

# NEWS RELEASE

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## City of Nanaimo update on the opening of recreation facilities

*Facilities closed in March due to COVID-19 pandemic*

### Summary

A planning process is underway to reopen City of Nanaimo recreation facilities. Staff from the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture are developing a complex and detailed reopening strategy to ensure the health and safety of everyone entering a City facility.

The process for developing this Reopening Strategy involves the following steps:

- consulting and working through established guidelines and recommendations from various organizations, including the Province, WorkSafe BC, BC Recreation and Parks Association, Lifesaving Society, viaSport and more
- conducting an in-depth Risk Assessment and preparing a Site Safety Plan (as required by Worksafe BC), for five major recreation centres, four sheets of ice, three aquatics facilities and four activity centres
- reviewing programs and services and determining what can safely continue, what needs modification and what needs to be delayed during this recovery phase
- working through a Service Delivery review where it is determined what can operate at each facility and with how many people
- revising operating schedules based on enhanced cleaning practices, physical distancing and provincial order of 50 or less per activity
- training and recertifying staff on new safety protocols, such as enhanced lifesaving protocols, retrofitting buildings, purchasing specialized supplies and obtaining required personal protective equipment

The reopening plans are well underway, and staff will provide an update to the community as soon as possible once plans are confirmed.

The City of Nanaimo Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture closed most of its facilities for programs, rentals and drop-in activities on Monday, March 16 after the Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, cancelled gatherings of more than 50 people as a way to slow down the transmission of COVID-19. Since that time, most outdoor amenities have reopened and some outdoor programs have resumed. For more information on the City's response to COVID-19, visit [www.nanaimo.ca/COVID19](http://www.nanaimo.ca/COVID19).

*Strategic Link:* Ensuring the safety and well-being of residents supports a livable community.

### Key Points

- Several recreation programs, usually held indoors, have moved to outdoor spaces. Some fitness, art, language and music programs are available for registration, and there are spaces for summer camps held at Beban, Bowen, Departure Bay, Harewood Covered Sports Box and a roving camp where kids are entirely outside meeting at different locations each week.
- To register for programs go to <https://cityofnanaimo.perfectmind.com> or phone 250-756-5200.
- Reopening plans are well underway and an update with potential reopening dates will be provided to the community as soon as possible.

## Quotes

"Issues related to COVID-19 have been challenging for the entire community. Staff is working diligently to create a reopening strategy so that citizens can get back to participating in activities that occur in pools, arenas and recreation centres in a safe manner."

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