



Town of Hilton Head Island TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

An Update from Deputy Town Manager Josh Gruber 2/26/2021

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

Here's an update on what's happening around Town:

Four Local Nonprofits Receive Final Distribution of HUD COVID Relief Funding

In the final round of COVID-19-related grantmaking, four local nonprofits received \$55,221 to help Hilton Head Island residents with rent, utilities, mortgage, food, transportation, childcare, education and other needs. The money comes from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants the Town of Hilton Head Island received. The funds are earmarked to assist low- to moderate-income families affected by COVID-19. The Town partnered with Community Foundation of the Lowcountry to grant these funds to nonprofit organization. In total, more than \$730,000 has been distributed.

The four nonprofits receiving grants include:

Boys & Girls Club of Hilton Head Island: \$4,739 for cleaning expenses and PPE.

The Children's Center: \$18,482 for tuition assistance for students from low- to moderate-income families on Hilton Head Island whose families must quarantine due to COVID exposure. Additionally, the grant dollars will offset lost tuition revenue during COVID-related closure.

The Hilton Head Island Deep Well Project: \$16,000 to be paid directly to landlords or utility providers on behalf of Hilton Head Island residents who meet income requirements.

Sandalwood Community Food Pantry: \$16,000 for food and PPE to be distributed to low- to moderate-income residents of Hilton Head Island.

We thank Community Foundation of the Lowcountry for partnering with us to award grants to organizations serving our community.

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Jane Kelly, an assistant state epidemiologist with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), shares updates about COVID-19 cases and vaccines during a bi-weekly town hall call hosted by the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Kelly is a knowledgeable and engaging subject matter expert, and we're always pleased to share the information she provides to help you understand the impact of COVID-19. Here is the update Dr. Kelly gave on Wednesday's call:

- The good news continues with a downward trend in South Carolina and nationally in the number of COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations and deaths.



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- Over the past two weeks, new cases in South Carolina have been at about the same level that we saw back in November, so keep wearing your mask -- we are not out of the woods yet.
- DHEC has a new vaccine dashboard <https://scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-vaccination-dashboard>.
- Visit the dashboard to see the numbers of 1st and 2nd dose vaccines delivered, split out by gender, age, race/ethnicity and county. The county information is about where vaccine was given, not where the person vaccinated lives. People may go to another county to be vaccinated.
- How will we ever reach herd immunity if we don't have a vaccine for kids yet? Immunity is not just about vaccine; it also includes people who have had COVID-19. CDC has an ongoing study looking at seroprevalence. That is an estimate on the percent of people who have antibodies in the blood to COVID-19. Based on a sample in South Carolina, by the end of December, 13% of people in our state have antibodies. It is probably much higher because that does not count people infected during the big January surge.
- That said, if you had COVID-19, you should still get vaccinated because vaccine will give you an even higher level of immunity.

Hilton Head Hospital and Coastal Carolina Hospital to Reduce COVID-19 Testing Schedule

As the demand and positivity rate for COVID-19 testing continues to decline within the community, Hilton Head Hospital and Coastal Carolina Hospital are reducing their hours of operation for drive-thru testing. Effective Monday, March 1, the hospitals will only offer drive-thru COVID-19 testing on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Testing is conducted in the same locations and are completed with or without a physician's order and at no charge to participants.

COVID-19 Vaccine Information

Do you have questions about COVID-19 vaccines or need help finding vaccine providers? Call the DHEC COVID-19 Vaccine Information Line at [1-866-365-8110](tel:1-866-365-8110). It's available between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily. South Carolina is still distributing vaccines to individuals in its Phase 1A group. For more information about the statewide vaccination plan, visit scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-vaccine.

Town of Hilton Head Island COVID-19 Hub Page

hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19

Our COVID-19 Hub page includes links to information DHEC has compiled about COVID-19 cases, vaccines, the state's vaccine distribution plan, and the vaccine locator map. You can also find information on community resources.



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Public Meeting for the Community Development Block Grant Program Fiscal Year 2021-22 Annual Action Plan

The Town of Hilton Head Island will hold a virtual public meeting at 5:15 p.m., Thursday, March 4, to solicit input on needs and funding priorities related to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program fiscal year 2021-2022 Annual Action Plan. The meeting can be viewed live on the Town's Public Meeting Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/townofhiltonheadislandmeetings/>. Public comments can be submitted electronically via the Town's Open Town Hall HHI portal at <https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/opentownhall/>. The portal will close 2 hours prior to the start of the scheduled meeting. Citizens who wish to comment during the meeting by phone must contact Marcy Benson, Senior Grants Administrator, at 843-341-4689 no later than two hours before the meeting. Following the meeting, the video record will be made available on the Town's website at <https://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov>.

Maintenance Work Around Town Scheduled for Next Week

Pathway repair work along portions of Helmsman Way, Arrow Road and Dunnagan's Alley will begin Monday, March 1. Temporary pathway closures are expected in the immediate vicinity of the work. Pathway users should exercise caution near the work zones. Work is expected to be completed within one week from the anticipated start date.

Repaving work for Sea Pines Circle is set to begin Monday, March 1. Work will take place between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. Crews will repave all lanes around the circle. All work is expected to be completed by Friday, March 19. Please use caution if you are traveling in the area during this time.

The Chaplin Dog Park will be closed for the majority of the day on Thursday, March 4, while new mulch is being installed. Thank you for your patience during this time.

Join our Award-Winning Fire Rescue Department

The Town of Hilton Head Island's Fire Rescue Department is looking for some more frontline stars to join its team. The department has an immediate need to fill current vacancies for firefighters. The online application period will be open through Sunday, March 21. To apply, visit our website at hiltonheadislandsc.gov and click on "Employment Opportunities" at the top of the page. To learn more about our award-winning Fire Rescue Department and its accomplishments, visit <https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/publications/reports/FireRescueAnnualReport.pdf>

Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue provides fire suppression, ALS transport - emergency medical services (EMS), hazardous materials and technical rescue services to a community of approximately 37,000 full-time residents and over 2 million visitors annually. Applicants must be 18 years old at the time of hire, have a high school



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diploma or GED, have a valid driver's license, and be in good physical health as determined by a medical examination. Additional qualifications that may be obtained after hire.