



PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
May 27, 2020

Board Chairman, John Nicholson would like to remind Lee County citizens that county services are continuing through the COVID-19 pandemic – albeit differently than normal. *“I want to commend the Lee County Department Heads for the creative ways they have modified day-to-day operations to keep the public and staff safe, while still continuing to provide necessary services to the public.”* Nicholson said recently. He encourages citizens to call county offices prior to coming, as some buildings and/or departments may be closed to the public. *“Departments have individually modified their business practices to provide essential services, so your best bet is to call ahead.”* Nicholson added.

Contact information and specific types of services available from various county departments can be found at www.leecountyil.com. The following is a brief overview of current practices in various county departments.

During its building closure, the **Animal Control** department is continuing to provide services via phone, email, mail, and fax, and is responding to animal welfare and stray dog complaints. When out in the community, staff is following CDC guidelines including social distancing and wearing masks. Pet owners are encouraged to contact their veterinary clinic regarding pet vaccinations that are due. **Phone: 815-284-3833.**

The **Assessment Office** is conducting all business via phone, email or mail. The office has modified exemption application procedures to the extent allowable by law to facilitate the process and minimize the necessity for in-person visits during the pandemic. Property owners are encouraged to go on-line for forms and applications. Property owners are encouraged to phone or email questions. **Phone: 815-288-4483.**

The **Board Chairman’s Office** is fully staffed and continues to answer phone calls, send and receiving mail, and respond to emails. The office is conducting monthly meeting through electronic phone, video, and emailing means. **Phone: 815-288-5676**

The **Circuit Clerk’s Office** is staffed at reduced levels, but is responding to phone calls and e-mail requests as they are received. E-filing is still available 24/7 and staff is current with accepting documents that have been electronically filed. Payments on court cases can be made on line at www.citepayusa.com. Approved forms are available at www.illinoiscourts.gov. **Phone: 815-284-5235**

The **Clerk and Recorder’s Office** staff is available to assist you via phone or email. Vital records can be obtained by mail or ordered online at www.leecountyil.com. Marriage license applications are being done by appointment only. Any documents for recording, payment of delinquent taxes or taxing district



documents can be filed by mailing to: Lee County Clerk & Recorder, P.O. Box 329, Dixon, IL 61021. **Phone: 815-288-3309**

The **Health Department** continues to provide Maternal & Child/Women's Health services curbside by appointment. Services will be expanded gradually beginning June 1. Several staff are working in the county emergency operations center. Others are doing COVID-19 contact tracing and monitoring residents who are in quarantine or isolation. Phone messages are checked hourly M-F and directed to the appropriate staff person. **Phone: 815-284-3371**

The **Highway Department** is operating at full staff and is fully functional. The office remains closed to the public. Operations for the electronics drop-off site are currently suspended. **Phone: 815-857-4141**

Lee Ogle Transportation System (LOTS) is continuing to operate during the COVID-19 Pandemic, with a focus on those rides that are essential which has encompassed medically necessary trips (kidney dialysis, chemotherapy), rides to workplace, trips to the grocery store and meal deliveries. On average in a given regular week, LOTS will provide upward of 2,000 rides. With the onset of the pandemic and the restriction of providing "essential" rides that figure has dropped to 350-400 rides per week. People have been very responsive and understanding to the changes in the system. We have been sending out post cards with reminder information to riders. A second communication of this nature will be going out within the next week or so. Other information has been shared with riders via traditional media, social media and our web site. Phone:

Since March 16, 2020, the **Probation & Court Services Department** has made constructive changes to its way of business. All of the day to day operations have continued, but in a slightly different manner. Contact with court ordered clients has continued and has moved to a more electronic and digital process. It is important we maintain contact with the individuals, not only as a measure of public safety to the court, but also as a means of health and welfare for our community. While we have maintained in person contact on a scaled back measure, electronic & video communication has increased immensely. Additionally, we have moved forward with additional use of Global Positioning Services (GPS), automated & remote drug testing, and random location check-ins for court ordered individuals. Our communication with the Lee County State's Attorney's Office has remained constant throughout this change, which has allowed us to address those individuals who are non-compliant with conditions ordered by the Court. **Phone: 815-284-5247**

The **Regional Office of Education** employees are working from home and receiving phone messages on their email. Employees are only going in when they have to and only after checking to make sure they would be the only one in their area. We have weekly staff meetings and grant coordinators meetings by Zoom. **Phone: 815-625-1495.**

The **Sheriff's Office** has continued with regular shifts, since the beginning of this pandemic. Additional requests for time off were postponed, so that we could have adequate staffing to respond quickly to any



issues that may arise. All employees in each division are screened daily. As always, we remain committed to the safety and security of our citizens.

The Jail remains operational, with the only changes due to COVID-19 processing:

1. All new inmates are screened, then quarantined for 14 days
2. PPE is worn by Correctional Deputies when handling new offenders, or when contact with inmates may be necessary
3. All employees screened daily
4. Daily nurse checks for those in quarantine, or anyone exhibiting symptoms
5. Thus far, no inmates or employees have tested positive for COVID-19

All court security personnel have been working on rotating shifts, due to the limitations on courts and only certain proceedings being allowed, during the pandemic. All dispatchers have been working normal shifts. **Administrative Office Phone: 815-284-5217**

The **Treasurer's Office** staff is available via phone or email. Real estate tax payments can be made on-line (debit from bank account), on-line (using a credit card), by US Postal Service, or at any bank in Amboy, Ashton, Dixon, Franklin Grove, Paw Paw, Sublette, and West Brooklyn. Due to the Old Lee County Courthouse closure, payments will only be accepted at the Courthouse via a first floor exterior window on the north side of the Courthouse, during regular business days between 8:00 and 4:30. **Phone: 815-288-4477**

The Lee County **Zoning Office** is fully staffed and continues to conduct business through phone calls, mail, and emails. The office is being flooded with phone calls and permit requests as citizens continue correcting zoning violations during the Amnesty Period. New construction permits are being processed and approved and tentative dates being set for future petition hearings. **Phone: 815-288-3643**