

MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR JENSEN AND ASSEMBLY
FROM: KARL HAGERMAN, PETERSBURG BOROUGH EOC IC 
SUBJECT: LOCAL HEALTH MANDATES FOR CONSIDERATION
DATE: 4/16/2020
CC: STEPHEN GIESBRECHT, BOROUGH MANAGER
DEBRA THOMPSON, BOROUGH CLERK

As the Assembly may know, I had been requesting a change to the State's Health Mandate #12 in regard to the Small community qualifications that allow smaller municipalities to enact additional measures for protecting their citizens from the impacts of a coronavirus outbreak. On April 11th, the State issued amendments to the Mandate #12 attachment B that dictates the qualifications for small communities. The State amendments do not allow Petersburg to be considered a small community and reaffirmed conditions (population level and hospital status) that put Petersburg into a category that requires we follow State mandates for travel and social distancing as written.

The EOC and Petersburg Medical Center (PMC) desire actions to further protect our citizens and mitigate an outbreak of COVID-19 that could quickly overwhelm local health care resources and put our vulnerable population at risk of serious illness and death. To that end, and with the assistance of the Borough Attorney, I have been working on drafting mandates that do not conflict with State Health Orders but serve to protect our population to a greater degree than the State has allowed. Below is an explanation of the mandates up for consideration at today's meeting with some background and justification for requesting that they be passed.

Face Coverings Mandate: State Health Alert #10 recommends facial coverings whenever possible to prevent the spread or transmission of the coronavirus. Masking protocols and policies have been adopted by the PMC, the School District and the Borough. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is also recommending that facial coverings be utilized whenever social distancing cannot be met. The local mandate will require that people in Petersburg shall wear a mask or facial covering when inside a building open to the public or working around others inside, and in outdoor situations where social distancing cannot be met. It is an order to our population that will prevent droplets from our mouths and noses from being shared with others and spreading the virus. The face coverings mandate will formalize the Borough's desire to protect our citizens to the maximum degree possible and above the current recommendations of the State of Alaska.

Submission of Travel Plans: State Mandates #10.1 and 12 require essential businesses to submit plans detailing efforts to protect communities while they provide essential service across the state. The state mandates acknowledge the need for essential businesses to plan for meeting social distancing requirements in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, but it does not allow for local municipalities to have access to the plans that have been provided to the State. This local mandate will require that any essential business that must travel to Petersburg to provide essential service must submit their state travel plan to the Borough for our review and comment. This information is important to understand a company's policies that will be used to protect Petersburg's residents while they perform their work.

Harbor Facilities Access: Cruise ship traffic poses a large threat to Petersburg residents if passengers or crew are allowed to enter into the community from the harbor. The Center for Disease Control has issued a No Sail Order on ships with capacity of 250 passengers or larger. As you know, this does not account

for the ships that visit Petersburg in the tourism season. While Petersburg cannot mandate a quarantine for these persons, we do own and can control their access to our harbor docks. This mandate will require that any cruise ship with a capacity of 25 passengers or more, must contact Petersburg's Health Officer prior to arrival so that a determination can be made about the travel history of the passengers and the health of those on board so that permission to utilize Borough docks can be granted or denied. This mandate will serve to protect the residents of Petersburg based upon medical reasoning and actions by Dr. Mark Tuccillo, the Borough's Health Officer.

The Unified Command for the Borough and the PMC recommends the passage of all three mandates in order to protect the residents of Petersburg from the COVID-19 coronavirus. Unified Commanders Hagerman and Hofstetter will be in attendance at the Assembly meeting to answer any questions.