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***Press Release* –Portsmouth Ready to Keep Citizens Informed and Help Those in Need**

*Portsmouth* – *March 19, 2020* – The Town of Portsmouth, RI understands the need to provide current and accurate information to its citizens during the COVID-19 situation.  The town has activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to coordinate the needs of its citizens during these extraordinary times.

As part of this operation, the Town has set up a call-in center at the EOC to handle inquiries related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Portsmouth residents may call (401) 643-0379 seven days a week, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for general inquiries related to the current health situation or for accessing municipal services, which are available by phone or online.

Residents may also email requests or inquiries to covid@portsmouthri.com. The Call-in Center is set up for general inquiries. If you are experiencing a true medical emergency, you should call 9-1-1 for assistance. If anyone is experiencing cold or flu symptoms, they are encouraged to call their primary care physician or an urgent care center for help or direction.

The town will do its best to provide information on the current crisis. In order to disseminate local information to as many as possible, the town has established local information on the town website, its NOTIFY ME system, and social media as follows:

* **Town Website:** www.PortsmouthRI.com – See the COVID-19 Alert at the top and the “Spotlight” section that will direct users to other town web pages with specific COVID-19 information.
* **Notify Me®:**  Sign up for automatic e-mail updates. On the town web home page click the “Notify Me®” button and choose your topic
* **Facebook:** Log on to the town Emergency Management Facebook page (Portsmouth Emergency)
* **Twitter:** Log on to the Portsmouth Emergency Twitter feed - @PortsmoutEmerg and use Hashtag #COVID02871 for Portsmouth-specific tweets
* **Phone:** The Emergency Operations Center phone number is 401-643-0379. A volunteer is ready to assist you. If you cannot get through, use email. We will get back to you.
* **Email:** Email COVID@PortsmouthRI.com and your message will be routed to the appropriate town staff person to help.

If you or loved ones have any special needs, please register with the RI Special Needs Registry (https://health.ri.gov/emergency/about/specialneedsregistry/ )

As always, in an emergency, dial 9-1-1.