

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Commerce City Council has declared a state of emergency however vital city services will continue. The City is actively working with members of the community to ensure that our neighborhoods are kept healthy and safe.

The health and safety of those who work, live, and visit our City is of paramount importance. We are closely monitoring the latest news and directives by federal, state and health officials concerning the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Our top priority is to ensure the wellbeing of our residents and provide support and resources to all neighborhoods and businesses within the City of Commerce during this period.

WHAT THE CITY OF COMMERCE IS DOING

Below you can find the most up-to-date coronavirus information as it relates to the City and its local agencies.

City Services

Commerce City Hall will be closed to the public until further notice and the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated. Residents are encouraged to visit the City's website to access online services or get the latest information regarding our operations during this time especially since information continues to change on a daily basis. Residents can call the EOC at (323) 887-4462 for current updates on city preparedness, services and emergency operations. A pre-recorded message with the most current updates is available at (323) 887-4442. More information can also be found on the City Webpage www.ci.commerce.ca.us or call (323) 722-4805.

Community Services

Commerce Municipal Bus Lines will continue to operate in accordance with the Governor's announcement that vital transit services continue to operate. Services will be running on Saturday schedule until further notice. This means that the Orange, Yellow, Purple, Church and Shopper Routes have been temporarily suspended and the Citadel Express route will only operate during peak travel times. Buses are undergoing daily intense cleaning measures to ensure the health and safety of riders. For more information, please visit the transportation office website at www.ci.commerce.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=90 or call (323) 887-4419.

The Commerce Senior Center is closed as of Monday, March 16, 2020. The closure will be in effect until further notice and all programs and classes are suspended. The congregate meal program will be delivered to senior homes. Seniors, including homebound seniors and those who haven't signed up yet, are encouraged to register for

meal delivery by calling the Commerce Senior Center at (323) 887-4430. We apologize for the inconvenience this may cause but the City is following the Governor's directive for seniors to self-isolate as a precaution. More information regarding the closure and meal program will be forthcoming.

Parks & Recreation programming will be suspended and facilities closed. Open spaces at City parks will remain open for residents. However, we urge residents to practice social distancing protocols and stay 6 feet apart from one another. For more information, please contact the Parks and Recreation Office at (323) 887-4434.

The annual Commerce Y.E.S. Program has been cancelled.

Commerce Libraries are closed to the public until further notice. Library patrons are asked to send an email via "Contact Us" on the upper right corner of the Library's website, www.cocpl.org. Staff will answer questions the same day. Library patrons are to hold on to the items they have checked out as book drops at all libraries are closed. No overdue fees will be accrued for late items. For further updates, please follow the Library on social media (Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/COCPL.org>, Twitter: @Commercelib, Instagram: @commercelibrary) or visit the Library website at www.cocpl.org.

Social Services will be continuing to serve clients and residents who need help. The Food Bank will be delivering groceries to all registered participants to their home. Any individual not registered who is in need of food will receive 1 bag of groceries while supplies last every third Thursday of the month from 10:30 am to 1 pm at the Commerce Central Receiving building next to Rosewood Park. For referrals and information about available Social Services, please call Moyra Garcia or Ed Saucedo at (323) 722-4805, ext. 2385 or 2284, respectively.

Planning, Building and Safety counters will be closed to the public as of Monday, March 16, 2020. Phone calls and inquiries regarding the planning and building process will be answered in the order as they are received during the normal course of the day. Staff is also working on establishing an online process for plan submittals, which includes a Safe Drop-Box for plans and permits located in the exterior of City Hall.

Animal Control will be dispatched only to critical public safety and animal welfare calls, such as dangerous dogs, sick or injured animals, animal cruelty and dead animal removal. Non-urgent calls such as barking dogs will be deferred until further notice. Pet licensing will be deferred.

Community Service Officers will continue patrols and services as normal, but will enact new customer service practices, such as social distancing. In addition, CSOs will not enforce street sweeping days and will not enforce overnight parking restrictions in the Village. CSOs can be called from Monday through Friday, from 8 am-6 pm at (323) 887-4460. For emergencies, call 911.

Upcoming Community Events

The City has postponed the Miss Commerce Pageant and all scheduled programs for the month of March and April. For information regarding the status of specific city events and activities, please contact Parks and Recreation at (323) 887-4434 or the Library at (323) 722-6660.

Emergency Legislation

During an emergency City Council meeting on March 16, City Council passed a resolution that protects residential tenants from being evicted due to an inability to pay rent due to circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including loss of income due to a COVID-19 related workplace closure, child care expenditures due to school closures, health care expenses related to being ill with COVID-19 or caring for a member of the tenant's household who is ill with COVID-19, or reasonable expenditures that stem from government-ordered emergency measures. Tenants will have up to six months following the expiration of the local emergency period to repay any back due rent.

WHAT OTHER AGENCIES ARE DOING

School Districts

Montebello Unified School District has closed all schools until May 5, for the moment. All athletic events have been canceled until further notice. While school facilities are closed, plans are in place for students to continue to learn during this time. For more information, please visit MUSD's website (<https://www.montebello.k12.ca.us/>).

Los Angeles Unified School District has closed all schools until May 1. While school facilities are closed, plans are in place for students to continue to learn during this time. LAUSD will open 40 family resource centers to provide care for children if families need it. For more information, please visit LAUSD's website (<https://achieve.lausd.net/latestnews>)

Water

According to Cal Water California Water Service (Cal Water), they have suspended disconnections and want you to know that you do NOT need to worry about your tap water; the agency, along with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have assured us that tap water is safe. For more information, please visit CalWater's website (https://www.calwater.com/latest_news/tap-water-safe-from-coronavirus/)

Electricity

Southern California Edison Company reports that they have taken steps to ensure it's ready to continue providing safe and reliable electric service to customers if the situation escalates. Southern California Edison announced that it is suspending service disconnections for nonpayment and waiving late fees, effective immediately, for residential and business customers impacted by the COVID-19 emergency. For more information, please visit SoCal Edison's Website (<https://www.sce.com/billhelp>)

Gas

SoCalGas' internal teams are taking several precautionary measures to mitigate exposure to the virus and are regularly communicating with their employees. SoCalGas reports that they are committed to provide safe and reliable natural gas service to Commerce. The agency is committed to helping customers experiencing hardships, including from the coronavirus and has also suspended disconnections. Residents in need of assistance are encouraged to call 1-800-427-2200 or visit SoCalGas' website (<https://www.socalgas.com/coronavirus>)

Public Transportation

Like Commerce Transportation, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority system remains fully operational. METRO is continuously reviewing cleaning protocols to ensure that vehicles are safe for the public. The agency continues to clean buses and trains at least once daily with EPA-approved disinfectants. For more information, please visit Metro's blog (<https://thesource.metro.net/>).

WHAT LOCAL BUSINESSES ARE DOING

Citadel Outlets

Citadel Outlets has closed operations from March 19 to March 30.

Commerce Casino

Commerce Casino is closed until further notice.

Restaurants and Bars

Effective immediately, bars, clubs/nightclubs, wineries/breweries/pubs/tap rooms, movie theaters, entertainment centers, gyms and fitness centers are ordered to be closed until further notice. Restaurants and “permanent food facilities” are required to limit their services to only preparing and offering food to customers via delivery service, take-out, and/or drive throughs. Dining-in services are strictly prohibited. Please note the City will be monitoring business operations citywide to ensure strict adherence to same. We appreciate any cooperation in advance.

The City has a list of open restaurants providing take-out and delivery options. If there are restaurants that are not on the list, please email dlarios@ci.commerce.ca.us:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fmoyUJUK0H67RGdNfRzTSdcSq9anTgdnDYrfbTBXaX0/edit?fbclid=IwAR0K7fS8RLG9ZH8bE5jqkykgs_SbxOrZeGtinTKTPchfoViS_jg_EiQYAgU#gid=293279725

Senior Shopping

Both Target and El Super at the Commerce Shopping Center will have hours set aside for senior shopping. El Super will open from 7am-8am every day for senior shoppers only. Target will open from 7am-8am every Wednesday for senior shoppers only.

Price Gouging

In addition, price gouging is illegal. If you suspect that a business is raising their price during this emergency past 10%, you can file a complaint with Los Angeles County Consumer and Business Affairs at (800) 593-8222 or file an online complain. For more information, visit <https://dcba.lacounty.gov/portfolio/price-gouging/>

Small Businesses

If there are any small businesses significantly impacted by the current coronavirus pandemic, they can apply for federal disaster loan with the United States Small Business Administration online at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

Additional Business resources

If you are an employer or worker in need of support, please visit the California Department of Labor and Workforce guidelines (<https://www.labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019/>)

WHAT YOU CAN DO

While there has been a news report of one (1) employee of the Commerce Casino to have been “presumptively” tested positive for COVID-19, the City is actively seeking official information in this regard. Furthermore, we are continually monitoring how the virus is impacting our community, surrounding cities, and Los Angeles County. We are working closely with county, state, and federal government partners to share relevant and timely information as we get them. The U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) has provided the following tips to help our community be prepared.

1. **STAY INFORMED:** To make sure you have the most up-to-date information, check the CDC website regularly.
2. **BE PREPARED:** Make sure to have enough food, household supplies, water, vitamins, and medications for each person (and pet) in your home. *Should you become ill, it is essential to have health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, cough, and cold medicines, and fluids with electrolytes.*
3. **GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS:** Talk with your neighbors (particularly the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions) about emergency planning and let them know you're there to help. According to the CDC, older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease seem to be at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness. Localized community response can be critical during times when federal, state, and local authorities are overwhelmed.
4. **CREATE AN EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST:** Ensure your household has a current list of emergency contacts for family, friends, neighbors, carpool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, and other community resources.

In challenging times, your neighborhood can be a great source of support. Showing kindness to fellow neighbors, supporting local businesses when feasible, and strengthening connections within our local community can have a significant impact on the vitality of a neighborhood and the City of Commerce as a whole.

During this time, both City Council and City Staff are committed to making sure the City of Commerce remains a place you and your family can feel safe. Thank you for continuing to make Commerce the Model City by being a good neighbor.