



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 8, 2021

CONTACT: Estella Espinosa

Work: (832) 395-7022

Cell: (832) 465-4782

HOUSTON PARKS DEPT. ANNOUNCES THE PERMITTING OF SPORTS FIELDS FOR PRACTICE USE ONLY AS COVID-19 CASES DECLINE

Community Centers will remain closed until further notice

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) today announced the scheduled reopening of certain facilities, fields, and leagues over the next few weeks. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and National Recreation and Park Association guidelines will be observed at all Parks Department facilities, which includes wearing masks at some league gatherings and other social-distancing and hygienic precautions.

"We are extremely happy to reopen some of our Parks facilities and amenities following the long shutdown related to COVID-19," said HPARD Interim Director, Kenneth Allen. "As we said at the beginning of the pandemic – our focus is protecting the safety of Houstonians."

"We've had numerous discussions with health and medical experts over the past several weeks and have determined that we can now safely reopen some of the Parks features our citizens are anxious to see return," Mayor Sylvester Turner said. "We urge everyone to observe CDC safety guidelines when visiting these amenities. However, if COVID numbers spike again, we will be forced to shut down these same facilities."

Monday, March 8 - Permitting for Practice Use Only Begins

(In compliance with CDC & NRPA guidelines for slowing the spread of COVID-19)

- **Sports fields (Baseball/Softball – Youth and Adults)**

Monday, March 22 - Tentative Reopening Based on COVID-19 case numbers

(Depending on COVID numbers, reservations will begin on March 15, 2021.)

(In compliance with CDC & NRPA guidelines for slowing the spread of COVID-19)

- **Sports fields for league games and tournaments (Baseball/Softball – Youth and Adults)**
- **Playgrounds**
- **Outdoor exercise stations**
- **Tennis courts for tennis tournaments**
- **Small picnic pavilion rentals**
- **Small bootcamps**

- **Lake Houston Wilderness Park archery range and playground areas**

Monday, March 29 – Tentative reopening based on COVID-19 case numbers

(Depending on COVID numbers, reservations will begin on March 22, 2021.)

(In compliance with CDC & NRPA guidelines for slowing the spread of COVID-19)

- **Other sports fields for league games and tournaments (soccer, football, and lacrosse fields – Youth and Adults)**
- **Basketball rim installations begin**
- **Soccer mini-pitch courts**
- **HPARD adult sports**
- **HPARD youth sports (Soccer for Success, H-Town Academy, and GHPAL)**

41 Community Centers, swimming pools, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center (except for outdoor activities), Lake Houston Wilderness Park dining hall, group camping sites, and group lodges will remain closed until further notice.

“This pandemic has disrupted almost every segment of our society these past several months, including the Parks Department,” said Allen. “But now we are excited to welcome back our neighbors to our facilities, albeit with some restrictions. We’re asking everyone to please keep your safety, and the safety of others, in the forefront so that we can keep these facilities open.”

Visitors are reminded to practice social distancing and follow CDC guidelines for personal hygiene prior to visiting our parks. This includes getting vaccinated, washing hands, carrying hand sanitizer, covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and staying home if you are feeling ill. For the latest information on Houston Parks and Recreation Department openings and closures, visit www.houstonparks.org.

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages 380 parks and over 39,501 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all ages and abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.