



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2020

City of Gloucester Offers Grocery Shopping Guidance

--Requests public abide by store rules and City guidance

--Promotes social distancing and personal responsibility

GLOUCESTER, Mass. (April 1, 2020) – Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken and Public Health Director Karin Carroll would like to provide guidance and suggestions to residents about grocery shopping amid concerns surrounding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Yesterday, Governor Charlie Baker extended the “Stay at Home” advisory which encourages everyone to restrict social interactions to essential activities, such as getting food, medicine and gas until at least May 4. Residents have called, emailed or messaged the Mayor about their worries around shopping, their shopping concerns and comments about their own shopping experience.

Our supermarkets are providing an essential service to our community during this public health emergency. We know for many going to the grocery store is one of the only times they leave their home. Additionally, eating well is a crucial component of staying healthy, even if getting the food can be stressful. The best way to protect yourself while shopping is to limit person-to-person contact by keeping a physical distance from other people and avoid touching things as much as possible.

Mayor Romeo Theken said, “We appreciate all our local supermarkets and their commitment to this City. Our sincere thanks to all those employees working to provide this service. Let’s all be respectful of each other and the rules in place to ensure everyone’s safety.”

Practices in Place at Gloucester stores

We are in frequent contact with our supermarkets and are confident that our Gloucester stores are working in earnest to comply with social distancing guidelines, to maintain a high level of sanitation and to ensure employees hygiene.

In Gloucester, all our supermarkets have implemented the following:

- Markings at the registers to avoid crowding - please look for tape on the floors for social distance guidance at registers;
- Wipes available to clean carts upon entry;
- Constant cleaning through-out the day of high traffic and touch-point areas;
- Special shopping hours for the senior and at risk community;
- In-Store signage detailing the CDC's safety measures;
- Adjusted store hours for cleaning and stocking; and
- Hand washing and hand sanitizing requirements of all staff.

Shopping Guidance and Considerations

The Gloucester Health Department and the Mayor's Office encourage the following regarding grocery shopping:

- Minimize shopping trips and shop during off peak hours;
- Plan ahead and consider delivery;
- When possible, go alone to limit household exposure and reduce the number of people in stores;
- Clean your shopping cart or basket – specifically the handles – with your own disinfectant wipes or wipes provided by the store;
- Make a paper list (the less you can touch personal items the better);
- Respect quantity limits of select, high-demand items (like hand sanitizers and household cleaners) to help ensure more of your neighbors can find the products they need;
- Please respect other customers and keep a 6' distance; and
- Please be patient.

Mayor Romeo Theken said, "We all have a responsibility to keep each other and our community safe. Unfortunately, not everyone is going to be respectful of social distancing. If you see a crowded aisle, skip it or wait for people to leave."

Dedicated Shopping Hours

Market Basket, Shaw's and Stop & Shop have implemented "High Risk and Senior Shopping Hours".

Dedicated shopping hours are:

- Market Basket hours are 6 a.m. – 7 a.m. daily.
- Shaw's hours are 6 a.m. – 7 a.m. Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday; 6 a.m. – 9 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday.
- Stop & Shop hours are 6:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. daily.

Residents over 70 years of age or anyone with underlying health conditions, who are considered at high-risk when exposed to COVID-19, should limit social interactions with other

people as much as possible. We encourage our seniors and high-risk individuals to have family or friends go to the store for them.

Mayor Romeo Theken said, "Please respect these dedicated shopping hours, which are meant to protect our community's most vulnerable individuals who have no other option but to go to the store."

Pick-Up/Delivery Options

If you can afford to, it's best to order food online. Delivery services dramatically reduce your contact with other people. You pay online, items are packaged and the food is left outside your door. Currently there are delays for many delivery services so plan ahead.

Reusable Bags

As a reminder, reusable shopping bags have been banned for use at stores during the coronavirus outbreak and local bans on single-use plastic bags have been suspended.

About The City of Gloucester, Massachusetts

America's oldest seaport, the City of Gloucester is known throughout the world as an authentic, working waterfront community, a place of spectacular natural beauty, and home to a diverse population of more than 30,000 residents. Its sharp focus on economic development has helped build its reputation as the ideal location to live, work, and play. An important center for the fishing industry, Gloucester is also proud of its vibrant cultural life and rich art heritage. Gloucester is a destination for thousands of visitors who visit the harbor and its beaches during the summer months. The City will be celebrating its 400th Anniversary in 2023. For more information please visit www.gloucester-ma.gov.

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