



**For Immediate Release
March 12, 2020**

City of Huntington Beach Develops a Response Framework in an Effort to Help Mitigate the Transmission of the COVID-19 Virus

COVID-19 Response Effort Transition

As the overall coronavirus situation continues to evolve, ensuring public health and safety has remained the City of Huntington Beach's top priority. While there are currently no known cases of COVID-19 in Huntington Beach, the City is taking immediate steps to help limit its spread, particularly to vulnerable populations, which include the elderly and those with preexisting health conditions. These efforts are being taken to ensure that we remain HB Ready to respond to the evolving issues at hand.

Of particular note, during this past week, there has been a transition in the response effort to address impacts associated with the COVID-19 virus. Previously, Federal, State, and County health care agencies had been directing their efforts towards containing the spread of the coronavirus.

This week, based on new guidance received, overall response efforts have shifted away from containment towards mitigation efforts to try and limit the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. As a result, we have seen widespread social distancing measures instituted, including the closure of Disneyland and the cancellation of nearly all major sporting and entertainment events.

The mitigation effort that is being engaging now at all levels of government has been identified as a key priority because large scale transmission of the coronavirus among the populations vulnerable to COVID-19 could overtax and overrun our existing health care system. To that end, the mitigations efforts being engaged are designed to slow transmission rates in our community.

City Develops COVID-19 Response Framework

To that end, the City is following [new guidelines](#) issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 11, 2020. This includes the ban on hosting any gatherings with an expected attendance of 250 people or more over the next 30 days. In addition, the City has developed an overall COVID-19 response program which provides a framework outlining varying actions and activities that the City will take as the overall situation continues to mature. That plan will be reviewed and discussed by the City Council at their meeting on March 16, 2020.

The City is also conducting targeted outreach to our highest-risk population, including those residing in health care facilities, senior-assisted living, and senior communities. The Huntington Beach Fire Department (HBFD) and Senior Center have identified 3 skilled nursing facilities and 8 assisted living facilities that house our most at-risk community members.

HBready.com Website Developed

In an effort to keep the community informed about continuing COVID-19 issues in Surf City, we have developed and launched a new website, www.HBready.com, as part of our planned public outreach campaign. Through the website, community members will be able to access the most current and updated information regarding COVID-19 issues, as well as any impacts to City services and events.

“The City Council and I assure you we are monitoring the situation closely and are committed to keeping you updated on the steps we are taking to limit transmission. In these uncertain times, the City is taking a proactive approach to mitigating the impact of coronavirus, because we believe the health of our residents, businesses, and visitors, as well as our City employees, is of the utmost importance.”

- Mayor Lyn Semeta

The City’s new website, www.HBready.com, provides resources, important phone numbers, and the latest City updates on COVID-19. Information on the www.HBready.com website has been developed after consultation with County and State officials to ensure that the most accurate guidance available is located all in one place on the web.

To ensure that the most up-to-date information is made available on the www.HBready.com website, City leaders will conduct daily HB Ready meetings to consider the latest COVID-19 updates and make sure all pertinent information is posted regularly online and through our social media channels. Other updates such as event cancellations or City / School closures or modified hours of operations will also be posted on www.HBready.com.

Currently Impacted City Operations / Postponed Events

At this time, all City facilities remain open. However, in an effort to mitigate possible impacts to our highest risk populations, we have made adjustments to our programming at the Library and Senior Center. The changes include:

- Library service adjustments
 - Cancelling/postponing all special events and special programming at Library facilities.
 - Computer labs will be limited to every 3rd PC open to keep individuals at least 6 feet apart.
 - Volunteer driven activities at the Library will be postponed.

- Senior Center service adjustments
 - All essential senior care services **will remain operational**, including health checks, transit services, and meal services.
 - However, the City will be shutting down all special programming at the Senior Center so as to avoid group gatherings of high-risk populations.

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In addition, in response to the COVID-19 situation, a variety of community events in Surf City have been postponed. The most current listing of event postponements that the City is aware of includes the following:

March 14:	3/1 Run	April 4:	Bunny Run
March 14/15:	Kite Party	April 4:	Corgi Beach Day
March 20:	Creative Vision Art Show	April 11:	Easter Hunt
March 21:	Beachcruiser Meet Car Show	April 12:	Easter in the Park
March 25-29:	Jacks Surf Competition	April 12:	Sunrise Service at the Pier
March 28-29:	OC Yoga Festival	Weekly:	Surf City Nights
April 2-3:	Ragnar Relay	Weekly:	Pier Plaza Art Afaire
April 3-5:	IJSBA Jet Ski Competition		

“The measures we have taken are designed to prevent large scale transmission of the virus and allow the local health care system to have all the necessary resources needed to care for our most vulnerable populations when they need it most.”
- Mayor Lyn Semeta

Safety Reminders

The City encourages its community members to do their part and exercise precautionary measures to mitigate COVID-19 transmission, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds.

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