



## VILLAGE OF SCARSDALE

### Open Letter to Scarsdale Community

*COVID-19 Update: March 20, 2020*

Dear Scarsdale Residents,

Scarsdale has always come together in times of adversity, and this is no exception. Every day I hear examples of how we continue to be the caring and generous community that we all cherish. Let's take care of each other, as we always do - reach out through phone calls and emails to our neighbors and friends. Although we cannot be together physically, we can do our part to keep our community strong and connected.

While we are in the midst an unprecedented crisis, I want to reassure you that the Village of Scarsdale is working diligently with County and State officials to reduce the spread of COVID-19. We are routinely in direct contact with the Governor's Office and County Executive's Offices and are receiving full support and cooperation from State and County Departments of Health. Governor Cuomo indicated in today's press conference that he will be signing "an Executive Order mandating that 100% of the workforce must stay home, excluding essential services. Exemptions from the order will include shipping, media, warehousing, grocery and food production, pharmacies, healthcare providers, utilities, banks and related financial institutions." As this is an ever-changing situation, we will do our best to provide timely and accurate information and updates. To that end, please note our section on communications.

### Communication

Communication is always a priority for our Village, but of the utmost importance at this difficult time. The most urgent messages to convey at present are:

1. [Stay Home, Save Lives](#);
2. When outside of your home, be sure to practice [social distancing](#); and
3. Wash your hands frequently and use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

With regard to Village of Scarsdale communication strategies being deployed, the following tools are being used to help keep you informed, listed in order of how frequently messaging occurs:

- [Our Twitter presence](#) (@ScarsdaleGov – which can be accessed via the Twitter app or [www.Twitter.com/ScarsdaleGov](http://www.Twitter.com/ScarsdaleGov)). This has been an active source of community announcements and I encourage all residents to follow us on Twitter;
- [Notify Me](#) (Press Releases by subscription, also [available online at www.Scarsdale.com](http://www.Scarsdale.com)); and
- [Weekly Updates to Our COVID-19 Webpage on the Village website](#).

Should emergency notifications become necessary, our mass notification system, [Blackboard Connect](#), would be activated.

Additionally, essential Village personnel operating remotely continue to monitor and respond to telephone calls and emails directed to any telephone number or email address included in our [Village Directory](#).

The final point I need to convey about communication is that it is important for the Scarsdale community to *only* rely upon official sources of news and information during the COVID-19 public health crisis; rumors and second-hand information should not be trusted or shared. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of misinformation circulating. To facilitate your informed participation in discussions you may have with others on the topic of COVID-19, the following public resources are also available and feature daily updates:

#### *Federal*

[@CDC on Twitter](#)

[CDC's COVID-19 Web Portal](#)

#### *New York State*

[Governor Cuomo on Twitter](#)

[NYSDOH COVID-19 Web Portal](#)

[Governor Cuomo's Press Room](#)

[Sign-up for NYS COVID-19 Updates](#)

#### *Westchester County*

[Westchester County on Twitter](#)

[WCDOH COVID-19 Web Portal](#)

### **Community-based Organization Highlights**

The Village of Scarsdale is very fortunate to be served by a number of community-based organizations that routinely provide support and assistance to our Village government and the community at-large. Forward-thinking, mission-oriented, and responsive to emerging needs, these organizations undertake countless hours of work in support of community betterment and enhanced public health, safety, and welfare.

In the context of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 public health crisis, it is important for each of us to recognize and appreciate the value that two organizations, in particular, are delivering through their thoughtful and professional efforts: Scarsdale Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the Scarsdale Family Counseling Services.

The following sections highlight some of their important contributions.

### Scarsdale Volunteer Ambulance Corps (SVAC)

Scarsdale Volunteer Ambulance Corps. ("SVAC") is one of our most treasured volunteer organizations. Never have we needed their services more. SVAC provides the Scarsdale community with advanced life support ambulance service to patients of all ages experiencing a medical emergency. Advanced life support is one of the highest levels of pre-hospital care available, which SVAC provides 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

SVAC has an ample supply of personal protection equipment and is fully staffed with paramedics and drivers. They are trained to deal with this crisis. During this crisis, SVAC is appropriately treating all of its calls for service as positive cases for COVID-19. Please do not assume that your neighbors are positive for COVID-19 because you see the ambulance corps in protective gear. This standard is to protect its staff and all of its patients, just in case.

SVAC continues to work closely with our Police and Fire Department to provide exceptional first responder services to our residents. SVAC is in close communication with our local hospitals on a constant basis. As always, we are in very caring and capable hands.

### Scarsdale Family Counseling Service (SFCS)

Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Service (SFCS), the Scarsdale Community Youth Services Project, and the Aging in Place initiative are all operational. Although SFCS office doors are closed, they continue to provide the same high quality of service via tele-health, using a HIPAA compliant video platform.

Here are the services being provided:

- SFCS Individual and Family Counseling Services

Counseling services are being provided for our existing clients and families. A wait list is in place for those seeking service. Existing or prospective clients should call SFCS at (914) 723-3281.

- Scarsdale Community Youth Services Project

Our five Community Youth Outreach Workers are available to middle school and high school age youth and families for individual, family and group support

Parent Support Groups will resume beginning Monday 3/23 via group video-conferencing.

Guidelines for providing structure to children, managing anxieties, and remaining vigilant about teen alcohol and other drug use is being distributed and/or forthcoming.

Community Prevention Coalitions, such as the Scarsdale Drug and Alcohol Task Force and Scarsdale Safe Coalition, will all resume meetings and virtual activities next week. Community members are encouraged to contact the Youth Outreach Workers via email

- Aging In Place

The Aging in Place Coordinator is maintaining contact via phone with Scarsdale's senior residents. Delivery services for essential items are being coordinated and well-checks are being provided as necessary. Existing or prospective clients should call SFCS at (914) 723-3281

### **Modified Village Operating Procedures and Protocols**

As you may be aware, and as a prudent measure to help "flatten the curve," Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order mandating that all New York local governments reduce their in-person staffing by 50% or more.

The Village of Scarsdale is in compliance with the Governor's mandate.

In addition to standard emergency operating protocols, the Village of Scarsdale has developed and implemented operational modifications to not only enhance public health, safety, and welfare, but to also safeguard employee health while endeavoring to maintain continuity of operations in a dynamic operating environment with reduced staffing.

Among other actions, the Village has undertaken measures to help reduce the opportunity for a potential domino effect amongst our personnel where one COVID-19 positive employee can potentially cause significant interruption to an essential service or operation.

To illustrate, discrete sanitation teams have been developed in such fashion that no member of "Team A" directly interacts with a member of "Team B" at any point during the work day. Thus, if a member of "Team A" is identified as COVID-19 positive, only those persons on "Team A" may be subject to any form of quarantine. It's social distancing in the workplace, in effect. We are also prepared to transfer assignments from other Village operating centers to support the needs of our essential services.

Police and fire personnel have implemented similar precautions.

It should also be noted that back-up support is available for police, fire, sanitation, and water department personnel through a combination of inter-municipal, mutual aid, and contractual agreements. Finally, anticipating the possibility of this pandemic, the Village began in early February ordering supplies and refining our emergency plans to ensure Scarsdale's readiness.

## Summary

Collaborating with our County, State, and local community-based partners, our government is doing all that we can to protect Scarsdale.

We encourage all residents to exercise prudent measures to “flatten the curve”, including maintaining social distancing and avoiding playground equipment and other high-touch areas that can easily spread COVID-19. Together, we can make a difference that will save the lives of our friends and neighbors.

Thank you for your understanding and patience during this stressful period, and I hope that you find this new weekly update of value as you navigate the ever-changing COVID-19 information landscape. Please also tune-in for Mayor’s comments at our next Village Board meeting virtually through [Zoom](#) on Tuesday, March 24, at 8pm. The meeting will also be recorded for later rebroadcast your government access channels (Meeting info updated March 24, 2020).

Please be safe and stay well. Although things will get more difficult before they improve, I know that we will come through this and I look forward to sharing much happier times with you in the not too distant future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MS', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Marc Samwick  
Mayor