

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Duluth - Fire Department

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DATE: 8/3/2021

SUBJECT: Duluth Fire Stations to close to the public effective immediately

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

NATURE OF INCIDENT: COVID Update

CASE NO.:

INCIDENT DATE: 8/3/2021

INCIDENT TIME: 1:21 p.m.

INCIDENT LOCATION:

Duluth Fire Stations to close to the public effective immediately

[Duluth, MN] Effective immediately, all Duluth Fire Stations will close to the public due to an increased threat of the Delta Variant and COVID positive cases in St. Louis County. Fire Stations had just reopened on August 1 after fifteen months of being closed for precautionary reasons.

“Our crews have been on the front lines of fighting COVID since the beginning,” Chief Shawn Krizaj said. “While we have continued to track COVID cases, we all were very excited to reopen to the public and begin operating normally again.”

Chief Krizaj sent a memo to staff earlier this afternoon alerting them of the change.

“This is not the news that I wanted to share with our team,” Krizaj said. “The overwhelming majority of our Department has chosen to get vaccinated to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19. We know that with the Delta Variant, vaccinated people can still catch and spread COVID, so it was in the best interest of our staff, their families, and the public that we take this step. We hope that it won’t be for another 15 months, but are committed to doing what we need in order to fulfil our mission which is to save lives by safeguarding our citizens.”

The four remaining Car Seat Safety Clinics will continue as scheduled at this time. Those who attend, which is by appointment only, will need to wear a mask when they attend.

“Community service programs are a huge part of what we do,” Krizaj said. “We hope that things will look better soon so that we can carry out the programming that we were hoping to get back to for Fire Prevention Week in October, among the other in-person prevention classes and outreach opportunities that we provide throughout the year.”

“I have been and continue to be very proud of our Department for their response to COVID-19, the things that they had to give up, and how this outbreak has affected them both in the fire stations and at home. It has been tough. This is just something that we need to do to protect vulnerable populations like children who have not been vaccinated yet, or are at a higher risk of contracting this virus.”

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