



Pleasant Hill Recreation
& Park District

ADMINISTRATION

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May 12, 2020

TO: Supervisor Candace Andersen and Supervisor Karen Mitchoff
CC: Dr. Chris Farnitano
FROM: Michelle Lacy, General Manager

**Re: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONALS**

On behalf of public park and recreation service providers across Contra Costa County, we ask Contra Costa County Health Officer, Dr. Farnitano entrust park and recreation professionals with re-activating park spaces and recreation facilities to the benefit of the public and to build confidence that we can do so in a consistent, progressive and responsible manner.

We acknowledge that we have entered a unique time in our County's history and that social/physical distancing and protections from communicable diseases will be a factor for our industry to bear in mind moving forward. Further, we acknowledge that sacrifices must be made, and we accept our responsibility to make substantive and meaningful changes to the way we deliver services.

We share a common goal to provide vital and accessible services that ensure safe and healthy communities for all residents, with special consideration for youth, seniors and other vulnerable populations.

We believe public parks and recreation spaces, facilities/community centers, programs and services are crucial in the recovery process, as social isolation and lack of physical and outdoor experiences negatively impact the mental, emotional and physical health of citizens. Traditionally local neighborhood and community park utilization by Californians is over 90%, demonstrating the need for community members to access these properties safely. Local parks support social equity, access to nature and healthy spaces in proximity to one's home. In fact, local parks are an equal-access destination and experience for all segments of society regardless of income, racial makeup, religion, or sexual orientation. Parks and outdoor recreation environments provide some of the lowest cost, most effective public health interventions available in our communities.

Parks and recreation professionals can offer programs, services, and facilities in a manner consistent with reducing the opportunity for community transmission of COVID-19 through implementation of safe practices including social distancing, collection of information for contact tracing, education of the public, and sanitation of public spaces.

As of the May 7, 2020 Health Order a variety of low-risk outdoor recreation activities and facilities were opened for participation including golf, tennis, and

skate parks, as well as small group childcare/summer camps for essential and work-from-home employees. With the summer months fast approaching, we believe that we can offer safe recreation activities which will promote overall wellness while educating the public on safe social distancing during such activities and gather vital information on participants to assist with contact tracing.

We believe by controlling access to recreation facilities and programs we can assist the Health Services Department to meet indicator 4 and achieve its goal of reaching 90% of all contacts identified. Therefore, all recommendations for offering access to municipal recreation services include careful monitoring of groups, registrations, and contacts. This is in addition, to physical changes made to facilities to eliminate untraceable groups from interacting such as separating entry and exit routes.

While the most essential activities including hiking, walking, and biking have been available during the Shelter-in-Place orders, we feel that subsequent Health Orders should consider allowing park and recreation professionals to develop guidelines around safe participation in the following activities listed below by risk-assessment for the potential community spread of COVID-19.

Lower-Risk Activities should be considered as a minimum risk to community transmission with the implementation of safety protocols to keep strict social distancing, use of face masks, signage, collection of contact information for tracing, wellness checks, hand-washing stations, staggered start-times, non-shared equipment and frequent sanitization.

Recreation Activities:

- I-on-I Appointments
- Small Group Classes which are sedentary in nature such as art, music, crafts
- Childcare and Summer Camps with up to 25 children in stable group at least one week in length
- Lap Swim
- Private Swim Lessons
- Private or small group instruction in outdoor activities such as tennis
- Art Gallery/Museums/Nature Center

Outdoor Facilities:

- Dog Parks
- Disc Golf
- Pool Facilities (open only to offer approved low-risk activities)
- Park Restrooms

Medium-Risk Activities should be considered when larger groups (25-50 people) can gather with some distance and safety protocols to further reduce the opportunity for community transmission. Including limiting participation based upon space to increase social distance, signage, face masks, wellness checks, stagger start times, increased sanitizing and collecting information for contact tracing.

- Active Group Classes with no or limited shared equipment- sports; enrichment; exercise;
- Sports Leagues with limited contact including softball; baseball; bocce; swim team
- Bingo
- Recreation Swim
- Facility Rentals by reservation only for small groups less than 50
- Dining/Lunch for seniors and those in need
- Group Swim Lessons
- Water Fitness Classes

Outdoor Facilities:

- Group Picnics by Reservation

High-risk activities should be considered when most distance requirements have been loosened, need for contact tracing is eliminated and safety precautions are such that individuals are responsible for reducing opportunity for transmission such as frequent hand-washing, wearing of masks, and no-touching of those not in household.

- Sports with greater physical contact including lacrosse, soccer, basketball, football, rugby
- Events such as concerts, festivals, street fairs
- Games with shared equipment such as mah-jongg; bridge; Pinochle; Bunco
- Drop-in classes and facility use that does not collect contact information
- Theater Performances
- Splash Pads
- Playgrounds

As subsequent Health Orders allow us to provide park and recreation services and facilities to our residents, we will develop strict protocols for each activity and facility prior to opening. The protocol will identify steps, protocols, and rules around safe reopening in the following categories:

- Adherence Management- identify responsible parties for ensuring strict adherence and monitoring for all activities and facilities
- Social Distancing- identify steps for ensuring strict social distancing

- Face Coverings- identify appropriate use of face covering for activity level and age of participant
- Sanitization- identify frequency and surface sanitization schedule
- Facility Changes- identify physical changes to limit interaction of non-cohort groups
- Contact Tracing- identify level of contact information required and availability for ease of use by Health Services
- Wellness Checks- identify protocol for assessing wellness of staff and participants
- Signage- identify necessary signage regarding protocols and safety measures including appropriate locations for posting. Includes but not limited to standing areas, barriers, rules, safety protocols
- Equipment- identify use of equipment including sanitizing requirements when appropriate

Since March 17, we have been working together to make sure that there is consistency throughout the County regarding best practices and strict protocols to reduce the potential for community spread of COVID-19. The National Park and Recreation Association has developed ["Specific Guidance for Common Park and Recreation Spaces, Facilities, and Programs"](#) which has provided the roadmap for our recommendations.

We are committed to developing a cohesive set of guidelines to provide consistency in implementation and enforcement throughout Contra Costa County to reduce the risk of community transmission of the virus while participating in active recreation activities throughout the summer.

Please let us know how we can be of assistance to provide information and guidance in safely opening park and recreation facilities, programs, and activities.

Sincerely,

Michelle Lacy, General Manager
Pleasant Hill Recreation and Park District

Cc: Park and Recreation Directors of Contra Costa County