

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed October 6, 2020

City recreation facilities following province-wide COVID-19 safety protocols

Summary

While most City of Nanaimo's recreation facilities are open and operating, staff are continuing to adapt, adjust and learn as a result of the ongoing changes to health and safety requirements as a result of the pandemic.

The City has taken a very thoughtful, informed and cautious approach to reopening its facilities as a way to ensure the health and safety of everyone that uses the facilities. This method also provides opportunity to carefully navigate the unforeseen issues that may arise with the opening of these facilities.

The safety protocols and procedures in the recreation facilities ensure that the City is in compliance with the Provincial Health Orders. Procedures have been put in place to meet the physical distancing requirements and mass gatherings order of a maximum of 50 people in the facility/event set out by the Province of BC. These two Provincial Health Orders mean that the City must control access in and out of a facility, reassign room capacities and reevaluate how many people can participate in a program or event. Each City operated facility has a COVID-19 Operating Plan to follow based on size and layout. The plan defines how revised activities and bookings may take place, outlines enhanced cleaning practices, maps out pedestrian traffic and allocates public sanitization stations.

The procedures established enable the City to be in compliance with the provincial orders. This not only ensures public safety, but it allows the facilities to remain open to the public. For example, not allowing spectators in some facilities or allowing the general public to linger in lobby areas is in place to meet the Provincial Health Order for mass gatherings.

Adjustments will be made as staff continue to review and update safety protocols that align with the province and other governing bodies, including WorkSafe BC, Island Health, viaSport, BCRPA (British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association) and other organizations.

City staff are also connecting with other Municipalities and Regional Districts to ensure that guidelines and protocols outlined by the City of Nanaimo are consistent with other communities on Vancouver Island and across the province.

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

Key Points

- Each facility has its own COVID-19 Safety Plan that takes into account the unique circumstances for each area.
- Safety protocols are continually being reviewed and are adjusted as needed to align with Provincial Health Orders.

Quotes

"The City of Nanaimo remains committed to keeping patrons safe through this pandemic. We understand how important it will be to continue to adapt as needed to ensure that Provincial Health Orders are upheld while still helping to find solutions to address concerns brought forth by the community."

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