

Community and Recreation Facilities Branch

PARTNERS NEWSLETTER

The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in white text on a blue square background.

Good afternoon,

This is the **August 2020 CRF Partners Newsletter**, which will be sent monthly to keep you up-to-date about the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications for partner-operated and partners in city-operated facilities. Any information in this newsletter represents our best available knowledge at the time and is subject to change as the pandemic situation continues to evolve.

The decisions on what types of facilities and services are allowed to reopen and when are made by the provincial government and the Chief Medical Officer. Alberta is currently in Stage Two of Relaunch, which began on June 12, 2020. The details of what is allowed to reopen in stage two are [available here](#).

The City of Edmonton requires that each of its partner operated facilities develop a written reopening plan and share the plan with their City liaison, for information. The plans are not subject to an approval, but are required for record keeping.

The content of this newsletter is intended to provide general information and guidance for our City of Edmonton partners and is not meant to supersede any regulations, requirements, or advice given by the Government of Alberta or additional municipal bylaws and requirements. Should any additional regulations, requirements, or guidelines be made available that conflict with this document, that guidance should be followed over the advice contained here. If you have any questions, please contact your City liaison.

CITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES UPDATE

Arenas

On July 2, Arenas were the first City amenities to reopen. Clareview, Londonderry, Mill Woods, Callingwood, Kenilworth, Castle Downs, Russ Barnes, and the Meadows are now open! Additionally, Crestwood and Michael Cameron arenas opened for concrete users. All arena usage is by booking only (no public skate times).

Demand for arena bookings is up significantly from previous years at this time. An evaluation is underway on when additional facilities will reopen.

Two City of Edmonton arenas are being used as practice arenas for the NHL playoff series, [Terwillegar](#) and the Downtown Community Arena (attached to Rogers Place). The arenas are part of the ["NHL bubble"](#) and can only be accessed by staff and others who have been pre-approved in the "bubble" process. The Fitness Centre and Gymnasium in Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre are still open to the public, [by appointment only](#).



Arena users arriving to new health and safety protocols

Fitness Centres and Gymsnasiums

On July 6, the [first City fitness centres & gyms](#) opened in recreation centres. Commonwealth, Clareview, Kinsmen, the Meadows, and Terwillegar are now open! Entry times must be booked in advance on [MoveLearnPlay](#) or 311 and are time limited.

Equipment in fitness centres has been spaced out and are sanitized frequently. Walking tracks are being used to enable equipment spacing and are not open as tracks. Gymnasium use is limited to badminton and pickleball, and it is recommended that you bring your own equipment. Table Tennis is being considered as an additional gym activity to be added soon. Fitness centre and gym uptake is below capacity, but has been increasing weekly, with peak times in the morning and evening. [WELCOME VIDEO](#)



Physically distanced equipment in City fitness centres

Aquatic Facilities

On July 20, the first [City aquatic amenities](#) reopened. Clareview, Jasper Place, Bonnie Doon & Kinsmen are now open for lane swim, aquafit classes, swim lessons and public swim.

These activities look much different than in the past. Swim lessons are one person per instructor, lane swims are limited to one person per lane for a half hour, public swims are limited to 40 people, and aquafit classes are limited based on the size of the pool and ability to distance. As with all of our reopening facilities and amenities, all swim times must be booked in advance through [MoveLearnPlay](#) or 311 and are time limited.

Another way things look different is lifeguards wearing masks on the pool deck. Lifeguards are provided disposable masks for when on shift, but are also allowed to bring in their own cloth masks, if they prefer, as long as they fully cover nose, mouth, and chin, and don't have any inappropriate logos/sayings printed on them. Lifeguard rotations have been adjusted to include more frequent rotations to off deck areas to allow them to cool off. Rescue procedures have been modified so an in-water rescuer does not wear a mask, but as soon as they reach the pool edge, another lifeguard wearing a mask takes over. An extra guard has been added to shifts to ensure there is always an extra guard available to do first aid.

Due to physical distancing requirements, capacity is extremely limited for aquatic activities, especially lane swim. Since reopening, there have been a few challenges, including people booking multiple consecutive spots (e.g. 3 lane swims in a row for a total of 90 minutes of swimming), and no shows for booked times. The aquatic team is working on some public education to encourage sharing in this time of limited capacity and on the importance of cancelling a booking if unable to attend, to improve access for others.



Prince of Wales Armouries, City of Edmonton Archives, and Orange Hub

On July 6, Prince of Wales Armouries and City of Edmonton Archives opened, for appointments only. To book an appointment call 780-496-5989.

Orange Hub has implemented changes to the entry and check-in process for tenants and has limited public access. Room rentals remain closed at both facilities.

Seniors' Centres

On August 4, Northgate Lions Seniors Centre reopened. North Edmonton Seniors Association has been busy preparing for opening day and [program registration is open](#). Advanced registration has had solid uptake.

On September 14, Mill Woods Seniors & Multicultural Centre will reopen. [Mill Woods Senior Association](#) is offering [online programming](#) while the facility is closed. There are daily free classes available, as well as 6 week courses.

On November 2, Central Lions Seniors Centre will reopen. [Central Lions Seniors Association](#) will be holding their AGM on August 20, 1:00pm-3:00pm, which will include the election of board members and required bylaw amendments. Register to attend by emailing info@CentralLions.org or calling 780-442-0934, with your name, phone number and membership number.

Edmonton Public Libraries

On **August 4, EPL opened most branches**, as part of phase 3 of their [reopening plan](#). Visitors can now enter the locations, browse the shelves, access public computers, and more. Capacity is reduced, to enable physical distancing and face coverings are mandatory, per the new [City of Edmonton bylaw](#).

Branches that are **NOT open** are **McConachie, Stanley A. Milner, and West Henday Promenade**.

On **August 5, EPL also launched EPL on the Square**. In partnership with the City of Edmonton and community partners, EPL is offering library and other services in Churchill Square. While an important audience are Edmontonians experiencing homelessness, the services will be open to all. The Square will remain open to the public and pedestrian traffic.

Services available are:

- Computer stations with free Wifi for up to 45 minutes.
- Daily drop-in classes from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. for adults, such as conversation circles, sewing repair clinics, adult storytime and bring your own book club.
- Relaxation area with single-use books, comics and magazines.
- Hand sanitization station.
- Outreach workers from EPL, Boyle Street, Bissell Centre and Homeward Trust.

EPL continues to offer [EPL at Home](#), a selection of online resources, including ebooks, audiobooks, video streaming, interactive educational programs, and a digital storytime.

EPL has also gone fine free! "Eliminating late fees will help Edmontonians during this challenging time and will permanently reduce barriers to accessing our resources and services. All existing fees are forgiven."

INFORMATION - MANDATORY MASKS / FACE COVERINGS

On July 29, City Council passed a temporary bylaw on face coverings in public spaces.

Effective August 1, 2020 and for the remainder of 2020, face coverings are mandatory in all publicly accessible indoor spaces. This includes, but is not limited to, city property and city-operated buildings, the transit system (LRT, buses, and transit stations), vehicle-for-hire services, and private buildings accessed by the public, such as stores, entertainment venues, restaurants, malls and recreation centres.

Enforcement by the city will be focused on education and awareness of how wearing a face covering can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, but a \$100 fine could be issued for non-compliance. Refusal of service can also be possible for not wearing a face covering.

The term “face covering” is being used, as it is more inclusive than just masks. **Face coverings refers to any medical or non-medical masks or other covering that fully covers the nose, mouth and chin.** This could include bandanas, scarves, cloth, and non-medical masks, but not face shields.

Face coverings can be removed:

- when eating or drinking in a designated seating area
- as part of a religious or spiritual ceremony
- when engaged in water activities or physical exercise
- if a service requires temporary removal of a mask, such as dental work or a passport photo.

The bylaw does not apply to:

- areas within a business that are exclusively accessed by employees.
- areas where employees have a physical barrier between themselves and the public, such as transit drivers, and retail counters.
- buildings under provincial jurisdiction, such as schools, hospitals, and child care facilities

Other exemptions to the bylaw:

- children under the age of two
- people with underlying medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely wearing a face covering or putting on and removing it without assistance
- individuals providing care to someone with a disability in situations where wearing a mask would hinder their assistance

Business owners can decide for themselves if they wish to refuse service to patrons not wearing face coverings. Proof of being eligible for an exemption is not required.

The bylaw will be in effect until the end of 2020, when Council will decide whether it is necessary to continue.

For further information please visit edmonton.ca/masks

[Mask Toolkit for Businesses \(posters\)](#)

If citizens are looking for information on where to find EXEMPTION CARDS please use [this link and information.](#)

COVID-19 INFORMATION

HOW TO WEAR A NON-MEDICAL MASK

Non-medical masks, including homemade cloth masks, can help prevent the spread COVID-19. They are another tool to use in places where it's difficult to keep two metres from other people for extended periods of time – such as public transit, grocery stores, pharmacies, hair salons, airplanes and some retail shops.

Masks do not replace proper hygiene, physical distancing or isolation to prevent the spread.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WEARING AND CARING FOR YOUR MASK

alberta.ca/masks

Alberta

- [Alberta Health guidance on the proper use of masks.](#)
- The Chief Medical Officer of Health for the Edmonton Region, Dr. Chris Sikora, has some timely tips about wearing masks and face coverings in this [article and video](#).
- [More information and resources](#) about the bylaw and its exemptions, including [toolkits](#), [FAQs](#), and [poster templates](#).
- Instructions from Health Canada on [how to make sew and no-sew non-medical face coverings](#).

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EDMONTON

Edmonton's event producers are finding creative ways to bring their events to Edmontonians. Take a look at some of their ideas:

- [Edmonton International Street Performers Festival](#) - Play @ Home Zone
- [The Whyte Ave Art Walk](#) - Window Walk
- [Heritage Festival](#) - Virtual Heritage Festival
- [Edmonton Folk Music Festival](#) - The Hill at Home

- [Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival](#) - The Fringe That Never Was

Major performing arts organizations in Edmonton will not resume public performances before 2021. That includes [The Citadel Theatre](#), the [Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and Winspear Centre](#), [Edmonton Opera](#), and [Alberta Ballet](#).

"The decision was made, first and foremost, out of concern for the safety and comfort of our patrons. It also stems from the fact that the cost of mounting major public entertainment is such that it is not economically feasible to do so unless performances are robustly attended," says a statement.

The organizations continue to work on ways to bring performances to Edmontonians, both online and in-person, until it is viable to reopen.

CIVIC EVENTS & FESTIVALS

Civic Events & Festivals are accepting applications for outdoor public events!

Events can be up to 200 seated and 100 unseated based on site and service availability and compliance with the Provincial guidance documents. If you have already submitted an event application for an event scheduled to take place in the fall (September 1 to December 31, 2020), please contact the Civic Events and Festivals office at 780-944-7740 or phone your liaison to discuss event options in light of the AHS COVID-19 health guidelines and restrictions.

River Valley picnic and small gathering bookings have resumed!

A limited number of sites in select River Valley locations are available for booking, for gatherings of up to 200 people. Site booking is available online. All other picnic sites, including non-River Valley sites, remain available for spontaneous, non-booked use only.

[Civic Precinct](#) Open For Events! Includes Sir Winston Churchill Square, the City Hall Plaza, and Centennial Pavilion (Observation Deck)

Civic Services are limited but the public washroom is open for use. Events will be required to comply with current AHS COVID-19 restrictions. Submit an online [Civic Events Application](#) for consideration. Parkland Rental Fees will apply.



We are happy to announce that the [fountain renewal project for City Hall Plaza](#) is complete. Due to AHS COVID-19 restrictions for public spaces, this feature will not be operational during the 2020 year.

There are ongoing construction activities occurring in the plaza during the 2020 year. This includes the replacement of the paving stones around the City Hall, the redesign of the East Formal Gardens, repairing cement on Sir Winston Churchill Square and the continued construction of the LRT River Valley Line on 102 Avenue.

Due to limited resources roadway events are still not being permitted, however community activations are being supported through Block Parties and Play Streets, which are hosted in neighbourhoods.

Here are the changes to the [Block Party and Play Streets process](#)

1. There is a **new online Google form** vs a pdf.
 2. Neighbourhood Services (NBHD) is the **new primary contact** responsible for the review and approval of the form and can be reached at blockpartyplaystreet@edmonton.ca.
 3. **Traffic Operations will no longer drop off and pick up TTC equipment.** NBHD Services will work with the event organizer to arrange for the pickup and return of Temporary Traffic Control (TTC) materials.
 4. Instead of barricades, the standard TTC setup for a residential street will be a Road Closed A Frame sign and pylons.
 5. Anyone applying using the old form will be directed to the new form. The applicant will have the option to have the permit team enter the form on their behalf into the new google form and follow the new process, or the applicant may choose to do this themselves.
-

FAQs

As we progress through these uncertain times, we know that you have many questions. Many of the answers are dependent on the provincial government and the Chief Medical Officer.

Here we will try and answer the most pressing and frequent questions to the best of our ability. Please remember that these answers are based on a point in time and our best available knowledge at the time. Continue to check provincial, federal, and association sources.

FAQ - Change Rooms

In order to reopen safely, there have been substantial changes to the availability and use of change rooms, with some differences based on amenity.

Arenas

Arenas are currently only available for group bookings. As most groups are following the provincial guidance for [cohorts](#), they are able to use the change rooms in a “near normal” way. If a group is not a sports cohort, they must maintain 2m physical distancing at all times. The biggest difference is that showers are not available.

Fitness Centre, Gymnasium (Dry Change Rooms)

In general, they are NOT in use at all at this time. So far, there have been no issues - people adapted to it pretty easily. As people start bringing more clothing/jackets, we will likely add in use of lockers, but not open the dry change rooms for some time yet. We regularly monitor AHS guidance and will update our procedures as they update their guidance / recommendations for change rooms.

Aquatics (Wet Change Rooms)

Aquatics change rooms have had the biggest changes.

- Change rooms are now one way - people can only use them on the way out. Swimmers are required to come already dressed in their swim attire (usually under their clothes).

- They enter the pool deck through an alternate entrance, not through the change room.
- They are provided with a bin to place their belongings in, which they bring with them to the pool deck. There are also “valuables lockers” available, if they need to lock up keys, phone, wallet, etc.
- When done, they bring their bin into the change room, where they can shower and change.
- The change rooms have signage to encourage physical distancing and not to touch certain features, such as hand dryers.
- The bins are left in the lobby to be disinfected by staff.

People have been happy with the changes and there have been few issues. Some people struggled to carry the bins, so we have some with wheels now. People can also bring their own bags onto the deck, if they prefer to not use a bin.



IMPORTANT LINKS

Provincial Guidelines (*this is not an exhaustive list)

- [All guidance documents](#) - updated frequently, check regularly
- [Professional Sporting Events](#) - updated August 4
- [Trade shows and exhibiting events](#) - updated August 4
- [Gondolas, trams and chairlifts](#) - updated July 21
- [Sport, physical activity and recreation](#) - updated July 20
- [Swimming pools and whirlpools](#) - updated July 17
- [Outdoor vocal concerts](#) - updated July 17
- [Outdoor events](#) - updated June 30
- [Drive-in Events](#) - updated June 30

[Alberta Biz Connect](#)

[Alberta Relaunch Strategy](#)

[Government of Alberta Youtube channel - with Covid-19 updates](#)

Grant Support

This list pertains to information within Alberta. Further grants may be available to groups through other various levels of government and support.

[City of Edmonton Economic Recovery Grant](#)

[Edmonton Arts Council](#)

[Alberta Foundation for the Arts](#)

[Government of Alberta Not For Profits Grants](#)

[Government of Alberta Community Initiatives Program](#)

Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant

City of Edmonton Links

[City of Edmonton Covid-19 information](#)

[City of Edmonton COVID-19 Relaunch Dashboard](#)

[Road to Recovery](#) - a review of the results of recent surveys of Edmontonians' opinions and preferences on a number of COVID-related topics

[Activities, Parks & Recreation](#)

[Neighbourhoods & City Parks](#)

Community Information Resources:

[Community and Non-Profit Supports for Edmontonians](#)

[Financial Empowerment webpage](#) and [subscribe to e-newsletter](#) (currently a weekly e-news that also highlights COVID emergency supports from Federal to Municipal and private sector)

[Keep Neighbouring e-newsletter subscription](#) (biweekly newsletter from Neighbourhood Services)

[Community Social Worker e-newsletter subscription](#) (periodic newsletter with community supports and resources for partners)

[Workshops, Conferences & Webinars](#) - compiled by Edmonton Sport Council