



# The Week in Review

City Manager Grace K. Leung  
March 27, 2020

## Upcoming Events

**Closure of City Facilities Extended Through April 12, 2020. City Staff Will Continue to Provide Services by Phone, Email and Through the Web.**

## To Our Community:

As the number of local and national COVID-19 cases increased this week, the City of Newport Beach took additional steps to help limit the spread of the virus, and more are taking place this weekend. Please know that the City's response is carefully considered and adheres to the direction provided by the State of California and Orange County public health authorities. However, the key to "flattening the curve" is for each of us to stay home except for essential activities and strictly adhere to social distancing when we do go out. We all must do our part

to protect public health.

## News and Resources

To keep up with the latest information, please visit [newportbeachca.gov/covid19](http://newportbeachca.gov/covid19) for the latest City news and useful web resources. Visit the [Orange County Health Agency's COVID-19](#) web page for Countywide information, including the number of local cases. You can also follow the City of Newport Beach on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and look for alerts from our City staff on [Nextdoor](#).

## How many COVID-19 cases are there in Newport Beach?

Beginning today, the County of Orange will post reported COVID-19 cases by city at <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/novelcoronavirus>. Previously only countywide figures have been made public. The number as of March 27, 2020 is 32 cases in Newport Beach out of 321 cases total in Orange County.

The County has informed cities that this information reflects the place of residence for those who have tested positive, not necessarily where the transmission occurred. Also, the data does not reflect all COVID-19 transmission in a given community because testing is prioritized for those at greatest risk, or who are the most sick. Those who are asymptomatic and have mild cases may not be tested, and are therefore not reflected in the data.

The data shows transmission is occurring throughout Orange County. Regardless of the case count in any particular city, it is important for all residents to practice social distancing as directed by the Governor and the Orange County Health Officer. Doing so will help to reduce the spread of infection, ease the burden on our hospital and healthcare system, and protect those most vulnerable in our county.

## Oceanfront Boardwalk to Close this Weekend

To further encourage social distancing and limit the spread of COVID-19, Newport Beach will close the Oceanfront Boardwalk on the Balboa Peninsula from the afternoon of Friday, March 27 through Monday morning, March 30. Midday today, March 27, crews began installing barriers along the Boardwalk's access points and posting temporary closure signs.

In addition, the Balboa Island Bayfront Walkway became a "one-way" sidewalk as of today, with signs directing pedestrians to walk in a single direction. This is intended to help walkers maintain at least six feet of space from other users along the narrow pathway. To reduce vehicle traffic

congestion on the Island, the southbound Jamboree Road through lane at Bayside Drive will be closed.

Also this weekend, increased signs will encourage social distancing in typically congested areas of Corona del Mar along Ocean Boulevard.

### **Status of Beachfront Parking Lots and Piers**

All beachfront parking lots and piers in Newport Beach were closed beginning Wednesday, March 25, in alignment with the most recent guidance from Gov. Gavin Newsom's office to limit public gatherings and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

### **Closure of Playgrounds and Fitness Equipment**

On Monday, March 23, the City of Newport Beach closed all playgrounds, fitness equipment, fields (baseball, soccer, multi-use), all courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, handball and volleyball) and the dog park to further discourage gatherings of any size and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. City parks remain open and additional signage was added to reinforce the importance of social distancing of six feet or more.

The City also closed Back Bay Drive to vehicular traffic, providing more room for recreational users to maintain at least six feet of separation from others.

### **Status of City Hall, Library and Public Safety Facilities**

All City facilities remain closed through April 12. Our public safety, public works, utilities and other essential services continue to function.

Many of our essential services are available by phone and email, including our Permit Center. [Click here](#) to learn more about how to utilize our Permit Center during the City Hall closure.

We encourage you to take advantage of our many online Library resources at [www.newportbeachlibrary.org](http://www.newportbeachlibrary.org).

Our staff is still here to serve you by phone and email. If you need anything, please give us a call.

### **What's Allowed, What's Suggested?**

This week, the City distributed a graphic summary of the allowable activities during the Governor's "Stay at Home" order. [Click here to view the graphic](#).

### **State Alcohol and Beverage Control Provides Regulatory Relief**

Alcohol and Beverage Control (ABC) regulates alcohol licenses for all business, restaurants and establishments that sell or serve alcoholic beverages. Due to the Governor's dining restriction for restaurants, ABC provided regulatory relief to all Type 41 and Type 47 license holders, allowing customers to purchase and take home alcoholic beverages to generate more revenue for the license holders. For example, a Type 41 beer and wine license restaurant may sell beer and wine, but not distilled spirits, for consumption off the premises. To support local business and not be in conflict with the State, the City quickly issued an Emergency Order that allows restaurants to sell alcoholic beverages for at-home consumption without being in violation of the holder's conditional use permit. The Order will be rescinded when the pandemic crisis is over in the City.

### **Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Update**

The City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) remains open as a central hub for our response efforts. The EOC gives us the ability to coordinate our response more effectively among multiple City departments, and document staff activities for the eventual reimbursement of state and federal emergency funding.

## **Trash Pickup and Street Sweeping**

Trash and recycling pickup continue as scheduled.

## **Senior Services**

State and county guidelines strongly recommend that people 65 and older, and those with chronic health conditions, should stay at home. We realize that presents an extreme hardship for many of our residents. Our meal delivery program will continue, and we are ready to provide special services, such as grocery shopping, by request.

Newport Beach seniors who are homebound and require special assistance are encouraged to call the City's Senior Services Dept. at 949-644-3244 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## **Tap Water Safety**

We can assure you that the City of Newport Beach's water is clean, safe and reliable. The coronavirus has no impact on the quality or supply of your tap water. We use chlorine to disinfect the water before it enters the distribution system to protect against microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses and fungus. This ensures safe drinking water for all our customers. There is no need to stock up on bottled water.

## **Police and Fire Services**

Our Police and Fire departments are fully staffed and ready to assist our community with essential public safety services. However, walk-in counter services have been temporarily suspended at the Police Department and fire stations. Residents are asked to contact the Police Department by phone and email and utilize the online reporting system at nbpd.org.

## **Library**

Our library branches are temporarily closed to the public. We encourage you to utilize our vast array of online resources, including downloadable books, audiobooks, magazines and streaming video, and databases. These are all available to Newport Beach Public Library card holders at [newportbeachlibrary.org/ebranch](http://newportbeachlibrary.org/ebranch).

## **Business Resources**

The City website contains information about the federal, state and local resources available to help [small businesses](#) and [workers](#) that have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) crisis. In addition, on March 26, the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce, in partnership the Greater Irvine Chamber and the UCI Center for Investment and Wealth Management, posted a ["2020 Market and Economic Update" video](#) presentation by Christopher Schwarz of the UCI Paul Merage School of Business. The Chamber welcomes interested community members to view the video at their convenience.

## **Homeless Update**

As concerns over COVID-19 (coronavirus) increase throughout the community, City Net, the City's contracted social services provider, continues to assist people experiencing homelessness. Their outreach efforts, coordinated with the City and County's resources, provide housing, health care and other opportunities. The City Net case managers practice proper social distancing and take protective measures to protect the health of the community.

The City's Homeless Liaison Officer and the Homeless Coordinator continue to interact with our people experiencing homelessness. Staff actively encourages people to seek proper shelter and healthcare through the City Net case managers. People, regardless of housing status, are mindful to practice social distancing, ensure proper hygiene, and avoid congregating.

Please refer to the following links for additional information: [newportbeachca.gov/covid19](http://newportbeachca.gov/covid19), [ohealthinfo.com](http://ohealthinfo.com), and [covid19.ca.gov](http://covid19.ca.gov). The County

of Orange operates emergency shelters in Fullerton and Santa Ana. The City Net staff makes referrals to these shelters as well.

**Success Stories:** Last week a veteran from Newport Beach was housed in Tustin. The man connected to services through the Volunteers of America and the 1736 Family Crisis Center. The Orange County United Way's Welcome Home OC program was the lead agency to assist him with navigating the housing opportunities. Established in 1896, the Volunteers of America is a faith-based nonprofit that provides affordable housing for low-income people. The 1736 Family Crisis Center, based in Los Angeles since 1972, assists people with escaping poverty, homelessness, and violence. The Orange County United Way, established in 1924, has launched its Welcome Home OC program to assist veterans with housing vouchers to find units. The Welcome Home OC program offers financial incentives to landlords to accept housing vouchers as a form of rental payment. The goal of Welcome Home OC focuses on housing all military veterans in the County by the end of 2020.

### **Project Submittal During Closure**

The Permit Center is closed to the public through **April 12, 2020** due to the COVID-19 outbreak. To help minimize the disruption to the development community, the Permit Center began offering modified services on Monday March 23, 2020. Please expect delays as we ask for your patience and cooperation during these challenging times.

### **Planning Services**

Planning and Zoning information will be provided by telephone and email. Please call 949-644-3204 or your planner ([for a roster, please follow this link](#)).

If you wish to file a planning application, please complete the [application](#) and mail it with all supporting design plans, reports, title report, mailing labels for notices and a check for the appropriate fee by mail. Alternatively, you can drop off your application in a bin that will be located outside the permit center at City Hall (Bay C). Drop off times are available Monday - Thursday, 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Friday 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Alternatively, you can upload your materials [electronically here](#). ([see instructions](#)).

### **Building Plan Check Applications**

Obtaining information relating to plan check submittals can be done by phone or email. Please call 949-718-1888, or contact directly from this [link](#).

Plan check and planning submittals will be via [EMAIL HERE](#) for small tenant improvements, small projects or revisions (\$100,000 in value).

For new construction or larger projects (\$100,001 or greater), you may drop off the plans in a bin located outside the permit center at City Hall (Bay C). Drop off times available Monday - Thursday, 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. All submittal plans shall include all necessary documentations such as [plan submittal form](#), completed [permit application](#), soil reports, structural calculations, energy calculations, water quality reports, etc.

For plan check fees, please contact the Permit Center at 949-718-1888 to obtain information regarding the required fees to be paid. Payments may be made over the phone with a credit card, or with a check.

Standard plans can be found [here](#).

### **Permit Issuance and Revisions**

Permits may be submitted via [EMAIL HERE](#) or fax 949-644-3250, provided it can be processed for payment authorization and signature by the contractor, or owner. Permits will be issued electronically. For new construction projects, appointments will be established to come to City Hall and pick up the approved set of plans. For minor permits such as reroof, window change out,

EV charging stations, water heater replacement, we encourage applicants to utilize the [iPERMIT](#) system.

For permit fees, please contact the Permit Center at 949-718-1888 to obtain information regarding the required fees to be paid. Payments may be made over the phone with a credit card, or with a check.

### **Inspections**

Inspections will continue. Please continue requesting online inspections [here](#), or call for inspection at 949-644-3255. Inspectors are physically entering commercial buildings and new construction. Inspectors are not entering existing residential homes. For existing residential homes, we are utilizing all mobile technology such as FaceTime, Skype, and photos to conduct and complete the inspections remotely.

### **Code Enforcement**

Code Enforcement will continue to provide inspection services. Please contact Code Enforcement 949-644-3215.

### **Library Closure - FAQ**

In concurrence with the executive order issued by the Governor of the State of California, all Newport Beach Public Library branches will be closed until further notice to limit the number of people in a public building and to help curtail further spread of COVID-19 in the community. Since this has all happened very quickly, here are the answers to some of the questions you may have:

#### **Are there any library resources I can use while branches are closed?**

Yes. The Library provides a wide array of digital offerings, including e-books, audiobooks, magazines, and streaming movies through [our e-Branch](#). Staff is adding new content daily, including story times and resources for online schooling. You can manage your account online, search the catalog, place holds, and renew items at <https://millennium.newport.lib.ca.us/patroninfo>.

#### **Can I drop off my materials in outdoor book drops?**

No, book drops will be closed. Please do not return library materials until the library re-opens. You will not accrue fines or lose holds for materials during the library closure. We will extend all due dates until the library re-opens.

#### **Can I pick up library materials that I have placed on HOLD?**

Unfortunately, due to health orders from the County to prohibit all public and private gatherings, we are no longer able to offer the holds pickup service. You will not lose holds for materials during the library closure; they will be waiting for you when the libraries open.

#### **I have a question about my account. Is there anyone that can help me?**

Yes. If you have any questions about your account or how to access digital resources please use the *Contact Us* page: <https://www.newportbeachlibrary.org/about/contact-us>.

#### **I have a reference question. Is there anyone who can help?**

Yes. If you have a reference question please use the *Contact Us* page: <https://www.newportbeachlibrary.org/about/contact-us>.

#### **Will I be fined if I am unable to return library materials during the closure?**

No, you will not accrue fines or lose holds for materials during the library closure. We will extend all due dates until the library re-opens.

## **New Battery Backup Systems Powers Traffic Signals During Recent Outage**

Last Saturday, March 21 there was an unplanned power outage that affected the City's traffic signals along Coast Highway from Pelican Point to Fashion Island as well as all the traffic signals around Fashion Island. A few years ago, the City completed the East Coast Highway Traffic Signal Rehabilitation Project that upgraded all the traffic signals along Coast Highway as well as installing new battery backup system at each location. Coast Highway carries a significant amount of traffic, as it is one of the main arterials entering and leaving the City. The new battery backup was able to power the traffic signals in full operation during the outage and therefore minimize impacts to motorists for most of the day.

## **Recreation and Senior Services Update**

The Recreation and Senior Services (RSS) Department continues to provide the highest quality service to the public, while taking the necessary precautions to keep our personnel safe and healthy. The RSS Management team is providing the necessary direction to staff working on site and remotely to coordinate COVID-19 related actions related to our programs and facilities.

RSS administrative staff is remotely monitoring community center voicemails and responding to calls from the public related to COVID-19 and regular operations. Staff continues to disseminate City messaging to community partners, class instructors and participants regarding COVID-19 and the status of spring programs, while maintaining plans for summer programming. Spring classes have been postponed indefinitely, spring camps have been cancelled and all facility use reservations through April 12 are cancelled. OASIS staff are providing services to seniors including meals on wheels, supply/food delivery, bus transportation to essential appointments and services, and telephone reassurance calls. Seniors in need of assistance are encouraged to call 949-644-3244 as our staff stand ready to help those in need.

In the field, Park Patrol staff are conducting windshield surveys throughout our parks and facilities to monitor park activity, social distancing and report maintenance needs. Maintenance staff are conducting daily checks at our community centers and on park amenities on weekdays to ensure they are secured and remain closed. Maintenance staff also continues to provide on-site repairs, disinfect equipment and facilities, replace closure signage and provide support in the field as needed.

City parks remain open and additional signage is being added to reinforce the importance of social distancing of six feet or more. As a reminder, park amenity closures include all playgrounds, fitness equipment, fields (baseball, soccer, multi-use), all courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, handball and volleyball) and the dog park to further discourage gatherings of any size and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Recreation and Senior Services Department is asking for the community's help in following these rules for your safety as well as our staff. If we all do our part with social distancing, we can get these facilities open and operable once again.



Visit the City's website for a complete listing of meetings and events at [newportbeachca.gov/events](http://newportbeachca.gov/events).