

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Saturday, March 21, 2020

On Friday, March 20th, Governor Pritzker issued an Executive Order requiring all Illinoisans to stay in their homes to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus. This order takes effect at 5:00 p.m. today.

The order prohibits things like visiting the homes of friends and holding gatherings of any size and closes all nonessential establishments, including most retail, recreation and entertainment businesses. This Order does NOT, however, prohibit essential activities like going to the grocery store, receiving medical care, or taking your pet for a walk.

Since the Governor issued this order, I have received many questions on how it will be enforced. Steger's police department is responsible for enforcement. That said, our police officers will not stop residents who are on their way to or from work or who are out for necessities like going to the pharmacy or getting groceries, or just taking a walk. Our police will not be requiring proof of where you are going or proof as to why you are not in your home. We are relying on all of you to abide by this Order to help us prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

During this mandatory shelter at home period, outdoor exercise like running or taking a walk is perfectly acceptable; however, exercise gyms, fitness centers and associated facilities will be closed to reduce the spread of coronavirus. In addition, all of our schools that provide free food services to students will continue on a pick-up and take-home basis. Laundromats, dry cleaners and laundry service providers are considered essential businesses that will remain open. Grocery stores and pharmacies will remain open. Our gas stations will remain open as well. The restaurants in Steger that are providing curbside service or delivery service will continue to do so. If you are considered an essential worker under the Order, you can take your child to a day care that is licensed on an emergency basis for the purpose of childcare for essential workers. Licensed day care homes for up to 12 children will be closed but may reopen as an unlicensed day care home for up to 6 children. As long as you are not experiencing symptoms or currently in isolation, you should visit family members who need medical or other essential assistance, such as ensuring an adequate supply of food.

Just keep in mind that when exercising outside, or when you go to the grocery store, laundromat, dry cleaner or doing any other essential activity outside your home, you should still practice social distancing by keeping at least six feet away from other people. If you are experiencing symptoms or are currently in isolation, you should stay at home and follow the guidelines provided by your physician.

Adhering to this Order will save lives and it ultimately is all of our responsibility to do our part to stay home when not doing an essential activity. Again, our police will not be stopping you just because you are out of your home. We are counting on you though to follow this Order to help us protect our friends, neighbors, and vulnerable populations.

Please stay safe.

Mayor Ken Peterson