



Media Release

Mayor George Yukich Statement Concerning Resurgence Mitigations Requirements for Region 7

Homer Glen, (October 21, 2020)

The Village of Homer Glen takes the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously. We have been supportive of the State of Illinois' guidance and assistance as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to listen and follow the guidelines to ensure our local public health care systems are not overwhelmed. We implemented these guidelines, both internally at the Village but also throughout our community. Our community continues to work together to adapt to our "new normal" and to take care of each other. Still today, we strongly encourage masks, social distancing, and staying home if you are sick or have chronic health issues.

Unfortunately, the Village was again notified this week of additional COVID-19 mitigation efforts to take effect in Region 7 on October 23. Region 7 includes both Will and Kankakee Counties. This is due to the region's positivity rate exceeding 8% for three consecutive days. Since COVID-19's inception, Will County has experienced 17,309 positive cases, with 424 total deaths. In Homer Glen, there have been 476 positive cases. Since last Spring, Homer Glen residents and businesses have complied with public health guidelines to slow the spread and not burden our local healthcare system. As of today, 29% of hospital beds and 25% of ICU beds are available in region 7. This is good news, as it shows that our local healthcare system is not being overly burdened by COVID-19 cases.

Previously, we shared our concerns about the Governor's resurgence mitigation requirements. Many of these concerns are still shared today. There are many requirements that are not based upon any scientific reason or data. Take for example our neighbor to the East - Orland Park. Their positive cases are 1,559, over three times higher than ours. Patrons can literally drive less than 5 minutes east of Homer Glen, and eat indoors at a restaurant in a community that has a higher risk than Homer Glen. As the Mayor, this is something that I cannot accept. Other

mandates, such as earlier closing times, and still allowing inside video gaming but not eating, are not based upon health or scientific data.

The colder weather puts our small businesses at an extreme risk of never opening again, if indoor seating is not allowed. I was hopeful that a compromise could be reached, in regard to restrictions on indoor seating capacity – as opposed to an outright prohibition. However, not allowing any indoor service will result in the death of many of our small “mom and pop” restaurants. I truly believe this.

Both myself and the entire Village Board understand the seriousness of this pandemic. We all look forward to the future when a safe vaccine will be available. However, this is not just a health pandemic, it is also an economic one. As the Mayor, I have to balance all of the needs of Homer Glen. I cannot be a party to the permanent closure of our small businesses - which I believe will happen under the current State guidelines. However, our local businesses have to also be aware both state and local public health departments do have the authority to enforce these mitigations requirements. Unfortunately, they will have to make some difficult business decisions. Please continue to support them during these unprecedented times. Our goal remains the same, to protect both our residents and our local businesses. I ask everyone in Homer Glen to continue to wear your masks, social distance and be kind to one another. Continue to do your part to eradicate this virus. Thank you.

Stay safe and healthy,

Mayor George Yukich

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