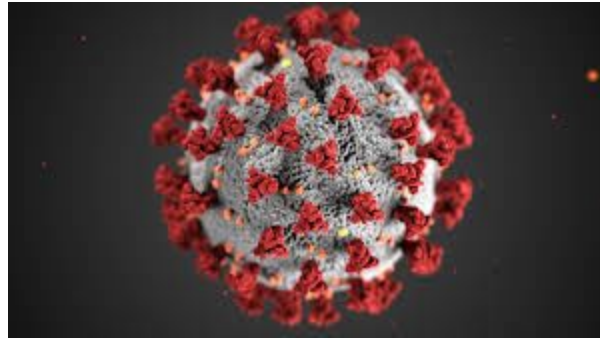


Yurok Tribe declares state of emergency, Rancheria closes bowling alley

March 17, 2020



The Yurok Tribe declared a state of emergency Friday while the Elk Valley Rancheria Tribe closed its bowling alley at least through the end of the month, following the COVID-19 recommendations from Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Yurok Tribe Chairman Joseph L. James wrote on tribe's Facebook page Friday:

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Yurok Tribal Council has declared a state of emergency. This action has been taken only as a precautionary measure to protect our community, our membership and the most vulnerable population among us. Although there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in either Del Norte or Humboldt counties at this time, the Yurok Tribal Council is taking this potential risk very seriously, and taking specific and proactive measures in the best interests of the health and safety of our tribal and community members, as well as our employees. We apologize for the inconvenience, and we appreciate your patience. With authority from the State of Emergency Declaration, the Yurok Office of Emergency Services has implemented the following immediate actions:

- Moratorium on the public use of all tribal facilities for March.
- Cancellation of all social gatherings at tribal locations for March.
- Basic precautions protocol for employees.
- Increased cleaning/disinfecting of all tribal offices.
- Restrictions on organizational air travel, with emphasis on international airports.

In conjunction with leadership, the YOES maintains regular communication with our tribal, local, state and federal partners, and is coordinating efforts to develop sound response strategies to this health risk. The

Tribal Council is keeping informed on the situation and engaged in this response. Rest assured, Tribal Council is monitoring this fluid situation and the health of our people is our highest priority.

Meanwhile, Kerri Vue, Chief Operating Officer for the Elk Valley Rancheria, said the Tribe and its businesses have reacted to top health agency's recommendations to aid in the protection of the health and safety of community members.

"After careful consideration, the Tribe has made the decision to temporarily close Tsunami Lanes Bowling to the public effective March 14, through, at minimum, the month of March," Vue said via press release. "This decision was made after the evaluation of health and safety guidelines following Newsom's Executive Order and Tsunami Lane's ability to regulate capacity and follow precautionary measures."

Vue said the Elk Valley Casino will remain open with an elevated level of cleanliness.

She said employees continue to perform precautionary measures with increased repetition of routine cleaning of high-contact touchpoints, replacement rotation of equipment filters and disposable items and communicating new information to guests and employees as released.

"We understand that our guests will experience an impact on accessibility to the Elk Valley Casino and its services and apologize for the disruption but feel these actions are in the best interests for the health and safety of our community," Vue said.

The Elk Valley Casino started taking the following measures March 14:

- Closing the casino's doors to the public every Wednesday from 2-6 a.m. to allow staff to complete a comprehensive sanitization of the entire property
- Canceled the Tuesday buffet and replaced it with specials offered within the Full House Bar and Grill
- Regulated building capacities of a recommended maximum of 250 people
- Postponed and/or canceled large or high-risk events.
- Eliminated self-serving soda and replaced it with drink service by Elk Valley Casino staff.

"As new information is released, the Tribe will respond as necessary to assist in the public-wide prevention plan to minimize risk to keep our friends, family, and community members safe," Vue said.

While the Tolowa Dee-ni Nation is keeping its facilities open for now, it has canceled or rescheduled all social events and large meetings.

"Out of an abundance of caution, we are implementing several measures to ensure the safety of our staff and community," said Denise Richards-Padgett, Tolowa Chairperson.

She pointed out the Tribe's annual General Membership meeting has been rescheduled from March 21 to April 4.

Also, the Tolowa Tribe is implementing the following actions to minimize the potential for COVID-19 outbreak in Del Norte and Currie counties:

- Work travel is prohibited for all Tribal employees
- All social gatherings are postponed until further notice
- Increased cleaning and disinfection are occurring in all Tribal facilities
- All Tribal committee meetings are postponed until further notice
- All employees are required to practice relevant precautionary protocols