

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **A Message from City of Belleville Mayor Mark Eckert to Residents**

**March 27, 2020**



Dear Belleville Residents:

First, I want to say thank you! Thank you for doing your part to help reduce the impact of COVID-19. While staying home may not feel like you're doing something big, that's actually *the most* important action to take in our community's fight against this pandemic.

Daily life looks a little bit different right now. I know we all miss seeing our friends and family and conducting our daily routines like we usually do. Please be patient because things will resume and return to the way they used to be. But for now, do stay home and make sure your children stay home as well. The springtime weather is enticing and good for you! But remember, parks are closed to groups and group activities. Group gatherings undermine the progress we make by staying at home. The closer we stay to home, the shorter this will be.

But until then, we are relying heavily on some groups of people who are unable to stay home because they are keeping our community going. These people are our grocery clerks, bus drivers and school food service workers, healthcare workers, firemen, policemen, and many more essential workers. Did you know this week alone Belleville School District #118 delivered 18,000 meals? That is no small task. So, let me express my sincerest gratitude to you. This is beyond incredible.

In the usual Belleville fashion, our community responded to the needs of our fellow residents who are struggling the most in this time of need. We've heard reports from the Interfaith Food Pantry that they've stayed afloat this week because of our community's outpouring of support. I heard that Ward 7 alone donated more than 700 pounds of items to the food pantry this week. That too, is beyond incredible. Please don't let this support waver. This need will persist and that means your help will be needed next week as well. Please continue to support our non-profits. They're relying on us more than ever. Also, please continue to support our small businesses in Belleville. Many restaurants and bars are offering curbside pick-up or delivery. They are part of the fabric of our community. If our small businesses hurt, we'll feel the impact citywide.

Today, the State of Illinois reported that there are 3,026 cases of COVID-19 in Illinois and sadly 34 people have passed away. We also had our first death reported from COVID-19 in St. Clair County earlier this afternoon. This is tragic and hitting close to home now, and our condolences go out to the family of the deceased. This virus is spreading fast and we're working to ensure our essential personnel have the personal protective equipment they need to do their jobs.

*The City of Belleville, Illinois, incorporated in 1814, is the St. Clair County seat and the largest city in southern Illinois. With a current population of 44,478 (2010), Belleville is home to the longest contiguous main street in the United States, excellent education and healthcare organizations, and thriving businesses and neighborhoods, including three National Historic Districts. Mayor Mark Eckert runs the municipal government along with elected officials including City Clerk Jennifer Gain Meyer, Treasurer Dean Hardt, and 16 aldermen representing eight city wards. The vision for the City of Belleville is one where all sectors of the community work together to help the city grow and prosper and to become a model for other communities to follow.*

Remember, all essential services provided by the City of Belleville will not stop. If you have an issue or concern, please still report it at <https://www.belleville.net/FormCenter/Report-A-Concern-25>. For emergencies, call 9-1-1. For non-emergencies, call the Belleville Police Department's non-emergency line at 618-234-1212. For more information, visit <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/> or <https://www.belleville.net/7.../COVID-19-Information-Responses>.

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