



# **The Navy Pier Will Close Temporarily On Sept. 8, 2020, Because Of Pandemic To Limit Financial Impact**

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CHICAGO — The Navy Pier, one of Chicago's most iconic lakefront destinations, plans a temporary Pier-wide closure beginning Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2020. The temporary closure is to limit the financial impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

“The closure will put a halt to all Pier-wide operations, including that of Navy Pier's more than 70 small local businesses, which have also experienced significantly low attendance throughout the pandemic,” The Navy Pier President and CEO Marilyn Gardner announced this past week. “Public access to the Pier's outdoor spaces, including Polk Bros Park and North and South Docks, will also be limited or prohibited during the closure.”

Pier officials said the temporary closure was a very difficult decision for the organization, but it was a necessary one to proactively ensure the long-term success of one of Chicago's most treasured and important civic institutions and the communities it serves.

Gardner explained the temporary closure will also help preserve the future of the many on-site businesses, which continue to face hardships of their own as a result of the pandemic.

"The temporary closure will allow the Pier and its partners to reduce its operational expenses and support efforts to limit COVID-19 cases as we move into the fall and winter seasons," Gardner said.

In accordance of state and City of Chicago orders, the Navy Pier first closed to the public from March 16 to June 10. Since its phased reopening, the organization has been working to find solutions that would enable it to continue its operations with the appropriate safety and security measures in place. While the organization has been able to resume partial operations and safely welcome guests back to the Pier, the destination is seeing less than 20 percent of its typical summer attendance, making it difficult to generate revenues that support its standard operations.

To date, the Centennial Wheel and other Pier Park attractions — a primary source of revenue — have not been able to open and operate. On-site cultural anchors, Chicago Children's Museum and Chicago Shakespeare Theater, have also remained closed. Additionally, the Pier has extended rent relief to all of its on-site tenant partners. All private events, consumer shows, trade shows and banquets have been canceled in the Pier's East End event facilities due to capacity restrictions. Furthermore, COVID-19 travel restrictions have resulted in significant decreases in tourism, another contributing factor to decreased attendance and revenues.

Navy Pier relies heavily on these sources of revenue. The loss of these earnings has been devastating to the organization's budget, resulting in a projected deficit of \$20 million in 2020. Navy Pier's short-term closure will help limit further losses for the organization, as well as the businesses that are housed at the Pier.

Navy Pier has operated as an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization since 2011. Although the organization maintains facilities on publicly-owned property, the Pier does not receive any public tax dollars to support its operating costs. It depends on generous philanthropic support from individuals, foundations and corporations with the majority of revenues earned through operational income, such as rent and fees from on-site business establishments, private events, consumer and trade shows, parking and ticket sales from attractions—all of which have been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Navy Pier will continue to remain open to the public through Labor Day, welcoming guests to experience the Pier's free arts and cultural programs, restaurants, retail shops, tour boats and dining cruises, and more, with multiple layers of safety precautions in place.