



## **Columbia County Board of Supervisors**

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Friday, May 1, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FROM: Chairman Matt Murell

### **37 NOW POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AT BARNWELL**

Thirty-seven residents of The Grand at Barnwell in Valatie have now tested positive for COVID-19, Columbia County Department of Health Director Jack Mabb said Friday. "Barnwell is being proactive with testing for the virus as this situation develops – we do anticipate more positive cases," said Mabb. "The positive cases are no longer limited to one unit of the facility. The home is making an effort to isolate those who are positive."

The first in-county nursing facility to experience a widespread outbreak of COVID-19, Pine Haven Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Philmont, has drawn kudos from State and Columbia County Departments of Health for its response to the virus. "Things appear to have leveled off at Pine Haven as they seem to have gotten a handle on their situation," said Mabb.

"Barnwell is the second Columbia County nursing home to be seriously affected by COVID-19," he added. Columbia County DOH and New York State DOH will continue to monitor the situation at The Grand at Barnwell.

Barnwell staff declined to comment.

### ***COVID-19 COUNTYWIDE***

As of Friday, 210 Columbia County residents had tested positive for COVID-19, out of 1,391 administered tests to those exhibiting symptoms of the disease, Director Mabb reported

"Testing continues to show that one in seven tested are coming back positive," he said. "That's been the case for weeks. It's a useful number for us at the DOH to contemplate as we continue to work to understand the extent of the disease in our community. Numbers seem to vary as you look at counties around the state, but this is the number that we currently have to work with in Columbia County."

### ***FUNERAL SERVICES***

As a reminder, said County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell on Friday, funeral homes are allowed to be open and services conducted "provided they follow the State guidelines." For further assistance with COVID-19 deaths, see "Available Services" below.

### ***AVAILABLE SERVICES***

**Family Assistance Network:** As part of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, Columbia County Emergency Management

has asked leaders in the human services and spiritual areas of our community for help, Director of Emergency Management David W. Harrison, Jr., said Saturday. The individuals were asked to form a Family Assistance Network to provide information to assist county residents who may be dealing with someone close to them who passed away as a result of the COVID-19 virus.

Information on where someone can reach out for help is posted on various websites, including the Columbia County website and Emergency Management Facebook page.

**Hotline for Elderly and Vulnerable:** Columbia County Sheriff David Bartlett has established a hotline for the elderly and vulnerable in our county, including those with medical conditions or are disabled, who would welcome a deputy checking on their well-being on a daily basis. The number for the hotline is 518-828-0601, extension 1400.

### *DONATION INFORMATION*

**Monetary:** Monetary donations intended for the purchase of coronavirus testing kits and much-needed equipment for emergency responders, medical personnel, and others on the front lines of the coronavirus fight are advised to send a check in care of Columbia County, with coronavirus noted in the memo field. The check be sent to the Columbia County Controller's Office, 401 State Street, Hudson, NY 12534. All money received is being placed in a dedicated account.

**PPE:** Those wishing to make donations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as N95 masks, face shields, and gowns, are advised to contact the Emergency Management Office at 518-828-1212. If no one answers, leave a message and someone will return the call.

**Food:** Donations should be directed to the county Office for the Aging (518-828-4258) and local food pantries.

**Masks:** Those interested in donating masks should contact Austerlitz Town Supervisor and county Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Rob Lagonia at [rlagonia@austerlitzny.com](mailto:rlagonia@austerlitzny.com). "It doesn't matter whether it's five or 100, we need every one," said Lagonia, who recommends that those wishing to help out with mask donations consult CDC guidelines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Currently, Ocean State Job Lot stores are offering free fabric for use in the construction of masks in a "Mask Fabric For Free" campaign. Visit any Ocean State location for the fabric, which is said to be of a high-quality cotton/polyester blend available in two sizes. Further information is available on the Ocean State Job Lot website. Jo-Ann Fabrics and Crafts is offering free mask kits. Those seeking to acquire a kit are advised to order online for curbside pickup. The Greenport store telephone number is 518-828-2621. Current store hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### *SELF-ISOLATION*

Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell continues to urge anyone migrating from outside Columbia County to self-quarantine for 14 days upon their arrival. "Everyone should consider they are a carrier of the coronavirus," said Murell.

### *DISCLAIMER*

It is the county's intention to issue accurate information regarding the coronavirus situation under conditions that can change by the minute. For the most up-to-date, accurate information, visit the County Department of Health's website at <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/home/coronavirus-covid-19> or their Facebook page @: <https://www.facebook.com/Columbia-County-Department-of-Health-469399129790791/>. The state's coronavirus website, with up-to-the-minute information, can be located at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

The county will issue a daily press release on the coronavirus situation every afternoon at 4. The releases can be found on the Columbia County website and the Facebook pages of the Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Management Office.