
BCW&S

**Berks County
Water &
Sewer Association**

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

March 22, 2020 – Issue 100



PUC Permitting Modifications to Administrative Deadlines, Procedural Rules for the Commission’s Filing and Service Requirements

Under the unique circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) Chairman Gladys Brown Dutrieuille signed an **emergency order** <http://www.puc.pa.gov/pcdocs/1658962.docx> permitting the modification of regulatory and statutory deadlines and procedural rules affecting filing and service requirements with the PUC as well as time periods established for the Commission to take final action on matters before it.

“Under current circumstances, it has become necessary to take additional measures to ensure continued operations during this period,” Chairman Dutrieuille stated. “These measures are intended to prevent regulatory or statutory procedural rules, including those providing for the calculation of time periods for final Commission action, from interfering with the overall conduct of Commission business in the public interest during the emergency.”

Chairman Dutrieuille added that today’s emergency order is consistent with Gov. Wolf’s **Proclamation of Disaster Emergency** <https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/gov-wolf-signs-covid-19-disaster-declaration-to-provide->

[increased-support-for-state-response/](#) which authorizes and directs the suspension of “the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of Commonwealth business, or the orders, rules or regulations of any Commonwealth agency, if strict compliance with the provisions . . . would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with this emergency.”

Today’s Emergency Order is the third such action initiated by the Commission since the Governor’s Proclamation of Disaster Emergency on March 6th. On Monday, Chairman Dutrieuille signed an **emergency order prohibiting electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, telecommunications and steam utility terminations** http://www.puc.pa.gov/about_puc/press_releases.aspx?ShowPR=4326; and then followed on Wednesday with an **emergency order suspending door-to-door and in-person sales and marketing activities by competitive energy suppliers and their agents** http://www.puc.pa.gov/about_puc/press_releases.aspx?ShowPR=4327.

Pursuant to the Commission’s regulations governing emergency relief, an emergency order will be issued only when there exists a clear and present danger to life or property or when the relief requested is uncontested and action is required prior to the next scheduled public meeting.

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission balances the needs of consumers and utilities; ensures safe and reliable utility service at reasonable rates; protects the public interest; educates consumers to make independent and

informed utility choices; furthers economic development; and fosters new technologies and competitive markets in an environmentally sound manner.

For recent news releases and video of select Commission proceedings or more information about the PUC, visit our website at www.puc.pa.gov. Follow the PUC on Twitter – @PA_PUC for all things utility. “Like” Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission on Facebook for easy access to information on utility issues.

Source: PUC Press Release, 3/20/2020

PUC’s March 26th Public Meeting to be Conducted Telephonically

In response to the ongoing threat to public health posed by the COVID-19 virus, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) announced that its upcoming public meeting – scheduled for Thursday, March 26 – **will be conducted telephonically.**

The PUC public meeting will begin at 10 a.m. on March 26, and members of the public, the media and others can begin accessing the telephone conference call starting at 9:45 a.m. that day. Interested parties can listen to the meeting by calling 1-888-917-8050, and then entering passcode 9570961.

The Commission welcomes the public to join the telephonic meeting, stressing that it will follow the Commission’s customary public meeting protocol with only Commissioners and the PUC’s Secretary speaking on agenda items. A final agenda for the public meeting will be published on the Commission **website** http://www.puc.pa.gov/about_puc/public_meeting_calendar/public_meeting_audio_summaries.aspx on Wednesday, March 25.

Under the unique circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, conducting public meetings and other routine Commission business telephonically – to help minimize non-essential

personal social contact – is consistent with the Governor’s Proclamation of Disaster Emergency and the requirements of the Public Utility Code.

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Source: PUC Press Release, 3/19/2020

WAIVER EXTENSION, REVISED TIMING OF ENFORCEMENT: Monday, March 23 at 8:00 AM

Updated Business Guidance

<https://www.scribd.com/document/452553026/UPD-ATED-5-45pm-March-21-2020-Industry-Operation-Guidance>

Business Waiver Application Form

<https://expressforms.pa.gov/apps/pa/DCED/Waiver-process-keeping-physical-locations-open>

FAQ on Business Guidance

<https://www.scribd.com/document/452553495/Life-Sustaining-Business-FAQs>

Due to the high volume of waiver requests, the Wolf Administration is delaying enforcement of Governor Tom Wolf’s **order** <https://dced.pa.gov/download/2020-03-20-tww-amendment-to-covid-19-business-closure-order/?wpdmdl=93593> and the Secretary of Health’s

order <https://dced.pa.gov/download/soh-business-closure-order-amdt-confidential-03-20-2020/?wpdmdl=93595> that all non-life-sustaining businesses in Pennsylvania must close their physical locations to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Per Governor Wolf's and Dr. Levine's orders, businesses that were non-life sustaining were ordered to close their physical locations on March 19, at 8:00 PM. This order stands; only the enforcement timing will change and become effective on Monday, March 23, at 8:00 AM.

Those businesses requesting clarification on whether they are **defined as life-sustaining** should check this **list** <https://www.scribd.com/document/452553026/UPDATED-5-45pm-March-21-2020-Industry-Operation-Guidance>, email the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) customer service resource account at ra-dcedcs@pa.gov, or call 1-877-PA-HEALTH and select option 1 to reach DCED staff. For businesses that determine from the list that they are non-life sustaining, but would like to seek a waiver, there is an **online waiver application** <https://expressforms.pa.gov/apps/pa/DCED/Waiver-process-keeping-physical-locations-open>.

When a business completes a waiver form, a team of professionals at DCED will review each request and respond based on the guiding principle of balancing public safety while ensuring the continued delivery of critical infrastructure services and functions. Those requesting a waiver will be notified via email if their operations may re-open. Businesses applying for a waiver must remain closed until a decision is made about their application.

DCED offers working capital loans that could be of assistance to businesses impacted by COVID-19. **Resources and information** will be posted to <http://dced.pa.gov/resources> as they become available. Yesterday, Governor Wolf **announced** <https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/gov-wolf-economic-injury-disaster-loans-available-to-small-businesses-and-non-profits-facing-losses-related-to-covid-19/> **the availability of low-interest loans for small businesses and eligible non-profits** in all 67 counties in

Pennsylvania through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, Pennsylvanians should follow www.governor.pa.gov and www.doh.pa.gov.

Source: DCED Press Release, 3/20/2020

Pennsylvania Workers Affected by COVID-19 May be Eligible for Unemployment and Workers' Compensation Benefits

Workers in Pennsylvania who are impacted by COVID-19

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx> may be eligible for Unemployment and Workers' Compensation benefits, Secretary of Labor & Industry (L&I) Jerry Oleksiak announced.

Unemployment compensation claims should be **submitted online** <https://www.uc.pa.gov/unemployment-benefits/file/Pages/File%20an%20Initial%20Claim.aspx> or faster processing.

“As Pennsylvania and the nation implement mitigation efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, it is important to relieve some of the financial pressures our workers are facing so they can focus on remaining healthy and safe,” said Secretary Oleksiak. “The best option is for employers to offer their employees paid time off. If leave is not available and your job has been impacted by this new virus, you may be eligible for benefits either through unemployment or workers' compensation. If you work in a job or industry that likely will be affected, prepare now by knowing what you need and how to file so your application can be processed quickly.”

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (UC) BENEFITS

You may be eligible if:

- Your employer temporarily closes or goes out of business because of COVID-19;
- Your employer reduces your hours because of COVID-19;
- You have been told not to work because your employer feels you might get or spread COVID-19; or
- You have been told to quarantine or self-isolate, or live/work in a county under government-recommended mitigation efforts.

Applying online

<https://www.uc.pa.gov/unemployment-benefits/file/Pages/File%20an%20Initial%20Claim.aspx> is the fastest and easiest way to get started. You can find **call center hours and other vital info** at <http://www.uc.pa.gov>; learn all UC benefit requirements by visiting the **self-service guide** <https://www.uc.pa.gov/unemployment-benefits/Pages/Self-Service%20Step-by-Step%20Instructions.aspx>; or use **UC LiveChat** <https://www.uc.pa.gov/Chat/index.aspx>.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION (WC) BENEFITS

If you believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19 in your workplace, you may be eligible for Workers' Compensation (WC) by either:

- Notifying your employer to file a typical "disease-as-injury" WC claim, which requires you to provide medical evidence that you were exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Notifying your employer to file an "occupational disease" WC claim, which requires you to show that COVID-19 is occurring more in your occupation/industry than in the general population.

Claims:

- All WC claims (including COVID-19) are thoroughly reviewed, and decisions are made

based on the facts and merits of each claim and the law.

- If your COVID-19 claim is denied, you may file a petition with the **WC Office of Adjudication** <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Workers-Compensation/wcoa/Pages/default.aspx>.
- Learn more about Workers' Compensation and the Injured Worker <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Workers-Compensation/publications/Pages/LIBC-100-WC--The-Injured-Worker-Pamphlet.aspx>.

For the most accurate and up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Pennsylvania, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Health's dedicated **coronavirus webpage** <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx> that is updated daily.

Source: PA Department of Labor & Industry, 3/16/2020

EQB Extends Public Comment on Proposed Administration of Land Recycling Program

The Environmental Quality Board has extended the public comment period on the proposed rulemaking regarding the administration of the land recycling program to April 30, 2020. Comments may be submitted to the board by accessing **eComment** <https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/>.

Proposed Rulemaking: Administration of the Land Recycling Program (#7-552)
<http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol50/50-7/238.html>

Comments may also be submitted to the board by e-mail at RegComments@pa.gov. Written comments should be mailed to the Environmental Quality Board, PO Box 8477, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477 or to the Environmental Quality Board, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 16th Floor, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

The Environmental Quality Board (Board) proposes to amend Chapter 250 (relating to administration of Land Recycling Program). This rulemaking is proposed under 25 Pa. Code § 250.11 (relating to periodic review of MSCs), which requires that the Department of Environmental Protection (Department) review new scientific information that relates to the basis of the Statewide health standard medium-specific concentrations (MSC) at least 36 months after the effective date of the most recently promulgated MSCs and to propose to the Board any changes to the MSCs as necessary.

In addition to updating the existing MSCs, this proposed rulemaking would add MSCs for three new contaminants, namely **Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)**, **Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS)** and **Perfluorobutane Sulfonate (PFBS)**. These contaminants are within the Per-fluoroalkyl and Poly-fluoroalkyl Acid (PFAS) family of compounds for which the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published toxicological data. This proposed rulemaking would also clarify several other regulatory requirements.

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, 3/21/2020
<http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol50/50-12/407.html>

Public Hearings on Proposal to Add PFAS to Environmental Cleanup Regulations Canceled to Mitigate COVID-19 Spread

Interested individuals invited to submit written comments

To prevent the possible spread of COVID-19, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has canceled three public hearings to gather public input on **proposed rulemaking**
<http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol50/50-7/238.html> that would amend state regulation to establish

groundwater and soil cleanup standards for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at contaminated properties. The hearings had been advertised in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, but to date, DEP had only received one attendee registration.

Interested individuals are invited to instead submit written comments, suggestions, support, or objections regarding this proposed rulemaking to the board, which must be received by April 30, 2020 11:59 PM. Written comments should be mailed to the Environmental Quality Board, P.O. Box 8477, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477. Express mail should be sent to the Environmental Quality Board, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 16th Floor, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101-2301. Comments may also be submitted online at <http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment> or via email at RegComments@pa.gov (a subject heading of this proposed rulemaking and a return name and address must be included).

The proposed rulemaking amends **Title 25, Chapter 250**
<http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/025/chapter250/chap250to c.html> (Administration of the Land Recycling Program) of the Pennsylvania Code, which encourages the voluntary cleanup and reuse of contaminated commercial and industrial sites, to add soil and groundwater medium specific concentrations (MSC) for three PFAS compounds - PFBS, PFOS and PFOA. The proposal would use the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Health Advisory Level of 70 ppt for PFOS and PFOA as groundwater MSCs and would use data and calculations developed by EPA for PFOS and PFOA to calculate soils MSCs.

This proposal was included as a recommendation by the PFAS Action Team, which was established by Governor Tom Wolf through an **executive order**
<https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/executive-order-2018-08-perfluoroalkyl-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-action-team/> to comprehensively address this emerging environmental issue. These **manmade chemicals**
https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/drinking_water/PFAS/Pages/default.aspx, which are resistant to heat, water and oil, persist in the environment and the human body. They can be

found in common items like cookware, carpets, fabrics and more, as well as firefighting foams.

The proposed rulemaking also changes the direct contact MSCs for lead in soil at both residential and non-residential properties. As a result of these changes, the residential statewide health standard in soil will decrease from 450 parts per million (ppm) to 420 ppm. The non-residential statewide health standard of 450 ppm will remain unchanged.

Source: DEP Press Release, 3/16/2020

WRAC Meeting Cancellation

The Department of Environmental Protection's Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for March 26, 2020, has been **cancelled**. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. at the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg.

Questions concerning the May 28, 2020, meeting can be directed to Bob Haines at robhaines@pa.gov or (717) 705-4090. The agenda and meeting materials will be available through the Public Participation tab on the Department of Environmental Protection's website.

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, 3/21/2020
<http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol50/50-12/420.html>

Pennsylvania's Unemployment Rate At 4.7 Percent in February

On March 20, 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) released its employment situation report for February 2020.

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate remained unchanged at 4.7 percent in February. The national rate was down a tenth from January to 3.5 percent. The commonwealth's unemployment rate increased by six-tenths of a percentage point from February

2019 while the national rate was down three-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

Pennsylvania's civilian labor force – the estimated number of residents working or looking for work – was up 9,000 over the month to a record high of 6,558,000 due to gains in both employment and unemployment.

Pennsylvania's total nonfarm jobs rose 15,600 from January to a record high of 6,112,200. Jobs were up in all 11 industry supersectors. The largest volume supersector gain was in manufacturing, which rose 2,900 jobs to its highest level since March 2019. Four supersectors were at record highs in February – construction, education & health services, leisure & hospitality, and other services.

Over the year, total nonfarm jobs in Pennsylvania were up 64,600 with gains in 10 of the 11 supersectors. The largest volume 12-month change among supersectors was an increase of 18,900 jobs in education & health services. Additional information is available on the L&I website at www.dli.pa.gov.

Note: The above data are seasonally adjusted. Seasonally adjusted data provide the most valid month-to-month comparison.

Source: Department of Labor & Industry Press Release, 3/20/2020

SRBC Announces Final Rule and Consumptive Use Mitigation Policy

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission has adopted **Resolution No. 2020-02** <https://www.srbc.net/regulatory/policies-guidance/docs/promulgating-consumptive-use-mitigation-resolution-2020-02.pdf> that adopts and promulgates a **final rule** <https://www.srbc.net/regulatory/policies-guidance/docs/consumptive-use-mitigation-rulemaking.pdf> to amend its regulations related to consumptive use and consumptive use mitigation. These rules are designed to enhance and

improve the Commission's existing authorities to manage the water resources of the basin. The Resolution also adopts a **companion Policy No. 2020-01** <https://www.srbc.net/regulatory/policies-guidance/docs/consumptive-use-mitigation-policy-2020-01.pdf> , Consumptive Use Mitigation Policy. The accompanying Policy offers implementing guidance for the Commission's mitigation rules. This rule and policy are effective on April 1, 2020.

Through the rulemaking, the Commission sought to increase the feasibility of project sponsor-initiated consumptive use mitigation options. The rule lowers the former 90-day mitigation standard to 45 continuous days and defines the discontinuance mitigation standard as including a reduction of consumptive use to less than 20,000 gallons per day (gpd). The Consumptive Use Mitigation Policy provides a comprehensive overview of traditional consumptive mitigation objectives for water storage assets and low flow augmentation projects and also expands the scope of Commission-initiated alternative mitigation methods.

Notice of proposed rule and policy was published in the Federal Register on Sept. 13, 2019; New York Register on Oct. 2, 2019; Pennsylvania Bulletin on Sept. 21, 2019; and Maryland Register on Oct. 11, 2019. An informational webinar was held on Oct. 4, 2020 and a public hearing was held on Oct. 31, 2019 in Harrisburg, PA. A written comment period was open through Nov 12, 2019.

The voting Commissioners and alternates were: Aneca Atkinson, Chair, Deputy Secretary, Office of Water Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection; Paul D'Amato, Director, Region 8, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; and Suzanne Dorsey, Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment.

Resolution 2020-02 provides the Executive Director the authority necessary to carry out the implementation of the final rulemaking and policy. This includes approving any Commission-initiated modifications to consumptive use approvals to modify the mitigation requirements for evaporative losses from ponds and other on-site

structures that meet the mitigation standard in Policy No. 2020-01.

The Executive Director is initiating such modifications. A **list of pending modifications** is provided for public review and comment <https://www.srbc.net/about/meetings-events/meeting-comment/default.aspx?type=9&cat=29>. The comment period for pending modifications is 20 days from the date of publication, with specific due dates posted when the list of pending modifications is published. Comments should be submitted to the attention of: Manager, Project Review; Susquehanna River Basin Commission; 4423 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110-1788; telephone: (717) 238-0423; fax: (717) 238-2436; e-mail: projectcomments@srbc.net.

Source: SRBC Press Release, 3/18/2020

SRBC Announces Final Policy - Guidance for the Preparation of a Metering Plan & A Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Plan for Water Withdrawals, Consumptive Uses, and Diversions

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission has adopted **Resolution No. 2020-03** <https://www.srbc.net/regulatory/policies-guidance/docs/guidance-planning-metering-groundwater-elevation-resolution-2020-03.pdf> that adopts **Policy No. 2020-02** <https://www.srbc.net/regulatory/policies-guidance/docs/metering-plan-groundwater-elevation-guidance-policy-2020-02.pdf>, Guidance For The Preparation Of A Metering Plan & A Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Plan For Water Withdrawals, Consumptive Uses, And Diversions.

This policy provides guidance and assistance to project sponsors in meeting the existing requirements for metering or monitoring of withdrawals, consumptive uses, or diversions of

water. It offers assistance with how to prepare a groundwater elevation monitoring plan, which is a long-standing requirement for groundwater withdrawal projects. The guidance provided is designed to help streamline a project sponsor's metering, monitoring, or groundwater elevation monitoring plan so that plans are concise, current, and useable by both the project sponsor and Commission staff. The policy does not introduce any new requirements of project sponsors or require meters be installed, but rather offers suggested plan structure and content details that simplifies preparation of metering and monitoring plans. The Commission believes that application of this guidance will reduce the length, cost and complexity of these project sponsor prepared plans. The Commission's goal with this policy is to serve the regulated community and continue to best manage the water resources of the Basin in an effective and efficient manner. This policy is effective on April 1, 2020.

Notice of policy was published on the Commission's website on January 09, 2020 and a public hearing was held on February 06, 2020 in Harrisburg, PA. A written comment period was open through February 17, 2020.

The voting Commissioners and alternates were: Aneca Atkinson, Chair, Deputy Secretary, Office of Water Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection; Paul D'Amato, Director, Region 8, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; and Suzanne Dorsey, Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment.

Source: SRBC Press Release, 3/18/2020

Rep. Roni Green sworn in to represent 190th District

On March 16, 2020, State Rep. G. Roni Green, D-Phila. was sworn in to represent 190th legislative district after winning a special election to fill the vacancy on Feb. 25.

The oath of office was administered in the House chamber on Monday by U.S. Magistrate Judge Susan E. Schwab. Green becomes the 54th

female member of the 200 legislators currently serving in the House.

"I've been in the Capitol building so many times as an advocate for working people. It's hard to find the words to express my excitement about the opportunity to work as a legislator to help lift our people out of poverty, end mass incarceration and ensure a living wage for our working families," Green said.

As state representative, Green's priorities include fighting for workers' rights, affordable housing to preserve neighborhoods and ensure that every working family has a home, sensible gun reform to combat the gun violence epidemic, equitable community and economic development that provides opportunities to all, and criminal justice reform with a focus on ending mass incarceration.

Green's offices in Philadelphia and Harrisburg will be closed to the public until further notice out of public health concerns due to the rapidly developing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. To contact the representative and her staff, call 215-879-6615 or 717-783-3822 or email at RepGreen@pahouse.net.

Source: Rep. Roni Green Press Release, 3/16/2020

House Passes Historic Rule Changes in Response to COVID-19

Rules allow members to vote remotely and keep House operating

On March 16, 2020, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives took historic steps to allow the chamber to do its part to help slow the spread of COVID-19 while no longer requiring all members to be present on the House floor.

Members voted unanimously to adopt a rule change ([House Resolution 834](#)) that strengthens the body's ability to take efficient and effective legislative action during these difficult times.

"Under our current rules, members must be present in the Capitol to vote on legislation. We had to convene a quorum of members in Harrisburg today to vote to change our rules," Majority Leader Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) said. "Under the new rules, members can vote on bills before the House and in committees without leaving their districts."

The rules changes will be reflected in three separate ways:

- Allowing designated voting. Under this temporary rule, members will notify their party's whip of their voting position on legislation, and the whip, or a member designated by the whip, will file a member's vote on the House floor. As for the floor itself, only the speaker, leaders, whips or designated members to those positions would need to be present. The process is the same for committee votes, with the relevant party chairperson collecting the votes ahead of a scheduled vote.
- Suspension of legislative time requirements. This temporary rule shortens all required wait periods related to legislation to three hours. Specifically, the 24-hour posting requirement for bills before a committee is now three hours, the 12-hour requirement after a bill is amended on second consideration is now three hours, and the six-hour wait requirement for a bill to be voted on concurrence is now three hours.
- Blackout mailing period adjustment. Under current rules, no legislative mailing can be sent out within 60 days of an election. The temporary rule passed today lifts the restrictions to allow members to send electronic communications related strictly to COVID-19 information.

"We are living in a worldwide event of the magnitude many of us have never experienced. Leaders at state, federal and local levels are working constantly to stay ahead of the next development and keep their communities safe and operating," Cutler said. "These important rule changes will allow our chamber to be a part of the solution and keep the voice of our constituents at the forefront of every decision made in Harrisburg."

The rule changes will expire at the end of the emergency declaration or if the declaration is rescinded.

Source: Rep. Cutler Press Release, 3/16/2020

Senate Adopts Temporary Emergency Rules to Continue Operating During Coronavirus Mitigation

On March 18, 2020, the Senate took an important step to continue its operations safely by passing a resolution allowing members to vote remotely, according to Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman (R-34).

The temporary emergency rules included in [Senate Resolution 318](#) will ensure the Senate can continue voting even when Senators cannot be physically present at the Capitol Building in Harrisburg due to coronavirus mitigation efforts that are ongoing statewide.

The resolution creates a mechanism for members to file bills electronically and to participate in committee meetings and session through the use of communications technology. The emergency powers are scheduled to expire July 31, 2020 or 10 days following the expiration of the governor's emergency order, whichever is sooner.

In order to ensure transparency, session was announced well in advance and streamed live for the public at www.PASenateGOP.com. Session was very brief and social distancing was strongly encouraged for members in accordance with guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Source: Senate Republican Communications, 3/18/2020

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This newsletter provides general information, not legal advice as to any specific matter. It

should not be used as a substitute for appropriate legal advice.