office can be found at <https://co.lawrence.pa.us/departments/public-defender-lawrence-county/>.

Certain court proceedings are being conducted through Zoom and other teleconference means, at the discretion of the presiding judge.

Client consultations can be conducted over-the-phone or through other electronic means.

COVID-19 Policies: The Public Defender is not accepting walk-in traffic at this time. The office can be reached at (724) 656-1902 to schedule a telephonic interview to determine if an individual meets the required standards of indigence to be represented by the Public Defender.

In-person meetings and court appearances are by appointment-only and will only occur when absolutely necessary to facilitate the effective representation of the client or mandated by the Court of Common Pleas.

Clients are instructed to only bring themselves to court appearances unless instructed otherwise by the court. Juveniles are asked to attend all events with only one parent or guardian.

Public Safety

Department Description: The Lawrence County Department of Public Safety’s mission is to protect the citizens, visitors, property, and environment of Lawrence County through establishing a program of planning, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery to natural and man-made disasters in Lawrence County. The Department of Public Safety is also responsible for Lawrence County’s 9-1-1 dispatch center.

Contact Information: Director of Public Safety: Jeff Parish
Phone: (724) 202-7101
Email: jparish@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Supply requests for PPE and other protective materials can be forwarded to the Director of Public Safety by email at jparish@co.lawrence.pa.us or by phone at (724) 202-7101.

COVID-19 Policies: The Department of Public Safety is the primary department tasked with overseeing Lawrence County’s response to the COVID-19 crisis. As such, the offices of the Department of Public Safety will be closed to the public for the foreseeable future to ensure the safety and security of Lawrence County’s emergency response personnel.

The Department of Public Safety is actively working with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Health, and our other state-level partners to secure PPE and other protective materials for emergency purposes.

The Department of Public Safety is also the primary department tasked with securing emergency grant funding and reimbursements for Lawrence County’s COVID-19 response.

Recycling and Solid Waste

Department Description: The Lawrence-Mercer Counties Department of Recycling and Solid Waste is a cooperative effort between Lawrence and Mercer Counties to deliver comprehensive waste management and recycling programming.

Contact Information: Director of Recycling and Solid Waste: Jerry Zona
Phone: (724) 658-6926
Email: jzona@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Any public questions related to Lawrence-Mercer Counties' recycling and solid waste policies can be directed to the Department of Recycling and Solid Waste over-the-phone at (724) 658-6926.

COVID-19 Policies: Countywide cleanup programs and recycling events have been temporarily postponed.

When staff members from the Department of Recycling and Solid Waste are doing site visits or interacting with the public at an off-site location, they will be required to wear masks and adhere to all CDC and DoH guidelines related to social distancing.

Register and Recorder

Department Description: The Lawrence County Register of Wills and Recorder of Deeds combines two elected row officer positions into one department. The Register of Wills has jurisdiction of the Probate of Wills and the Grant of Letters to properly qualified individuals who meet the requirements of the Probate, Estates, and Fiduciaries Code. The Recorder of Deeds handles the recording, protection, preservation, and reproduction of legal documents related to real estate in Lawrence County. Both positions are held by the Lawrence County Register and Recorder.

Contact Information: Register and Recorder: Janet Kalajainen
Phone: (724) 656-2128
Email: jkalajainen@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Online property deed searches can be conducted at <http://sur.ly/o/countyfusion1.kofiletech.us/AA000014>.
Online Register of Wills services can be found at <https://countyfusion1.kofiletech.us/countyweb/login.do?countyname=LawrenceWills>.

You may record your documents electronically at the following websites:

- www.simplifile.com
- www.erecording.com
- www.indecomm.net
- www.goepn.com

A dropbox has been provided at the entrance to the Lawrence County Courthouse to drop off estate filings, inheritance tax payments, and other necessary documents to the Register and Recorder.

Video conferencing is available for probate estates.

COVID-19 Policies: Due to the high volume of probate estate processing, all probate estate functions will be handled through video conferencing for the safety of all staff and patrons.

Sheriff

Department Description:	The Lawrence County Sheriff is an officer of the courts. The Sheriff serves writs, processes, orders, and notices issued by the courts. The office also takes bail in civil cases and transports prisoners to their places of confinement, as well as issues firearm licenses to members of the public. Additionally, the Sheriff is responsible for the execution of various judgements of the courts, including the sale of real estate and personal property.
Contact Information:	Sheriff: Perry Quahliero Phone: (724) 656-5120 Email: pquahliero@co.lawrence.pa.us
Remote Services:	Applications for a license to carry firearms can be submitted by mail to the Sheriff at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101. The application form may be found at http://co.lawrence.pa.us/gov/sheriff/application-to-carry-a-firearm-in-pennsylvania/ .
COVID-19 Policies:	Due to the high volume of applications for a firearm license, the Sheriff is taking appointments to process those applications. To make an appointment with the Sheriff for a firearm license, please call the Sheriff's office at (724) 656-1936. Walk-in service will not be available.

Tax Claim

Department Description: The Lawrence County Tax Claim Office collects all delinquent property taxes for Lawrence County, as well as delinquent property taxes for municipalities and school districts who have not contracted with a third-party service for delinquent tax collection.

Contact Information: Tax Claim Director: Artishia Foster
Phone: (724) 656-2185
Email: taxclaim@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Delinquent property taxes can be mailed to the Lawrence County Tax Claim Office at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101. Payments must be in the form of a cashier's check or money order. Registration for the Lawrence County Judicial Sale can be done over-the-phone at (724) 656-2125.

COVID-19 Policies: The Lawrence County Judicial Sale has been postponed until June 26, 2020. Individuals who wish to participate in this sale must register for the sale with the Tax Claim Office from June 22, 2020 to June 25, 2020.

In an effort to promote social distancing, the Tax Claim Office is actively searching for a larger location to hold its Judicial Sale. Any change in location will be posted on the county website at co.lawrence.pa.us/departments/tax-claim-office/.

Treasurer

Department Description: The Lawrence County Treasurer is the official custodian of all county funds and the chief county tax collector. Additionally, the Treasurer is responsible for the issuance of state licenses related to hunting, small games of chance, bingo, and raffles.

Contact Information: Treasurer: Richard Rapone
Phone: (724) 656-2123
Email: rlrapone@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Payment of Lawrence County property taxes can be done online at co.lawrence.pa.us/taxes or through the secure dropbox located at the Lawrence County Courthouse.

Applications for dog licenses can be made online at padoglicense.com, through mail to the Treasurer's Office at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101, or through the secure dropbox located at the Lawrence County Courthouse. A dog license application form can be found at <http://co.lawrence.pa.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2020DogLicenseApplication.pdf>.

Applications for small games of chance and bingo licenses can be submitted through mail to the Treasurer's Office at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101 or through the secure dropbox located at the Lawrence County Courthouse. A small games of chance application can be found at <http://co.lawrence.pa.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Small-Games-of-Chance.pdf>. A bingo license application can be found at <http://co.lawrence.pa.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Bingo-Application.pdf>.

Tax certifications and duplicate bills can be processed electronically at <https://epaygov.com/tax/lawrco/>.

Veterans' Affairs

Department Description: The mission of the Lawrence County Department of Veterans' Affairs is to aid and assist all Lawrence County veterans and their families with obtaining local, state, and federal benefits. The Lawrence County Department of Veterans' Affairs is committed to advocate for veterans and provide quality services and programs for veterans and their families.

Contact Information: Director of Veterans' Affairs: Jesse Putnam³
Phone: (724) 656-2180
Email: jputnam@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: The majority of claims can be processed over-the-phone or through video conference. Please contact the office at (724) 656-2180 if you would like to process a claim through remote means.

Military records can be requested online at www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records.

You can enroll for VA Healthcare at www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/.

COVID-19 Policies: Due to the high volume of calls received by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, we request that any in-person meetings are by appointment-only.

³ Director Putnam is currently on active duty military assignment. Additional office staff are available to assist with any claims or questions from veterans and their families.

Voter Services

Department Description: The Lawrence County Department of Voter Services handles all voter registrations, including new registrations, changes to existing registrations, transfers to other counties, mandatory mailings, permanent record management, and report processing. The office also facilitates all elections in Lawrence County from ballot preparation to vote count certification.

Contact Information: Director of Voter Services: Ed Allison
Phone: (724) 656-2161
Email: lcvote@co.lawrence.pa.us

Remote Services: Voter registration, change of party, address changes, and name changes can be done online at www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/pages/voterregistrationapplication.aspx or by mailing your voter registration application to the Department of Voter Services at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101.⁴

Absentee or mail-in ballots can be requested at <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/OnlineAbsenteeApplication/#/OnlineAbsenteeBegin> or by mailing your completed application to the Department of Voter Services at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101.⁵

Voters can submit their absentee or mail-in ballots by mail to the Department of Voter Services at 430 Court Street, New Castle, PA 16101 or through the Voter Services dropbox at the entrance to the Lawrence County Courthouse.⁶

COVID-19 Policies: The Board of Elections has consolidated certain voting precincts in Lawrence County due to a shortage of election workers. The full list of consolidated precincts can be viewed online at <https://co.lawrence.pa.us/departments/voter-registration-and-elections-lawrence-county/>.

Due to the high volume of mail-in and absentee ballots, the Board of Elections has authorized a pre-canvas of all mail-in and absentee ballots at 7:00am on June 2, 2020.

⁴ The deadline to register to vote in the 2020 Primary Election has passed.

⁵ The deadline to request a mail-in or absentee ballot for the 2020 Primary Election has passed.

⁶ Absentee or mail-in ballots must be received by 8:00pm on June 2, 2020 to be counted in the 2020 Primary Election.