



YMCA Family,

Like our entire nation, our YMCA continues to monitor the ongoing developments associated with the community spread of COVID-19, which is prompting us to make some unprecedented decisions.

Due to the ongoing public health emergency presented by the COVID-19 virus outbreak, we will be temporarily closing the Athens YMCA effective 7 PM today (March 19). We anticipate this closure will last at least through March 31st, but will adapt our plans based on the best and latest guidance from the CDC and local public health officials.

For all the members that have stressed their appreciation for us remaining open thus far, please know that this is not an easy decision. Thank you all for expressing how important our YMCA is for your mental health and well-being. I assure you all that we will be back in operations as soon as we feel that our community is safe and healthy.

Digital wellness and program options available

I want you to know how much we at the Y regret the inconvenience this temporary closure may cause you. Even while our doors are closed, please know the Y continues to be a resource for you as you seek to maintain your health and well-being during this challenging time. Fitness classes taught by your favorite YMCA instructors are being recorded and can be found at athensymca.org/workout-videos. New videos are being added weekly. We are also offering a child section that can be found at athensymca.org/family-kid-videos where you will find track, soccer, and volleyball workouts, book reading with Ms. Gina, Camp Kelley dances by your favorite summer camp staff and more. New passwords to these accounts will be sent every 15 days. Please continue to check our website and social media for updates.

More than ever, our Y means more

We want our members and program participants to be extremely proud to support their local YMCA and our efforts to step up during this health crisis. We have made our YMCA and our resources available to many community organizations. The YMCA is not a swim and gym. We do not close and become dormant during these times. We are an organization that is able to answer the call to action when our community is in need. Here is what your YMCA is doing in the unprecedented times:

1. Our facility has been offered to the Northeast GA Foodbank for an emergency pantry and/or a pickup site for food.
2. Our buses have been offered to the Athens Area Council on Aging to assist with delivering necessities to seniors.
3. I participate on a conference call with 17 YMCA CEO's every other day that include updates from the Department of Public Health, CDC, and more.
4. I have been in contact with both of our healthcare systems and state officials about serving as a drive through testing site for COVID-19.
5. Our school system has been made aware that we are here and willing to help in any way possible.
6. We have spoken with both healthcare systems about providing emergency childcare for our healthcare professionals.

Your support during this time means more than ever.

We know many of you may be experiencing significant hardship during this crisis. If so, I encourage you to seek the membership financial assistance available through our scholarship program. We, of course, can also cancel your membership if there is no other option. But it is our hope and my personal request that you stick with us in service of the greater good we can do together for our community.

If you have any membership questions, please contact our front desk. We will have staff available next Monday through Thursday from 9am to 3pm to take calls and work with members and participants.

We will also use this time to deep clean our facility and perform routine maintenance.

Please take care of yourself and one another. Our community is strong, and together, we will get through this.

With Gratitude,

M. Shae Wilson

CEO