



Town of Ponoka Introduces New Temporary Restrictions at Town Facilities Due to COVID-19

Ponoka Civic Building Closed to Public Access; Town Office Remains 'Open' for Business

(November 13, 2020 – Ponoka, Alberta) – In response to new provincial health directives yesterday for communities in 'Enhanced' COVID-19 status areas to take measures to help reduce spread of the virus, the Town of Ponoka is announcing the following new restrictions for the next two weeks.

The Town Office at the Ponoka Civic Centre will be closed to public access beginning Monday, November 16, but will remain open for business by phone, email, fax and online. Citizens can contact the Town Office by phone at 403-783-4431, by email at town@ponoka.ca, or by fax at 403-783-6745.

“Our staff will still be available to respond to service requests and to answer questions from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday to Friday each week. We’re just asking citizens to do business with us at a distance for the next two weeks to help limit the spread of this virus. We are taking a proactive approach to help protect the health and safety of our citizens, our staff and their families,” said Sandra Lund, Interim Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Ponoka.

Citizens are encouraged to make bill payments online through their bank, by mail, by credit card using the online credit card payment slip available at www.ponoka.ca or by phoning the Town Office at 403-783-4431.

Aquaplex and Arena Remain Open with New Restrictions

Other measures being put in place for the next two weeks, effective immediately from November 13 to 27, include:

- Temporary cancellation of swimming lessons, Junior Lifeguard Club and Aquafit classes at the Aquaplex. Lane swimming, Public Swim and Family Swim will continue to be offered but occupancy numbers at the facility will be reduced to a maximum of 20 visitors at one time.
- No spectators will be permitted at the Ponoka Arena Complex and the Curling Rink. Those facilities will be limited to athletes and support staff only for the next two weeks. All games are temporarily cancelled at the Arena. Only team practices are permitted.
- Public skating is also temporarily cancelled at the Arena. Arena staff are working to reopen the outdoor rink as soon as possible.
- The Hudson’s Green Community Activity Centre is temporarily closed to public bookings.

“These measures will remain in place for two weeks at which time we will re-evaluate based on current information at that time,” said Lund.



Santa Claus Parade Postponed

In consultation with the Ponoka & District Chamber of Commerce, the Santa Claus parade and tree lighting ceremony planned for November 20 will be postponed for two weeks and re-evaluated by early December. The Chamber's Almost Midnight Madness event and the fireworks sponsored by the Town and Ponoka County for November 20 will still be happening as planned. Citizens are asked to please follow all provincial health requirements and recommendations, including physical distancing. Wearing a mask is also encouraged.

Town Continues Business as Usual

Town staff are continuing to ensure the ongoing delivery of essential Town services, including clean drinking water, waste water treatment, electrical services, curbside waste collection and solid waste management. "It's business as usual at the Town in terms of daily operations. The only difference right now is how we interact with the public in keeping with provincial directives to help reduce the spread of COVID-19," said Lund.

Citizens are encouraged to continue using outdoor recreation facilities such as the walking trail system to stay active during the pandemic. Town staff are working to reopen the outdoor rink at the Arena as soon as possible.

Protect Yourself and Others

Ponoka citizens are encouraged to protect themselves and others against the spread of COVID-19 by doing the following:

- Not holding social gatherings at their homes with anyone who doesn't already live there;
- Not attending gatherings in other communities or at other people's homes;
- Use good hygiene practices, such as frequent handwashing or hand sanitizing;
- Cover coughs and sneezes;
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands;
- Stay at least 2 metres from others who aren't part of your cohort or live in your home;
- Wear a mask in public when you can't physically distance; and
- Stay at home if you are feeling unwell.

For more information on how to protect yourself and others, please visit www.alberta.ca/COVID19.

For Media Inquiries:

Sandra Smith
Communications Manager
Town of Ponoka
403-783-0158
sandra.smith@ponoka.ca