



CITY NEWS

Mayor Fischer extends state of emergency to May 10, closes Metro Parks playgrounds and ballfields

March 24, 2020

Mayor Greg Fischer today extended to May 10 the state of emergency he enacted to help stop the COVID-19 outbreak in Louisville.

The Mayor said the next few weeks will be critical as Louisville works to slow the spread of the virus and prevent a surge of new cases from overwhelming the city's hospitals. The move is in line with recommendations issued by the federal Centers for Disease Control.

"Things are changing rapidly," Mayor Fischer said. "We have to slow the spread of COVID-19, and working together, practicing good social distancing, we have the power to do that."

LATEST NEWS ([/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/covid19](https://web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/covid19))

The Mayor's original executive order, signed March 13, cancelled all Metro hosted or sponsored events. The new order extends that into early May and includes new restrictions, including the closure of playgrounds, ballfields, and soccer fields in the city's 120 parks.

"I didn't want to have to close public areas in our park and was hoping this wouldn't be necessary," the Mayor said. "But too many people have shown they have yet to grasp the serious nature of this threat and were gathering in crowds in our parks and ignoring social distancing."

The parks will remain open to walkers, runners, and cyclists, and golfers can still play on the city's 10 municipal courses, with some restrictions. The Mayor ordered that portable toilets in the parks be closed and removed. But crews will continue to clean the permanent restrooms that are open, pick up trash, and mow the grass. The campground at Jefferson Memorial Forest will also be closed. All dog parks where dogs are normally permitted to roam free without a lease are closed, but dogs on leashes are still permitted where allowed.

In his remarks today, Mayor Fischer commended all the Louisvillians who have been making sacrifices to avert a surge of COVID-19 cases that would overwhelm our healthcare system.

"Many of us are practicing social distancing, making the sacrifices this moment demands – cancelling plans, postponing parties and weddings and baby showers and reunions," the Mayor said. "I know it's hard, and I know it's disappointing. Everybody is adjusting to this new reality. But it's also what this moment demands of us."

Read the order here: [https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/mayors_office/news_images/e...\(/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/mayors_office/news_images/executive_order_2020-002_executed.pdf\)](https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/mayors_office/news_images/e...(/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/mayors_office/news_images/executive_order_2020-002_executed.pdf))

Changes to Metro employee policies

As part of the extended state of emergency order, Mayor Fischer empowered Louisville Metro Government agencies to assign duties to unionized employees outside their normal areas of work or departments as the city grapples with the COVID-19 outbreak.

The order does not change current rates of pay, benefits, or other rights according to their current Collective Bargaining Agreement and/or Louisville Metro policies.

"I really appreciate our Metro employees," the Mayor said. "Thank you for this flexibility we now have."

Helping to ease the impact on businesses

Mayor Fischer also announced measures to help local businesses that are during the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

"COVID-19 is affecting all kinds of businesses in all kinds of ways," the Mayor said. "And we're working to help those businesses that are eligible to continue operating."

For example, for example, Metro Codes and Regulations will extend the expiration date on all Itinerant Vendors, Peddlers, and Solicitors licenses and permits from March 31 to May 31, 2020. Mayor Fischer specifically cited food trucks, which have been helping to fill the gap for many diners with so many restaurants shut down.

"Food trucks can keep operating, as long as people are taking food away and not congregating," the Mayor said.

Other changes include:

- Aligning Louisville Metro Government policies with the state and extending ABC License renewals to May 31.
- Metro Public Health and Wellness has suspended collections for swimming pool permits until those facilities open.
- The city has suspended late collections and subsequent closures for operating without a permit at food establishments.

Report establishments that won't comply with shutdown

Mayor Fischer urged Louisvillians to report non-essential businesses that refuse to shut down during the COVID-19 outbreak. The city has received numerous complaints about restaurants, bars, and salons that are still conducting business as usual.

"Social distancing is one of the most effective ways to slow the spread of this virus, but it won't work if some of us refuse to do their part," the Mayor said. "Now is not the time to be selfish."

Residents who see businesses defying the order to close or curtail their activities can report those violations in several ways:

- State of Kentucky – 1-833-KY-SAFER / 1-833-597-2337 (tollfree)
- City of Louisville – Metro311
- Email: 311@louisvilleky.gov
(<https://web.archive.org/web/20200330185450/mailto:311@louisvilleky.gov>)
- Twitter: @LouMetro311
- On the web: louisvilleky.gov/tell311
- App: Louisville Metro 311 on Android or iOS
- Phone: 311

Due to an increased volume of phone calls, city officials are asking residents to contact Metro311 via the web if possible. Your complaints will still be addressed, and your questions will be answered.

CITY EVENTS

Spring Break - No Metro Council Meetings
Scheduled

(/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/events/spring-break-no-metro-council-meetings-scheduled)

POSTPONED SilverSneakers Exercise
Class

(/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/events/postponed-silversneakers-exercise-class)

CITY NEWS

Mayor urges residents to save lives by staying
home

(/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/news/mayor-urges-residents-save-lives-staying-home)

What You Need to Know about Coronavirus

(/web/20200330185450/https://louisvilleky.gov/news/what-you-need-know-about-coronavirus)

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