

## Valparaiso Mayor Announces Coronavirus Closures and Preparedness

Valparaiso Mayor Matt Murphy has issued a statement regarding the coronavirus pandemic. “As a family man as well as mayor, I understand the concern about the spread of coronavirus and its impact on our loved ones and our community,” he said. “I can assure the public that I’m in close contact with state and county officials for updates and guidance regarding the virus and the confirmed case at Porter Regional Hospital.

“Collectively, we are working to communicate all we can do to take care of ourselves and each other. In the spirit of our Valparaiso community, we encourage everyone to maintain positive habits, checking on older neighbors, sharing resources and working together. We appreciate all of the cooperation we’re already seeing in our city.” Murphy has shared the following updates, in accordance with Governor Eric Holcomb’s newly released guidelines:

- Indiana will adhere to the CDC guidelines for events and gatherings, recommending no gatherings of more than 50 people. For a link to the guidelines, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>
- Indiana restaurants and bars will be closed to in-person patrons and may provide take-out and delivery services through the end of March.
- The best way to prevent and contain the spread of coronavirus is to limit contact with others, avoid gatherings, practice frequent and thorough hand washing, contain coughs and sneezes, and clean frequently touched surfaces.  
For more information about the virus and its prevention from the CDC:  
<http://www.ci.valparaiso.in.us/DocumentCenter/View/7547/COVID-19-Coronavirus-Disease-Fact-Sheet>
- Symptoms of coronavirus include *fever, cough, and shortness of breath*. If you suspect that you or a loved one have the coronavirus, here are guidelines for care, from the CDC:  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fsteps-when-sick.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fsteps-when-sick.html)
- For the safety of our community and Valparaiso City employees, the City of Valparaiso is asking that anyone who is sick, please stay home. No validation of illness will be required for Valparaiso City employees.
- The City of Valparaiso is increasing cleaning routines at all city facilities for the safety of visitors and employees.
- The City of Valparaiso has published closures and changes to meeting policies at Valpo.us. Mayor Murphy encourages people to call ahead for any meeting or interaction, city-sponsored or otherwise, as all community organizations continue to monitor activities and conditions.
- City Hall is closed to the public, effective immediately. All departments can be reached by phone at 462-1161 or via e-mail. All e-mail addresses are available on Valpo.us.
- City of Valparaiso services of public safety, utilities, trash and recycling pickup, etc. will continue to serve. The mayor expresses his appreciation for these important employees and will provide all the necessary support they need.

Murphy assures the community that the City of Valparaiso and Porter County governments are taking this challenge very seriously and working to keep the community safe and informed. “We will continue to keep you informed and work to maintain city services throughout this worldwide pandemic. We’re proud of our community and our resilience. Please continue to reach out as needed,” he said. For real-time updates, the City of Valparaiso encourages people to consult Valpo.us and the “Valparaiso Now” page on Facebook.

Valpo's current closure and modification list is below:

**Coronavirus Update 3-15-20:** In order to best inform and protect our community and employees, the City of Valparaiso is observing CDC guidelines regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19). The following are precautionary measures being taken at this time:

## **CITY HALL**

- City Hall will be closed to the public, effective immediately. We can be reached by phone at 462-1161 or via e-mail. All e-mail addresses are available on Valpo.us.
- The Board of Zoning Appeals meeting scheduled for March 17 has been postponed to March 31.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

- While public meetings will remain open to the public, we encourage citizens to avoid attending meeting unless they have specific business on the agenda. If a citizen has specific business on the agenda for a meeting, they can contact the City of Valparaiso at 462-1161 to reschedule their business at a future meeting. We will work to have public meetings recorded for later review.

## **PARKS**

- The Valparaiso Parks office will be closed to the public. You may reach them via email or at 462-5144.
- Banta Senior Center will be closed Monday, March 16 through Friday, March 27, with additional closing dates possible. We continue to work with partners to offer an option for individual meals and will communicate options as available.
- Ice Rink at Central Park Plaza is now closed for the season.
- Youth Winter Skills Clinics scheduled at VHS for March 15 are postponed.
- Discovery Cottage Preschool will follow the Valparaiso School Corporation's schedule, which means we will be closed Monday, March 16 through Friday, April 10.
- Playgrounds will remain open with seasonal restrooms opening as early as next week, beginning with Butterfly Meadows Park and ValPlayso. Please use your judgment when visiting the parks and follow CDC guidelines to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.
- Valpo Parks Board will meet as scheduled on March 17 at 6 pm.
- Start dates for future programs will be assessed and announced as available.
- Creekside Golf Course and Training Center will be closed. The reopening of Creekside to the public will be announced at a date to be determined.
- Forest Park Golf Course opening date has been postponed. Opening date to be announced.

## **POLICE**

- The Valparaiso Police Department has suspended fingerprint services and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) inspections at the VPD station.
- The VPD encourages online reporting for non-emergency calls for service or filing of reports that are not in progress.
- Police reports or vehicle crash reports are available at the Records Division, which will remain open Monday-Friday, 8 am to 4 pm.

## PUBLIC WORKS

- Trash and recycling service will continue without interruption, however curbside yard waste collection and spring leaf pick up will be suspended until further notice. The Public Works office will be closed to the public, and residents may call or email any questions or concerns to 219-462-4612 or [ktravis@valpo.us](mailto:ktravis@valpo.us)

## TRANSIT

- Valpo V-Line and ChicaGo Dash will run on schedule, with additional cleaning procedures and the availability of handwipes and sanitizer aboard for passenger use.
- The Zoom bus service to Chicago airports and South Bend has been suspended by Royal Excursion. For further information, visit <https://royalexursion.com/royalzoom>

## UTILITIES

- The Utilities customer service center will be closed to walk-in visitors, but the drive-up window and telephone center remain open during regular business hours.

The City of Valparaiso will continue to keep the public informed and work to protect the community. For further information, visit [Valpo.us](http://Valpo.us)

Sincerely,



Mayor Matt Murphy