



# Office of the Mayor

City Hall

New Brunswick, New Jersey

## Media Release

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**For Immediate Release**

For Further Information Contact:

Bert Baron

732-745-5004

[bbaron@cityofnewbrunswick.org](mailto:bbaron@cityofnewbrunswick.org)

## Temporary Worker Furloughs Initiated as City Adjusts to COVID-19 Closures

**NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ** (April 17, 2020) - In preparation for an anticipated significant drop in revenue resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak, the City of New Brunswick has initiated temporary employee furloughs in those departments whose programs were discontinued as a result of the closure of the facilities where those services were provided.

These furloughs affect hourly, part-time and full-time workers whose positions involve direct non-emergency services to residents, including Youth Services System, Recreation, Senior Resource Center and Free Public Library. The facilities for each of these services have been closed in response to the State's ban on all public gatherings and non-essential activities.

Efforts were made by the City to arrange for any employee who has the capability to work from home and carry out their daily responsibilities remotely to do so and remain on the payroll.

While numerous employees across several City departments and divisions have made the successful transition to the work-from-home model to help maintain social distancing requirements, not every work function can be carried out remotely.

The furloughed workers were notified by mail with letters from New Brunswick Mayor Jim Cahill and City Administrator Daniel Torrasi.

Mayor Cahill explained the reasons why the furloughs were being explored, citing his responsibility to provide essential services to City residents and business owners, many of whom had lost their jobs, closed their businesses, or seen drastic loss in income, while making sure the City's taxpayers get the services that they are paying for.

The Mayor also mentioned those who would be furloughed would retain their seniority with the City and access to medical benefits.

Cahill also indicated the timing of the decision would allow furloughed employees to take advantage of recent changes to unemployment insurance laws that would assure that most workers would be receiving the same amount of income as they did before the furloughs.

"It just makes sense to save money now while these services are not being provided so we will have the funds to fill these positions when things get back up and running," said Mayor Cahill. "By taking this action now, our goal is to avoid any permanent loss of employment while protecting the employees' present income levels."

In the accompanying letter from Torrasi, those furloughed were given specific details about when the furloughs would take effect, but also what to expect when the City determines the end of the furlough and the process for employees to return to work.

The remaining staff of each of these departments continues to reply to emails and phone calls, and assist with access to the online resources.

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The City of New Brunswick is the county seat for Middlesex County and home of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the world headquarters for Johnson & Johnson and two globally-renowned hospitals. New Brunswick is an educationally-focused City as well as "The Healthcare City."

All of New Brunswick's developments provide seamless access to major transportation lines and an extensive dining scene and an arts district, located in its bustling downtown. The City is focused not only on bringing in new residents and businesses, but also on improving the lives of every one of its residents.

For more information, please visit [www.cityofnewbrunswick.org](http://www.cityofnewbrunswick.org).