

Message from the City of Costa Mesa

The employees and leadership teams of the City of Costa Mesa extend a huge thank you to the members of the community who have been so vigilant in doing their part to stem the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Here are some tips going forward:

Our business community is being especially hard hit by this crisis. We encourage residents to support them by shopping local and ordering take-out food and delivery services from local restaurants.

As a reminder, the governor's and the county's orders call for all businesses where social distancing cannot be achieved, including places like massage parlors and salons, to be closed.

While City facilities are closed, we realize that business still needs to be conducted. City department webpages have been updated to provide residents with the ability to conduct business in an online environment. Click the following link to learn [more.](https://www.costamesaca.gov/city-hall/city-departments)
<https://www.costamesaca.gov/city-hall/city-departments>

If you have questions about COVID-19 and what the city is doing, we have a hotline number where members of the community can leave us a message. Please call the hotline at 714-754-5156.

Also, the Orange County District Attorney's Office has issued a warning about price gouging and that business owners who unjustifiably raise prices during this crisis can face criminal charges.

Residents who suspect a business is price gouging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are encouraged to file a report to District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit using this form: <http://orangecountyda.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?>

Finally, on Tuesday March 17, the City conducted the first City Council meeting under the temporarily relaxed Brown Act rules that do not require a majority of Council members to be in attendance. Four Council members and some staff participated in the meeting by telephone and members of the public were given opportunities to ask questions of the council, either in person or via email. Seating in the Council Chambers was also modified to allow for proper social distancing between those in attendance. The model will be a useful one for future meetings.

#BeAwareBePrepared #FlattenTheCurve

County amends public health order

The County of Orange has amended its order issued on Tuesday March 17 to stem the spread of Covid-19.

Please click here to read the county's press release on the new amended order.
<https://cms.ocgov.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=114421>

UPDATED: Costa Mesa Police

temporarily suspended parking citations for street sweeping and residential permit parking

UPDATE:

The Costa Mesa Police Department resumed street sweeping enforcement on July 1, 2020. Residents were notified through several social media sites and through email and text via Nixle. Residents are now required to adhere to the street sweeping restrictions in their area. Also, residents should be aware that the police department issues citations for any vehicle parked on the street during the restricted "No Parking" times. Residents cannot park their vehicle(s) on the street after the sweeper cleans if it is within that restricted time frame. City Hall remains closed and therefore, permit parking enforcement is still suspended.

Street sweeping operations will continue until further notice.

Earlier message:

Effective immediately, the Costa Mesa Police Department will suspend issuing parking citations for street sweeping and residential permit parking violations as approved by the City Council on March 17, 2020.

Street sweeping operations will continue until further notice.

County Health Officer issues order regarding public health in regards to COVID-19 virus

COSTA MESA, Calif. (March 17, 2020) – Today, County Health Officer Dr. Nichole Quick issued a Health Officer's Order effective immediately through March 31, 2020 to protect the health and wellbeing of Orange County residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To view the Health Officer's Order in its entirety, click on the link bit.ly/OCHealthOrder

The City of Costa Mesa will be coordinating efforts to take necessary measures in ensuring compliance with the Order.

Essential activities that will remain operational include City business that provide for the health, safety, and welfare of its community, the Costa Mesa Police Department (CMPD), Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue, Emergency Management, and the Dispatch Center.

In accordance with the legally enforceable Order, CMPD has been given the following directive that any person who violates or who refuses or willfully neglects to obey the Order is subject to a fine, imprisonment, or both.

The City is asking its residents to heed the Order and abide by the restrictions collectively to slow the spread of COVID-19. Since this is not yet a shelter in place order, the City recommends caution and social distancing while residents are in public for essential activities. We are in this together and we can all do our part to keep the City of Costa Mesa healthy and safe.

City calls for closures of movie theaters, fitness clubs and limiting restaurants to take out to help stop spread of COVID-19

The City of Costa Mesa is calling for the closure of movie theaters, fitness clubs, and limiting restaurants to take out and delivery services only, effective March 17 at 11:59 p.m.

This is in concert with the most conservative guidance, which is in direct alignment with local, state, and federal actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The City carefully considers every decision and is working around the clock to prevent the risk of further transmission of COVID-19. As such, these closures are crucial and in the best interest of our community.

In addition to the closures, the City reminds the Costa Mesa community to practice social distancing (six feet of separation), wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, avoid any gathering of 10 individuals or more, isolate yourselves if you are feeling sick, and avoid all non-essential activities.

We are not doing this just for our own well-being but for the best interest and health of our families, friends, and loved ones.

Collectively, as a community, we will defeat COVID-19.

[Click here](#) to read our webpage for more information.

Governor Newsom and City of Costa Mesa ramp up efforts to curtail spread of COVID-19

Governor Newsom held a press conference Sunday March 15 stepping up measures to combat the spread of COVID-19. The City of Costa Mesa urges the public and business community to closely follow these guidelines.

Key Points

It is important to focus on the highest priority needs during any emergency. At this point in time, we all need to collectively prioritize our efforts to protect the most vulnerable. This guidance provides details regarding the statewide efforts we should all employ going forward.

Protect the Most Vulnerable

- The Governor's guidelines focused specifically on the 5.3 million seniors who are vulnerable, those with chronic conditions of any age and individuals experiencing homelessness.
- The Governor called for home isolation of all seniors in the State of California for those 65 years and older and individuals with chronic conditions. The guidance is to minimize contact with others as much as possible.
- Visitation to senior facilities will be restricted further to only allow end-of-life visitations.

Reduce Contact in Public places

- All bars, nightclubs, wineries, and brewpubs are to shut down, presumably through March 31 in accordance with the Governor's public gatherings direction from March 11. The March 31 date may be extended.
- Restaurants and grocery stores can remain open, however, restaurants are to reduce occupancy levels by half and make arrangements for social distancing.
- The Governor is sharpening his focus on assisting businesses during this time through unemployment, disability insurance and through the Small Business Administration. Other resources will be explored to help businesses get through this difficult time.

What Costa Mesa is doing

- We want the Costa Mesa community to know that the City is taking strong and proactive measures to protect vulnerable populations and reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19. It's also important to remember to prepare, check in on relatives and friends. We must also remember to show compassion toward our neighbors.
- In an abundance of caution, the City of Costa Mesa is making a major shift in our city's operations as we continue to address the COVID-19 health crisis as follows.

City Facilities closed to public

- Starting Monday, March 16 many city facilities, including City Hall and community centers, will be closed to the public. Our city leadership team is currently developing plans for the provision of essential city services and will be providing services to the public online, via telephone and through our website in order to follow the Governor's guidance and reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. The following operational changes will be effective Monday, March 16, through the end of April, or until further notice. Open

space venues will remain open to the public, including parks and golf courses.

- Please know that our residents, businesses and community partners are extremely important to us. We are going to do everything we can to help you during this difficult time. We are going to work on helping to minimize this disruption to our daily lives as much as possible. We are putting into place disaster recovery efforts to help secure disaster relief funding to the greatest extent possible.
- Our team is monitoring all federal and state resources for disaster relief. Our finance team is going to be sending instructions to businesses to assess economic damages related to this incident. This is precisely why we took the bold action to be the first in the county to declare a local emergency. Please go to the Small Business Administration for additional resources.
- Finally, know that your City leaders and public safety officials are prepared to deal with the crisis, and we are working day and night to get us through these difficult and uncertain times.

City Hall and all City facilities closed to the public due to concerns over COVID-19 virus

In response to Governor Gavin Newsom's direction regarding COVID-19, the City of Costa Mesa has closed all City facilities out of concern for public health and safety.

Essential services related to meals and social services will be available on a limited basis. Please contact the Senior Center for detailed information about access to specific resources at (714) 327-7550 or via email cmseniorcenter@costamesaca.gov.

Community health and safety is a top priority for us and we will work to provide timely updates as they become available.

Please be patient as we work through this challenging time together.

Council ratifies City Manager's emergency declaration for Costa Mesa

COSTA MESA, CA – The City Council in a special meeting on Friday March 13 voted to both declare an urgency ordinance and ratify the decision by City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison to declare a local emergency to protect the public's health and welfare against the spread of COVID-19.

Costa Mesa was the first city in the county to declare an emergency. The county issued an emergency proclamation on Feb. 26.

"I want to assure every community member that the City of Costa Mesa is actively preparing to mitigate the impact of Coronavirus," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "For the past month, the City of Costa Mesa has been aggressively preparing contingency plans should the situation come close to home. These bold preparatory measures will keep our City safer."

As of March 13, the City of Costa Mesa has no known cases of COVID-19 and there is no community transmission of the virus in the County of Orange, according to the OC Health Agency.

“Despite not having any known cases in Costa Mesa, I took this action out of an abundance of caution,” City Manager Farrell Harrison said. “We need to assure the city employees, members of the public, business owners, visitors, local stakeholders and partners that their city leaders and public safety officials are prepared and are securing the full suite of resources to help mitigate and reduce the community’s risk.”

Based on guidance from Governor Gavin Newsom and the California Department of Public Health, the City took the bold step to order the cancellation of all non-essential meetings and functions and all large gatherings of 250 people or more.

This includes postponing or cancelling smaller gatherings that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person or involve individuals at high risk of infection, including those over 60 years of age or with underlying conditions.

Additionally, the city has cancelled special events through the month of April.

Please check the City’s web page at www.costamesaca.gov/covid19 and follow the city’s social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor for the latest information.

Costa Mesa declares local

emergency to protect public health and slow transmission of COVID-19

COSTA MESA, CA – As the COVID-19 crisis has spread to a global pandemic, City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison has issued a proclamation declaring the existence of a local emergency in order to protect the public's health and welfare.

Based on guidance from Governor Gavin Newsom and the California Department of Public Health, the City has issued an order for the cancellation of all non-essential meetings and functions and all large gatherings of 250 people or more. This includes postponing or cancelling smaller gatherings that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person or involve any individuals at high risk of infection, including individuals over 60 year of age or with underlying conditions.

As of today March 12, the City of Costa Mesa has no known cases of COVID-19 and there is no community transmission of the virus in the County of Orange, according to OC Health Agency.

Click here to read the proclamation.

Please check the City's web page here <https://www.costamesaca.gov/hot-topics/coronavirus> and follow the city's social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor for the latest information daily.

It is important to note that the best sources of information regarding the virus will be the county, state and federal health care agencies as this is their area of expertise. Here are links to those sites:

OC Health Care Agency

www.ochealthinfo.com/novelcoronavirus

California Department of Public Health

www.cdph.ca.gov/covid19

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov/covid19

World Health Organization

www.who.int/coronavirus

For questions, please call the Health Care Agency of Orange County at 800-564-8448 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The County of Orange has also scheduled a virtual town hall today from 6 to 7 p.m. Click [here](#) for more information on that.

The City of Costa Mesa staff will continue to focus its continuity of government plans and ensuring we will provide core public services to the community, such as police and fire services.

Finally, the city asks If you have travelled internationally and/or had direct contact with someone who has travelled recently, or are experiencing flu-like symptoms or fall into a high-risk category please do not attend public meetings or events.

City notches one more victory for sober living home ordinance

The City of Costa Mesa achieved yet another victory in U.S. Federal District Court on Wednesday March 4 with a summary judgment against Casa Capri Recovery, an operator of sober living homes.

Judge James Selna ruled the City did not discriminate against residents of those facilities when it brought legal action to shut the group home down for operating unlawfully and without required permits.

“The Court’s ruling once again validates Costa Mesa’s decision to adopt reasonable rules and push back against bogus lawsuits by abusive operators who benefit financially from exploiting people suffering from addiction while also disrupting our community,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “The entire city council, and I as Mayor, remain steadfast in our commitment to protect all residents including those exploited by unscrupulous operators of sober living homes.”

In February 2018, Casa Capri sued the City in federal court alleging that the City’s group home ordinances were illegal and discriminated against the disabled. In granting the City’s Motion for Summary Judgment as to these claims, the Court noted that Casa Capri failed to provide any evidence that its residents were disabled or handicapped or had a record of being disabled.

Likewise, Casa Capri failed to offer any evidence that the civil rights of its residents were violated by any conduct undertaken by the City. The Court also rejected claims that the City engaged in retaliation by filing a state court action to abate the illegal homes being operated by Casa Capri.

In August of 2018, the City Council unanimously approved taking the legal action against the owners and operators of Casa Capri Recovery Center and Casa Capri, LLC at 269 and 271 16th Place in Costa Mesa for maintaining a public nuisance.

Each of the Casa Capri homes consists of 14 recovery beds. The City filed the complaint after Casa Capri's requests for conditional use permits for these properties were ultimately denied by the City Council.

City staff is preparing for potential flooding and sand bags are available to residents

As a reminder as a rain storms approach Costa Mesa and the region this week, sand bags are available for free to Costa Mesa residents in the southeast corner of the City Hall parking lot at 77 Fair Drive and at Fire Station No. 4.

Only 15 bags per resident and no contractors please.

Staff will continue to monitor both locations as needed.

Both locations are self-serve, so plan to bring a shovel.

The city's maintenance service crews will patrol potential flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational. Crews are also ready to respond to other weather-related incidents. Flood signs will be placed at all known hot spots.

Please report flooding issues to 714-754-5250.

Senior Engineer Shirjeel Muhammad is latest City Manager Leadership Award recipient

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Senior Engineer Shirjeel Muhammad with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet event on Thursday Feb. 27.

“Maintaining public transportation is a big priority for our City Council and residents,” Farrell Harrison said. “I’m grateful to Shirjeel for his dedication to this important issue and his enthusiasm in getting the job done. This is a well-deserved honor.”

Muhammad joined the City’s Transportation Services Division in the Public Services Department in 2018 with over 20 years of experience working on a variety of transportation engineering and traffic signal projects.

Muhammad is currently managing several Active Transportation, traffic signal design projects, and several traffic signal synchronization projects. HE has shown excellent leadership in mentoring and training new staff in the Transportation Services Division.

The division has recently hired new staff to fill vacant positions. With the new staff joining the team, Muhammad encourages teamwork and works closely with new staff to make

sure they are trained and have a thorough understanding of transportation related tasks, design, and signal operations.

In addition, he has built great working relationships with Public Services staff in other divisions and other Departments.

His knowledge, skill level and professionalism have been evident from the time he started with the city. He enthusiastically accepts special assignments and looks for ways to improve efficiencies and processes. He responds quickly to public records requests and to risk management requests from the Human Resources Department for information related to the City's traffic signal infrastructure.

Muhammad's responsibilities include management of planning and design of capital improvement projects and the day-to-day management of the City's Transportation Management Center (TMC).

Prior to coming to Costa Mesa, he has worked for public and private sectors in California and worked abroad for several years for the Government of Qatar in Middle East. Muhammad graduated from NED University of Engineering and Technology in Pakistan with a degree in Civil Engineering. He also holds a Master Degree in Transportation Engineering from California State University, Long Beach.

In addition, City Manager Farrell Harrison welcomed several new employees and congratulated three on their promotions.

Jennifer Avila is the new Video Production Aide in the City Manager's Office and Destiny Andrews and Michael Sniezak are a new Interns working in the Development Services.

Nikki Johnson is the new Code Enforcement Officer working in the Fire Department and Arianna Centeno is the new Community Services Leader II working in the ROCKS program at Balearic.

Benjamin Morrison is one of the new Lifeguards working at the Downtown Recreation Center, and Vincent Legaspi is the new Range Master for the Police Department.

In Public Services, Salem Afeworki is the new Energy & Sustainability Services Manager, Iris La is the new Assistant Engineer working in the Transportation Division in Public Services and Mathew Limon is the new Equipment Mechanic II working in the Maintenance/Fleet services, Ramin Nikoui is the new Assistant Engineer also working in the Transportation Services and Seung Yang is the new Principal Civil Engineer working in the Engineering Division.

Those receiving promotions include Elise Price, who has been promoted to Community Services Leader III and Kevin Stoddard has been promoted to Recreation Supervisor in the Parks & Community Services Department.

Finally, Kevin Henderson has been promoted to Lead Equipment Mechanic for the Maintenance Services Division.