

Our Mission: Providing quality services through responsible leadership, innovation and the cooperation of dedicated people

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Washington County extends suspension of public-facing services in response to COVID-19

Washington County will continue the suspension of all public-facing services at its libraries, service centers, and license centers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, through April 28.

The County Board took its first action March 18 to protect county residents and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, declared a local emergency March 17, and directed staff to suspend the county's public-facing services. The board extended the suspension through April 28.

The suspension includes the county's eight library branches, the Government Center, the county's license centers in Forest Lake and Stillwater, and the service centers in Cottage Grove, Forest Lake, and Woodbury, including the CareerForce centers, and the service counter at the North Shop. Check the county website for some of the services that remain available at county libraries and license centers.

The County Board granted the county administrator the authority to resume public-facing services if doing so follows recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Washington County Department of Public Health & Environment, and is consistent with the executive orders of the governor of Minnesota.

County parks will be available for use of their trails and other open spaces, but county parks buildings will be closed. There will be no charge to enter county parks through April 28.

The County Board also ordered that county campgrounds not be opened before May 1, to comply with the "Stay At Home" order. Many of the campgrounds have site reservations between April 24 and May 1; the county will provide a full refund to anyone who has a site reserved that will now be impacted by this extended closure. Campground closures could be extended pending additional orders from the governor.

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County government services will continue to function, while adapting to working within the parameters set by the COVID-19 pandemic. Public safety agencies will continue to provide service to the community, as will the county's Department of Public Health & Environment.

The County Board agreed April 7 to earmark \$350,000 of the county's contingency fund for emergency expenditures to pay for expenses related to the pandemic, to keep individual department budgets from being depleted while managing the pandemic.

For additional information, see the county website at www.co.washington.mn.us.