



City of Independence

Office of the Mayor, Eileen Weir

January 28, 2021

TO: City Council

FROM: Mayor Eileen Weir

RE: HOURS OF OPERATION

The City Council received my memo dated January 21, 2021 regarding City facilities hours of operation. At that time, I communicated my decision to continue operating with modified hours. This decision was based on the data provided to the Council every two weeks by our Health Director, Christina Heinen and discussion with the City's Incident Command Team.

After further discussion, I have a better understanding of the desires and expectations of the City Council. While protecting the health of our citizens and our employees is key, it is equally essentially that the citizens we represent and serve be able to access their facilities with reasonable time, place and manner restrictions. Such is the hallmark of a democratic society.

As such, I am modifying my directive so that Independence City Hall will resume hours of operation from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. effective Tuesday, February 16, 2021. Opening on this date will allow adequate time to receive Council approval for funding and coordination of staffing and logistics. Independence Utility Center and Independence Police headquarters will continue to operate with limited hours. To accommodate full access to City Hall, the following procedures will be implemented:

- Public access will be restricted to the ground floor entrance.
 - ADA accessible
- Health screeners will be stationed at the ground floor entrance
 - Visitors are required to undergo health screening
 - Masks are required at all times. Masks will be made available.
 - Hand sanitizer will be made available
- City employees are required to self-perform health screening on days they will be working from City Hall
- Visitors will be required to sign in/sign out
 - Date/time
 - Name/organization
 - Name of person/department visiting

- Verify health screening was performed/passed
- The City Manager will be required to reallocate funding for City Hall health screeners. Under our current agreement, health screeners are paid \$25.00/hour. Working 40 hours/week, this cost will equal \$1,000/week. Combined with the two days at the Police Headquarters and three days at the Utilities Center, this cost will total \$2,000 per week.

The City remains in Phase 1 of approved gating criteria

- Positive rates should be at or below 5 percent for at least 14 days before a state or country can safely reopen, according to the World Health Organization. The Harvard Global Health group estimates that communities need to test widely enough so that the number of people testing positive for the virus is 3% or lower in order adequately suppress the pandemic. In the US, the current positive rate is 15.0% with the cumulative positive rate is 9.11% The Harvard Global Health group estimates that communities in Missouri should aim for 212 tests/100,000 citizens each day to mitigate outbreaks and 767 tests/100,000 citizens each day to suppress the virus.
- Testing in Independence and Eastern Jackson County are far below these numbers. In the last seven days of available data (the week of January 7 - 13), Eastern Jackson County averaged 529 tests per day or approximately 137 tests/100,000 citizens each day. City of Independence Gating Criteria for Re-opening 1. Sustained decrease in the number of confirmed cases and positive rate for at least four weeks. 2. Adequate PPE supply for hospitals, long-term care facilities, and first responders. 3. Sustained decrease in hospitalizations. 4. Adequate access to testing and contact tracing

Consistent with our peer cities in the Kansas City metropolitan area, City staff will continue to be encouraged to work remotely through Phase 1. I will continue to review this data with the Incident Command Team on a weekly basis and will modify our operations as the situation allows. In the interim, I ask for your continued leadership in improving our communications and services.

CC: Zach Walker
Kim Osborne
Sheila Saxton
Rebecca Behrens