



TO: Legislative Operating Committee (LOC)
FROM: Clorissa N. Santiago, Legislative Reference Office, Senior Staff Attorney *CNS*
DATE: April 20, 2020
RE: Domestic Animals Law Amendments: Public Comment Period Review

On March 4, 2020, the Legislative Operating Committee approved the public meeting packet and forwarded the Domestic Animals law amendments to a public meeting to be held on April 2, 2020. After the public meeting was scheduled, the world was hit with a COVID-19 pandemic resulting in many countries experiencing the effects of health issues and mortality related to COVID-19 and vast economic impacts.

On March 12, 2020, Chairman Tehassi Hill signed a “*Declaration of Public Health State of Emergency*” regarding COVID-19 which declared a public health emergency for the Nation until April 12, 2020, and set into place the necessary authority for action to be taken and allows the Nation to seek reimbursement of emergency management actions that may result in unexpected expenses.

On March 24, 2020, the Nation’s COVID-19 Team issued a “*Safer at Home*” declaration which orders all individuals present within the Oneida Reservation to stay at home or at their place of residence, with certain exceptions allowed. The “*Safer at Home*” declaration prohibits all public gatherings of any number of people.

Then on March 27, 2020, the Nation’s COVID-19 Team issued a “*Suspension of Public Meetings under the Legislative Procedures Act*” declaration which suspended the Legislative Procedures Act’s requirement to hold a public meeting during the public comment period, but allows members of the community to still participate in the legislative process by submitting written comments, questions, data, or input on proposed legislation to the Legislative Operating Committee via e-mail during the public comment period.

On March 28, 2020 the Oneida Business Committee adopted resolution BC-03-28-20-A titled, “*Extension of March 12th Declaration of Public Health State of Emergency*” which extended the Nation’s public health emergency declaration until May 12, 2020.

The April 2, 2020, public meeting for the amendments to the Domestic Animals law was canceled by the Legislative Operating Committee on March 30, 2020. The public comment period for the Domestic Animals law amendments was still held open until April 9, 2020, to allow members of the community to provide written submissions of comments or questions to the Legislative Operating Committee through e-mail.

No written comments were received during the public comment period for the proposed amendments to the Domestic Animals law. A copy of the public meeting draft has been attached to this memorandum.