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**A S H L A N D**

*City of Ashland, Wisconsin*

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: David Wegener, City of Ashland Fire Chief and Covid-19 Public Information Officer

Subject: Update on Access to Public Buildings and Public Spaces Following the WI Supreme Court decision striking down the Safer at Home Order

Ashland, WI – May 15, 2020

The following is a summary of the City of Ashland's current policies regarding access to City buildings and public spaces. Please keep in mind that this is a rapidly evolving situation that is subject to change pending a joint decision by the Governor and the State Legislature going forward. These policies have been developed based upon current recommendations of local health authorities.

**Access to City Buildings:** City Hall will continue to be closed to the public until the end of May 2020. Starting June 1 and continuing until the end of June, the public will be allowed access by appointment only. City staff are still available by phone regardless, by calling 715-682-7071, during office hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, if you need assistance. The Vaughn Library will open to the public on Tuesday May 26 with the following adjustments to service. Mon – Fri 9 am – 10 am open for elderly and those at medical risk. 10 – 3 pm open to the public. 3 – 6 pm curbside service only. Saturday open from 9 -2 for both curbside and inside service. Please call or visit the library website if you have questions 715-682-7060 [www.vaughnlibrary.org](http://www.vaughnlibrary.org). The 2nd floor meeting space & computer lab remain closed at this time. The Bretting Community Center will remain closed to the public until June 1. Starting June 1, the Bretting Community Center will be available to the public by appointment only from 9am – 4pm to register for summer programming and to take payment on accounts. At this time, no indoor programming or access to public spaces will be available. Programs offerings will be limited in class size and a summer programming schedule will be released shortly. The Ashland Fire Department is closed to the public except by appointment only (715-682-7052). The Fire Department training room will remain closed for meetings or public gatherings. Ashland Public Works is closed to the public except by appointment only (715-682-7061) during office hours through June 2020.

**Access to City Spaces:** Public campgrounds at Prentice Park and Kreher Park are closed through May 26, 2020. Beginning May 27, 2020, only independent camping units (campers with bathrooms) will be welcomed at the campgrounds, limited access to restrooms but no access to showers will be available. Tent camping sites at Prentice Park will be closed in 2020 for maintenance. Camping is available at a first come first serve basis. Social distancing and good hygiene are strongly encouraged while camping. City Public Beaches will be open effective immediately, and the public is strongly encouraged to maintain 6' distance from non-family members. Outdoor pavilions at City Parks will be closed to the public until further notice with no reservations taken.

Skatepark and playgrounds are open to the public with the following warning. Use of these facilities is strongly discouraged and is "use at your own risk". **The city does not have the necessary personnel and resources available to properly sanitize playground equipment in between each use.** Parents wishing to allow their child to use playground equipment must use their best judgment and are strongly encouraged to practice social distancing of 6' or more from non-family members and to bring their own hand sanitizer to the playground. Please stay home and keep your children home if you or they exhibit signs of illness, such as coughing, sneezing, or fever. Please remember to wash your hands thoroughly when you return home from a public space and wear a mask or face covering when in close proximity to other people.

We all want things to return to the way they were before the COVID pandemic. We are very fortunate that we have done a good job of keeping the virus at bay in our area. However, all of the above is subject to change in the event that local numbers of confirmed cases increase. In addition, remember that until we get a vaccine for this virus, we all must do our part to prevent the spread and protect ourselves and others from this disease.

We all have a part to play in having an enjoyable summer and protecting each other. Thank you to everyone for your patience. Be safe!