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Coeur d'Alene Tribe Begins Phased Reopening of the Reservation

April 23, 2020

Plans include enhanced health protections and continued physical distancing

Plummer, ID – The Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council is beginning the process of re-opening the reservation (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4pk0TQGtE8&feature=emb_logo).

"The health and safety of our community is always our highest priority and through this pandemic, we have relied on facts to guide our decisions, not fear," said Ernie Stensgar, Chairman of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. "We made the difficult decision to enact an early Stay Home order and shut down the Casino, which is an essential tribal operation that keeps many of our other vital programs running. Our swift and deliberate actions worked to keep our community safe. The curve has flattened in our region," he added. Neither the Coeur d'Alene Reservation nor Benewah County have had any confirmed COVID-19 cases to date.

"The Creator has continued to bless the Coeur d'Alene Reservation by keeping our people healthy. Based on local trends and the consistently low number of confirmed cases in the region, we believe we can safely start to reopen the reservation. Protecting lives and protecting livelihoods don't have to be mutually exclusive. We have a plan that we believe can do both and frankly, it is time to take action," added Chairman Stensgar.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council appointed a Task Force to plan for the reopening of the reservation and tribal entities. The Task Force is made up of Tribal Council members, key directors from tribal departments, Casino executives, medical professionals, and members of Marimn Health's leadership team. The group has created guidelines for a phased opening on the reservation based on local COVID-19 trends and data. The plan is also consistent with reopening guidelines released by the federal government. The group will regularly review local coronavirus data and trends and provide recommendations to the Tribal Council as the situation changes.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is starting the process of re-opening the reservation starting with a limited opening of the Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel on April 27. The Casino will reopen to the general public on May 1. Other tribal entities and facilities will also begin their phased reopenings. Enhanced safety measures will be in place including physical distancing, aggressive cleaning and sanitation guidelines, and mandatory face covering protocols to protect the health and safety of all patrons and employees.

"We have put a lot of thought and effort into preparing to re-open in the safest way possible. Our team has worked with the medical professionals at Marimn Health to put together safety training for our employees and to outline social distancing and cleaning and sanitation protocols consistent with CDC recommendations," said Coeur d'Alene Casino Chief Executive Officer Laura Stensgar.

Patrons can expect to see some changes throughout the property to protect the health of all guests and employees:

- Significant social distancing efforts including but not limited to, reduced and distanced seating at all restaurants and lounges, and every other gaming machine will be powered off to ensure physical distance between patrons. Plexiglas barriers have been installed in key locations across the property.
- Face masks or face coverings will be required for everyone on the Casino property.

- All concerts and large events have been rescheduled to later dates
- Ongoing enhanced cleaning measures will include closing the casino from 3–7 a.m. daily for deep cleaning
- The High Mountain Buffet and off-track betting will remain closed during the initial phase of reopening

“Our guests and our employees are like family to us so this time has been difficult for everyone. We are excited to open our doors after such a lengthy, but necessary closure,” said Casino CEO Laura Stensgar.

The Coeur d’Alene Casino is an essential part of the economy in North Idaho and supports thousands of families across the region. Revenues from the Coeur d’Alene Casino provide funding for critical services benefitting everyone on the reservation such as law enforcement, social services, public works, and other essential tribal government operations that provide assistance elders, youth, and educational services.

The Coeur d’Alene Casino closed on March 20, five days before the State of Idaho enacted its stay home order. All Casino employees kept their jobs, wages, and benefits during the closure, though only essential employees continued to come to work.

For more details on the Coeur d’Alene Casino Resort Hotel’s Health and Safety protocols, visit [https://www.extracasinio.edsandbox.com/covid19/\(https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_www.www.cdacasinio.com_covid19_&d=DwMFaQ&c=IDAP98VzfAAO_Hiyz7HWQRvcdz8eM0XvTT95P4fa2wo&r=jb0gionebjLNabUourCzQujbxjvQbVKrzqYOQyiUJA8&m=Q3uE3B_REWGNwX0feExSS5izeXi4ZVeWOCbYdNsXWsw&s=zdOGpl1ucznePvTr_88LIVye3xDfMyn7ZKlpd-LttfY&e=\)](https://www.extracasinio.edsandbox.com/covid19/(https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_www.www.cdacasinio.com_covid19_&d=DwMFaQ&c=IDAP98VzfAAO_Hiyz7HWQRvcdz8eM0XvTT95P4fa2wo&r=jb0gionebjLNabUourCzQujbxjvQbVKrzqYOQyiUJA8&m=Q3uE3B_REWGNwX0feExSS5izeXi4ZVeWOCbYdNsXWsw&s=zdOGpl1ucznePvTr_88LIVye3xDfMyn7ZKlpd-LttfY&e=)).

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