



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2020

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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES CITY HALL WILL NOT BE OPEN TO GENERAL PUBLIC IN RESPONSES TO COVID-19

Building will remain open to essential service staff and aldermen

CHICAGO —As part of an effort to ensure the health and safety of Chicago's residents and City employees, and to prevent the further spread of the COVID-19 virus, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced City Hall will not be open to the general public, effective Friday, March 20 and until an announcement to resume normal operations is made. The building will remain open to essential personnel and aldermen in order to help maintain the continuity of government and essential city services. Starting tomorrow, new temporary policies will only permit employees with proper identification to access their respective floors in the building.

“Essential City employees will continue delivering critical services to our residents throughout this difficult time. More than ever before, Chicagoans will rely on us to deliver critical services and supports during this disruption, while we help navigate these uncharted waters” said Mayor Lightfoot. “However, we must ensure we balance our mission of service delivery with the need to keep our workforce and the community safe, and reducing the amount of traffic in one of the City’s largest municipal buildings will do just that.”

During this time, only City of Chicago personnel and members of City Council will be able to access the upper floors of City Hall. This comes after the Mayor last week directed each department to evaluate their entire workforce and determine who could perform the core duties of their jobs from home while ensuring that essential employees are in place and critical government services continue to be provided to Chicago's residents.

The City Hall Press Corps will be allowed to continue work on the second floor and additional media personnel will be able to cover events advised by the Mayor's Press Office.



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All public safety departments, including the Chicago Police Department, Chicago Fire Department and the Office Emergency Management & Communications, will continue to operate at full staffing levels. Critical services including sanitation, water, human services, facilities, technology and airport operations will remain fully staffed and operational.

Every employee — whether they are working on-site, working from home, or if their function is suspended — will be paid and will continue to receive normal benefits, including healthcare. The reduction of non-essential City services and new temporary policies are subject to change as the situation continues to evolve over the weeks ahead.

This is the latest in a series of preventative and precautionary actions taken by the administration as the City works in close coordination with guidance by state officials and public health experts to prevent further spread of COVID-19 while maintaining essential city services.

Following Governor Pritzker's and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines announced on Monday limiting gatherings, the City has directed all employees to conduct meetings with more than 10 people through conference call as opposed to in-person. Given the rapidly evolving nature of this situation, the City is working diligently to provide timely and transparent updates on changes that pertain to Chicagoans.

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