



# Lackawanna County

## Commissioners

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## **Commissioners Implement Major Safeguards Against Coronavirus**

The Lackawanna County Commissioners announced today (March 20) tighter measures to safeguard both the general public and County staff in their attempt to stop the exposure, transmission and spread of the Coronavirus.

The Lackawanna County Government Center will be closed to the general public as of March 23.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court issued an order on March 18, announcing that all Pennsylvania courts are generally closed to the public, beginning at the close of business March 19 and lasting through at least April 3, subject to the general and specific directives and exceptions listed on Page 6 of the Order, which is posted on the Government Center's window and County website.

To that end, the court rooms in the main courthouse and government center will be closed.

Several of the row offices in the Government Center will be affected by the closure, but services will continue to be provided, but in a significantly different manner.

Drop boxes will be placed in the Government Center's vestibule for various payments and other transactions. Residents can pay their 2020 Lackawanna County taxes and the City of Scranton and Scranton School District taxes by using the Single Tax Office box in the vestibule. Payments are to be by checks only. The office will be open to process payments.

Residents can pay for their 2019 and prior years delinquent real estate taxes through the Tax Claim Bureau's page on the County's website [www.lackawannacounty.org](http://www.lackawannacounty.org). People can go to the "Government Directory" in the upper right hand corner of the page, click on "Business & Community" and then look for the Tax Claim Bureau section. Tax lien certificates can also be purchased on the County's website.

A help desk has been constructed and is located at left side of the vestibule to handle a variety of transactions pertaining to the Clerk of Judicial Records and Register of Wills offices, Family Court Administration, and multiple other departments. Department representatives will be on hand to provide assistance.

Only necessary documents will be accepted, time-stamped and filed.

New Protection from Abuse orders, Emergency Special Relief and emergency custodies will also be processed.

Guardianships for Orphans Court will be processed. Marriage license applicants should call 570-963-6702 for further information and instruction.



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Wills will be probated by appointment only. All inheritance tax matters must be placed in an envelope marked "Register of Wills"/Department of Revenue INH and include the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue Inheritance Tax forms and a check. These are to be placed in the Department of Revenue/Register of Wills drop box.

For any other court filings, residents and attorneys are directed to utilize the mail or special courier.

The Recorder of Deeds office will have a drop box for special documents and Notary Public Commissions. All fees must be paid by check. Special business will be done by appointment only.

There will also be a drop box for the Treasurer's Office for dog licenses and delinquent tax payments. These transactions are to be done by check only. Receipts will be sent by mail.

Voter registrations and requests for an absentee ballot can be placed in the Voter Registration drop box also located in the vestibule.

The Assessment office will also have a drop box at the front entrance. All documents must be placed in the box, and the items will be processed as soon as possible.

Senior citizens are of vital importance. The Area Agency on Aging's protective services will continue to function 24/7. Face-to-face contact will continue in cases of neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Outreach services will also continue to be offered. For assistance, contact the Aging at 570-963-6740.

The department is also collaborating with other agencies on a volunteer door-to-door food distribution to older adults. Anyone interested in volunteering to deliver food or to fill bags should call 570-866-2998 or email [volunteer@uwlc.net](mailto:volunteer@uwlc.net). Meals on Wheels is including more shelf stable meals with its routine deliveries.

The prison has also taken several measures to fight the Coronavirus. The administration has: suspended contact and regular visits; implemented an aggressive sanitation program; posted educational flyers; authorized staff to carry alcohol based hand sanitizer; and suspended visitation from all volunteers.

It is important for the general public to note that all County departments are still operating and can be reached by telephone.