



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 4, 2020

### **City Hall, some facilities reopening to public in phased-in approach May 6**

*Social distancing, face coverings and workplace protocols encouraged*

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** — Murfreesboro City Hall will reopen to the public Wednesday, May 6 as the City continues a measured, phased “reopening” under Gov. Lee’s Tennessee Pledge guidelines and expired “Stay-at-Home” Order lifted on April 30.

Reopening adheres to the Economic Recovery Group guidelines and President Trump’s “Opening Up American Again” guidance. Other City facility operational guidelines are provided below. Phased guidelines allow local governments to begin phased operations and eased restrictions.

On April 28, Mayor McFarland provided guidance on relaxing restrictions under Murfreesboro’s “Safer at Home Reopening Guidelines” by advising local non-essential businesses to resume commerce safely while maintaining social distancing. The guidance included Parks and Recreation facilities, some of which reopened May 4, 2020. The latest, updated Guidelines are attached.

“While I’m pleased to announce that City Hall and other City facilities will resume public operations under the lifting of Governor Lee’s order and phased modifications, we need to stay the course and remain vigilant,” said Mayor Shane McFarland. “Some restrictive measures, especially for vulnerable populations, remain appropriate. Everyone should continue to observe social distancing, wear face coverings in public, and practice good hygiene.”

McFarland added, “This is Phase 1 of the phased return to normalcy. Returning to normal will take time, but the need to open up government operations along with businesses, which have suffered under the emergency shutdown, is critical to commerce and economic welfare. The top priority has been and will continue to be public safety.”

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## Facilities Phased Plans:

Below is a list of pertinent opening information of City operations and facilities:

- **City Schools closed** for the remainder of the school year. Visit <http://www.cityschools.net/> for information.
- **Rover buses have continued to operate** during the emergency with temporary route changes to Memorial Blvd. implemented on March 18. Rover continues to operate the full schedule with CDC recommended cleaning and disinfectant measures in place. Rover advises all passengers to continue social distancing and encourages use of face coverings for personal protection. For more information, visit <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/248/Public-Transit---Rover-Bus-System>.
- **Murfreesboro Electric's** main lobby remains closed to walk-in traffic, with reopening to be announced at a later date. During modified operations, MED has provided customers with drive-in, online, phone-in and web app service. For electronic pay, visit [www.MurfreesboroElectric.com](http://www.MurfreesboroElectric.com).
- Murfreesboro **Water Resources customer service** lobby will reopen May 6 after being closed to only drive-through and online payment service. Visit [www.murfreesborotn.gov/MWRD](http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/MWRD) for electronic billing or call (615) 848-3209, Option 1.
- **City Court** in-person proceedings will reopen effective Thursday, May 7 with only 10 persons allowed in the courtroom at a time after being closed since March 13. Call the Clerk's office at 615-890-2142 for more information.
- **Parks & Recreation Main Office** reopened May 4 after being closed since March 23.
- **Indoor recreation facilities** reopened May 4 with limited activities. For details on Parks & Recreation facilities, visit <https://www.murfreesborotn.gov/1700/Cancellations-and-Closures>.
- **Golf Department** resumed modified play (walking only) at Old Fort Golf Course March 26. Golf carts and the driving range were available beginning Monday, May 4. Bloomfield Links parking lot also reopened May 4<sup>th</sup>. The VA Golf Course reopened May 4<sup>th</sup>. The clubhouse at both Old Fort and the VA remain closed. More information at [www.oldfortgolfclub.com](http://www.oldfortgolfclub.com).
- **Buildings with modified access during the crisis have eased restrictions:**
  - The Police Department lobby remains open. The public should call Records for copies of reports and continue to use Teleserve if feasible.
  - The Murfreesboro Fire Rescue Department Administrative Office reopened to the public Monday, May 4. Fire stations are open to the public, but no public tours are being hosted at this time.
  - Fleet Services lobby reopened to the public, Monday, May 4.
  - The Solid Waste Department lobby reopened to the public, Monday, May 4.
  - The Street Department reopened to the public, Monday, May 4.
- Since April 16, **City Council meetings** have been conducted electronically with no physical public access in order to protect public health, safety and welfare in light of the coronavirus and to comply with CDC guidelines. Citizens were strongly encouraged to watch meetings on CityTV, the City's Facebook page, YouTube, Roku and Apple TV. **Public Hearings** on May 7, 2020, will be held in person in City Council Chambers. Social distancing measures will be followed. Visit <http://tn-murfreesboro2.civicplus.com/1709/Public-Hearings-May-7-2020>.
- For information on public meetings, **Boards and Commissions**, including electronic viewing on CityTV and online platforms, visit the City's website homepage at: <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/>.

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In March, City Hall and other City facilities closed to the public in efforts to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and to avoid a surge in local hospital capacity. The goal was to balance the community's needs for critical services with employee and public safety. Limited staffing and alternative scheduling were designed to reduce potential spread of the virus. While some service delivery was delayed, the City's critical operations: Police, Fire, Water and Sewer, Communications and disaster management, and Solid Waste operated fully. During closure, City hall business continued on a limited basis, mostly through online servicing and alternative measures to help maintain continuity of government and delivery of critical City services to citizens.

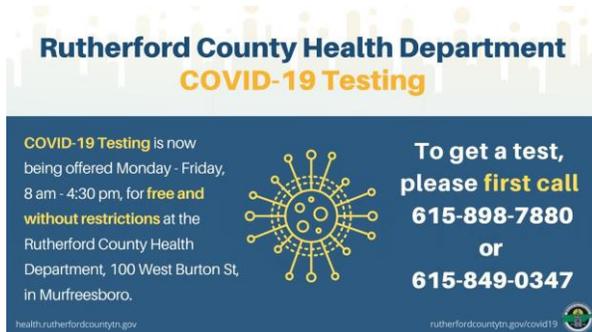
**Social Distancing Citywide Continues:**

Even with the reopening of facilities, physical distancing and sanitizing protocols must be adhered to in City facilities to contain the spread of Covid-19 and prevent a possible resurgence of the virus. This includes CDC guidance for wearing face coverings in public, frequent hand washing and hand sanitizer usage, disinfecting surfaces and avoiding meetings in groups of more than 10. **Vulnerable individuals**, including those with pre-existing conditions, should continue to stay home unless needing to leave for a medical emergency.

In addition, members of all households with vulnerable residents should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus home. Stringent precautions are recommended for these households. Precautions should be taken to protect vulnerable residents. The elderly and individuals with serious underlying health conditions (high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those with compromised immune systems) should remain isolated.

The City is still prohibiting visits to the **Senior Center** on St. Clair Street to protect this vulnerable population. Interaction with the elderly population at senior living and nursing home facilities in our community should adhere to strict CDC protocols regarding social distancing and hygiene.

Any Person with medical concerns should contact their primary healthcare provider or call the Rutherford County Health Department at 615-898-7880 or 615-849-0347 Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. to be connected with appropriate resources for testing.



**Rutherford County Health Department**  
**COVID-19 Testing**

COVID-19 Testing is now being offered Monday - Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm, for **free and without restrictions** at the Rutherford County Health Department, 100 West Burton St, in Murfreesboro.



To get a test, please **first call** **615-898-7880** or **615-849-0347**

health.rutherfordcountynj.gov rutherfordcountynj.gov/covid19

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## **Testing and Contact Tracing:**

**Expanded testing** for Covid-19 remains a high priority for the Rutherford County Health Department of both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals who want to be tested. Murfreesboro Police officers continued staffing the Covid-19 testing site at the Murfreesboro Medical Clinic as well as staffing drive-through rapid testing by the Rutherford County Health Department, Saturday, April 18 and May 2. The County Health Department is tracing positive contacts to quarantine patients and those who have come into contact with confirmed individuals.

## **Parks & Recreation Facilities:**

In addition to opening City Hall, some **Murfreesboro Parks** facilities reopened to the public, as part of Phase 1, effective Monday, May 4:

- Greenway, hiking trails, bike trails, open green spaces, outdoor rest rooms are open.
- **Adams Tennis Complex** opened indoor play with strict physical distancing and sanitation protocols.
- **Cannonsburgh Village** grounds opened, but the Visitor's Center remains closed.
- **McFadden Community Center** reopened for pre-planned structured programs and activities only. No open gym or game room play.
- **Patterson Park Community Center** opened weight room, exercise, fitness classes and indoor track, but Washington Theatre, game room, pool, racquetball courts, coffee stations and locker rooms are closed.
- **Sports\*Com** opened weight room, fitness classes, Indoor track, but pools, coffee stations, locker rooms and open gym are closed.
- **Wilderness Station** at Barfield Crescent Park trails and restroom opened, but Visitor Center and Gift Shop remains closed.
- **Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center** remains closed.
- **Gateway Island Reception Center** remains closed.
- **Ballfields** and **Sports Complexes**: Barfield Crescent Park, StarPlex, McKnight, Old Fort Park ballfields, Siegel Soccer Park, remain closed.
- **Playgrounds and Pavilions** remain closed.
- **Bark Parks**: at Cason Trailhead and at General Bragg Trailhead remain closed.

Social distancing guidelines, use of protective equipment, sanitation and disinfecting protocols in high traffic areas remain in effect at these Park facilities. Follow the latest City of Murfreesboro reopenings at <https://www.murfreesborotn.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2831>.

“As the City and our community reopens we continue to monitor the situation and are prepared with our County partners to take immediate and appropriate steps to mitigate any situation that may arise.” said **City Manager Craig Tindall**. “We all greatly appreciate those employees who worked very hard throughout this situation to maintain a high level of service despite limited staffing and resources.”

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Under the Mayor's Reopening Guidelines and Tennessee Pledge, some businesses previously closed under Stay-at-Home orders were allowed to reopen beginning April 27:

- Restaurants with sit-down dining (April 27)
- Retail (April 30)
- Gyms, Exercise and Fitness Centers (May 1)
- Salons, Barbers and Close Contact Services (May 6)

However, these venues must operate under strict physical distancing, sanitation and specific guidance protocols. **Bars remain closed at this time.**

**Elective and non-urgent medical procedures** were allowed to resume safely May 1 as clinically appropriate after Gov. Lee's Order expired April 30.

For Universal guidance on these and other private sector business, visit <https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19/economic-recovery/general-guidelines-for-businesses.html>.

Mayor McFarland's "Safer at Home Reopening Guidelines" can be viewed on the City's Coronavirus Information page at <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11476/Murfreesboro-Safer-at-Home-Reopening-Guide-Amended-542020>.

The City continues to encourage citizens to follow existing CDC and Tennessee Department of Health guidelines and recommendations for social distancing and good hygiene:

- **Social Distance** practices, avoiding crowded spaces, washing hands, and wearing recommended face coverings in public settings remain recommended. That means that all individuals, when in public (parks, outdoor recreation areas, shopping, etc.), should maximize physical distance from others.
- **Social settings** of more than 10 people, where appropriate distancing may not be practical, should be avoided unless precautionary measures are observed. Avoid socializing in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.
- **Workplaces** should continue to encourage telework, whenever possible and feasible with business operations. Returning to work in phases or alternating schedules, restricting non-essential travel and restricting or closing Common Areas where workers congregate and interact, as well as social distancing protocols, should be enforced. Special accommodations should be provided for workers who are members of the vulnerable population.
- **Wearing face coverings** in public.
- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Cover your cough** and sneezing.
- **Avoid touching your face**, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Stay home when you are sick** and call your physician or the County Health Department at 615-898-7880 or the State Information Hotline: 1-877-857-2945 for guidance.
- **Stay home if you come into contact** with someone who is sick.
- **Clean and disinfect** objects (e.g., cell phone, computer) and high touch surfaces.

Health and Safety Mitigation measures for returning to work include:

- Frequent hand washing
- Access to wash stations and hand sanitizers for employees and visitors
- Disinfecting frequently used items and surfaces

- Requesting that employee's self-temperature check prior to work shift
- Maintaining appropriate social distancing from employees and the public; avoiding meetings in groups of more than 10, including break rooms and common areas
- Indoor and outdoor waiting areas for sufficient accommodation of social distancing
- Permitting use of face coverings by staff who come into contact with visitors
- Use of temporary physical barrier (e.g. plexiglass window) for reception areas and customer service employees
- Accommodating employees with pre-existing conditions

Citizens can follow updated Coronavirus information from the City of Murfreesboro and our State and Federal partners on the City of Murfreesboro website.

<https://www.murfreesborotn.gov/1690/Coronavirus-Information>.

For information announced by the Governor, including update guidance, visit

<https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19.html>.

*For City News online, visit [www.Murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.Murfreesborotn.gov).*

**Photos, Graphics attached**

1. *City of Murfreesboro Logo.jpg*
2. *City "Safer at Home Reopening Guidelines" cover page.jpg*
3. *City "Safer at Home Reopening Guidelines.pdf*

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