

# City Parks news



## Media Statement

Tuesday, 24 March 2020

No embargo

### Precautionary measures adopted by Joburg Parks and Zoo to contain Covid 19

The global call for hygiene, isolation and limiting social contact to deal with the impact of Coronavirus (Covid 19), has warranted Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo to comply with national regulations, to temporarily close all parks, nature reserves and the popular, Joburg Zoo.

“The unprecedented move is aimed at protecting the wellbeing of visitors, employees and the animals in our care,” stated the Member of the Mayoral Committee for Community Development, Councillor Margaret Arnolds.

The stringent measures have taken effect since Thursday, 19 March and the call is for residents to comply even in facilities where notices are yet to be erected. All customer requests are to be directed to Joburg Connect on 011 375-5555 or to [trees@jhbcityparks.com](mailto:trees@jhbcityparks.com).

In this regard all events at the Zoo, in parks and nature reserves have been cancelled. Amenities within these facilities such as restaurants and shops have been closed, as well.

MMC Arnolds advised residents that Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo will also curtail all non-critical services with effect from 26 March as part of the nationwide 21-day lockdown, to tackle the spread of Covid 19.”

### Zoo operations considered critical

The Joburg Zoo requires a 24/7 presence. The Head of the Zoo remains based within the facility. Dedicated safety, health, environment and quality (SHEQ) officers continue to monitor high risk, activities. All operational employees have been retained as part of the critical service offering of the Zoo. Employees have been adhering to stringent sanitising requirements, particularly around personal protection; preparation of meals for animals and in the veterinary hospital. Security officers have been posted at all entrance points and within the facility. The officers are also sensitising disappointed visitors that the Zoo is closed for their safety and that the animals in our care will continue to receive the highest of care by their committed caregivers who form part of the critical staff complement, of the Zoo.

## **Parks and Nature Reserves remain closed**

Regular visitors have voiced their understandable concern regarding the closure of parks and nature reserves. This came about in the light that the spread of the virus is accelerated in public gatherings. “The global call for residents to stay at home and to refrain from entering public open spaces must be taken seriously”, urged Arnolds. Notices advising park users that facilities are closed, are being placed in parks and nature reserves and where possible play and outdoor fitness equipment will be cordoned off with danger tape. Residents who are illegally accessing facilities that are not fenced, are reminded that they are transgressing regulations promulgated as part of the Disaster Management Action and that they could be fined.

Arnolds further appealed to residents to refrain from flouting the strict measures of the 21-day lockdown and posting messages of illegal visits to public open spaces. “Transgressions will not be tolerated. You will be held accountable as it is compounding the confusion that parks are open to the public,” reinforced Arnolds.

MMC Arnolds, further underlined that these extraordinary measures, in these fast changing and difficult days, requires mass cooperation by all residents, visitors and employees alike, to ensure that the loss of life is contained.

Residents requiring more information on Covid 19 are urged to call the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) on 0800 029 999 or to talk to the medical staff on 0800 111 131.

**ENDS**

**Issued by the Member of Community Development in the City of Joburg**

**Councillor Margaret Arnolds**

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