



EXECUTIVE
DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

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PRESS RELEASE

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South Portland Announces Phased Reopening of City Facilities

Following guidance set forth by Governor Janet Mills' "Restarting Maine's Economy" document, the City of South Portland will begin the phased reopening of various City facilities and services over the coming weeks and months. Numerous City staff – including the Fire Chief/EMA Director, Safety Coordinator, Facilities Manager, Human Resources Director, City Manager, and relevant department heads – have been meeting over the course of the past two weeks to ensure that these reopening plans are compliant with the Governor's phases and keep the safety of employees and members of the public as a first priority.

Some buildings will open sooner than others, and new safety measures will be in place at all locations to better ensure the health of residents and employees alike from the novel coronavirus. Although these facilities will begin the reopening process to various extents, we continue to strongly encourage members of the public to avoid visiting us in person whenever possible. As much as we miss seeing our residents and business-owners, in-person interactions still represent the biggest threat in spreading the coronavirus. Most of our services are offered online, via email, via phone, or even via mail. More information is available on our website at www.southportland.org or by calling our City Clerk's office at 767-3201.

In addition, please note that the global pandemic is ever-evolving and this coronavirus still has many unknowns. This means we may need to adjust our plans "on-the-fly" to react to these changes. Any decisions made will be based in science and the best available advice from public health officials. Sometimes this may include closing buildings for certain periods of time even after they have reopened, or curtailing services we offer, such as the transfer station. We will do our best to communicate updates to you in a timely manner.

This reopening schedule only applies to City facilities. Questions about private businesses reopening should be directed to the State Department of Economic and Community Development at 1-800-872-3838 or business.answers@maine.gov as these are not dictated by the City.

Here is a facility-by-facility re-opening schedule for the City of South Portland:

City Hall & Assessing: Re-opening by APPOINTMENT ONLY beginning Monday, June 1. A larger re-opening, with social distancing measures in place, is anticipated for July 1. Appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed.

Planning/Code Enforcement/Economic Development: Re-opening by APPOINTMENT ONLY beginning Monday, June 1. A larger re-opening, with social distancing measures in place, is anticipated for July 1. Appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the

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public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed.

Library (Main & Branch): Both library buildings will remain closed to the public through at least June 30, with a limited curbside pick-up program in place at the Main Library beginning June 1. Available items will be limited to South Portland Public Library holdings only. Detailed instructions for this service will be available at www.SouthPortlandLibrary.com or by calling 767-7660 as they become available.

A limited reopening of the Main Library building to the public will begin July 1, with social distancing measures and building capacity limitations in place. Appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed.

The Branch Library will remain closed through at least June 30 while staff focus on reestablishing services from the Main Library location.

All in-person library programming will continue to be on hold until further notice and library staff will continue to maintain and develop online program offerings.

Community Center and Redbank Community Center: These centers will remain closed to all activities and programs through at least June 30. However, the City is currently working with the State of Maine on a plan to operate recreation day camps this summer, beginning in mid-June. If these camps can be held, registration will open on May 27. More information on these camps will be available soon via the department website at www.sopoparksrec.com or by calling 767-7650.

The community center will open its front desk to the public beginning Monday, June 1, with no appointment necessary. This includes in-person registrations and other business transactions. Appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed. There will be no activities or programs for the time-being at either center, including use of the gym and track. The pool will be closed until at least September 1 due to state guidelines and the need for pool wall repairs.

Tennis courts will re-open to singles only (2 players) on May 15. The golf course will also re-open on May 15. The restrictions on playgrounds remain in effect through at least June 30. Both will have new safety measures in place. All other parks, trails, and Willard Beach will remain open so long as proper social distancing can be maintained. The City's emergency dog leash regulation will remain in effect for the time-being, as will the ban on use of playground equipment, such as swing-sets and basketball courts. Park Rangers and lifeguards will continue to monitor these areas to ensure all safety protocols are being followed.

Municipal Services Facility/Transfer Station: The Transfer Station will re-open on Saturdays beginning May 16, although the new limit of ten vehicles at a time will remain in place. The Municipal Services Facility will re-open to the public on Monday, June 1. The public will be buzzed in to the facility, though no appointment will be necessary. In both locations, appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed.

Water Resource Protection: Reopens on Monday, June 1, with no appointment necessary. Appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed.

Public Safety (Police & Fire): The main lobby of the Public Safety building will remain open for members of the public who wish to make reports in-person to our Police Department. We encourage members of the public to make non-emergency reports online at <https://www.southportland.org/departments/police-department/file-police-report/> or via phone at 874-8575 when possible. Always use 9-1-1 for an emergency. The prescription drug drop-off box remains accessible to the public in the main lobby area.

The Fire Department will allow in-person visits by APPOINTMENT ONLY beginning Monday, June 1. Members of the public should check in at the main lobby of the Public Safety building and NOT go directly to the fire stations.

At both locations, appropriate face coverings will be required for members of the public. Staff who come within 6 feet of the public or other employees will also be required to wear a mask and other personal protective equipment as needed.

We appreciate the public's patience during this global pandemic and ask that you continue to practice appropriate social distancing techniques while visiting our facilities, both for your safety and that of our staff. In addition to wearing appropriate face masks in parking lots and City facilities, this also means maintaining at least 6 feet of distance at all times when possible, not shaking hands with others, touching as few things as possible, and utilizing hand sanitizer stations located at each facility.

For More Information

Residents are encouraged to obtain the latest information about the coronavirus from the [Maine CDC](#) and [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#). We also recommend taking precautionary measures like a person would for cold and the flu. Examples include staying home when you are sick, covering your cough and sneeze (into your arm), and practicing good hand washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds. Residents and visitors to South Portland can stay informed of our efforts via the following methods:

- Visit the [COVID-19 page](#) on our website;
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#);
- [Sign up](#) for phone, text, and/or email alerts via the City's CodeRED service (aka Reverse 9-1-1). You can also download the CodeRED mobile app for your phone; and
- Stay tuned to local TV and print media for local, state, and national news regarding COVID-19.

The City of South Portland will continue to work closely with other agencies to provide additional updates and information as it is available and applicable.

For more information, please contact EMA Director/Fire Chief James Wilson at 207-799-3314 or jwilson@southportland.org or City Manager Scott Morelli at 207-767-7606 or smorelli@southportland.org.