Public Health Emergency Declarations Impact on Cities

Public Safety
- Enforcement of proclamations
- Retirement flexibility
- Public safety continued education

Property Taxes
- Penalties and interest delayed

City Administration
- Office hours and in-person requirements suspended
- Electronic meeting flexibility
- Filling a council vacancy

Business & Amenity Closures
- Restaurants and bars
- Nonessential retail, i.e luggage, cosmetics
- Nonessential medical procedures
- City amenities including: libraries, parks, campgrounds

Code of Iowa Chapter 29C grants the Governor authority to proclaim a public disaster emergency. Through proclamation, the Governor can prohibit any activity that is reasonably believed to help maintain life, health, property and public peace.

Governor Reynolds has issued eleven proclamations which affect many aspects of city operations and public life. The below items specifically pertain to the operation and functions of city government. This guide is meant to help provide citations and references for League members but is not a holistic list. Contact your city attorney with any questions. You can find the Governor’s proclamations at www.HomelandSecurity.iowa.gov > Disasters > Disaster Proclamations

The League worked with Governor Reynolds throughout the COVID-19 response to address the needs and concerns of Iowa’s cities. Continue to reach out to the League should you come across issues that need to be addressed. We will be updating this document as new proclamations are made.
Property Taxes
Suspended penalty and late fees
The Governor suspended Code of Iowa Section 445.39 and Admin. Code Rule 701-75.3 which effectively suspends any penalty for late payment of property taxes.

City Administration
Open meetings
The Governor ensured that cities have the ability to conduct meetings via electronic means, so long as the information required for the public to participate in the meeting is noticed.

Public records
The Governor suspended provisions of Code of Iowa Section 22.2(1) and 22.3(1) which allow for the in-person examination or copying of public records so long as they are made available through mail or technological means as well as the provision that requires a custodian of public records hold regular office hours, found in Code of Iowa Section 22.4.

Requirement to timely fill vacancies suspended
The Governor suspended Code of Iowa Section 372.13(2), requirements that city council fill vacancies within 60 days of an opening.

Public Safety and Disaster Responders
Enforcement of proclamations
Peace Officers of the state were formally called upon to help in the enforcement of the Governor’s proclamations.

Working while retired
The Governor suspended requirements found in Code of Iowa 97B.48A, 97B.52A, 411.3(3), 411.6(1)(C), and 411.21(3) which would limit a retired IPERS or 411 member from returning to work without penalty. Specifically rescinded were the regulatory provisions requiring a reduction or repayment of retirement if a member should return to work as a disaster responder or a protection occupation.

Professional certifications
The Governor suspended the expiration of law enforcement certificates which are found in Code of Iowa Chapter 80B.

Business and Amenity Closures
Several establishments, including city amenities were formally closed including:
- Museums
- Libraries
- Zoos
- Campgrounds
- Skating Rinks
- Parks

Private businesses have also been closed such as restaurants and bars, fitness centers and casinos. The list of closed businesses was expanded to include salons, massage therapy and tattoo establishments. This proclamation also ordered nonessential medical and dental procedures to be halted as well. These closures do not prohibit curbside service.