

As other casinos reopen, here's why Augustine Casino remains closed – Press Enterprise

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 02 June 2020 17:43 -

While many tribal-owned casinos across [Southern California have flipped on their slot machines and opened the doors to customers](#) ,

Augustine Casino is taking a wait-and-see approach.

The casino — a relatively small property compared to some of its Coachella Valley neighbors — is targeting a mid-June reopening date as officials monitor the progress of reopening other area casinos.

“We don’t want to rush into anything. We feel like we have a good plan, but we want to make sure it’s safe enough to open,” said Jef Bauer, general manager for Augustine, which closed March 15 to combat the spread of the [novel coronavirus](#) .

On the gaming floor itself that plan includes removing half of the chairs and slot stools to promote social distancing eliminating table games.

“We took what was the player’s club and opened that up to casino floor space so we could move slot machines further apart and we added more to the casino floor space,” Bauer said.

Rather than going inside the gift shop to browse and purchase, guests will approach a counter at the combined gift store and player’s club to order items, Bauer said.

At the Menyikish Grill, tables and chairs will be set apart further to allow for social distancing and guests shouldn’t expect to be eating off permanent plates and silverware.

“Everything we serve, at least initially, will be in disposable containers as if it were in a to-go container,” Bauer said. “We won’t be reusing plates or forks or glassware — anything.”

The Cafe 54 buffet will be closed for the foreseeable future, Bauer said, and no decisions have

As other casinos reopen, here's why Augustine Casino remains closed – Press Enterprise

Written by Administrator
Tuesday, 02 June 2020 17:43 -

been made for how that space could be reopened or modified.

“We have other restaurant options available that don't involve having to kind of reinvent the wheel,” Bauer said.

There will be dividers in places where customers purchase things or interact with casino employees, including the player's club/gift shop, the casino cage or restaurant.

All employees and customers will be required to wear masks and also get their temperature checked by a touchless device before entering, but that could prove a bit of a challenge.

“The jury is still out on whether you can do a temperature check in 115 degrees,” Bauer said. “Again, we have the smaller building so we don't have the luxury of open areas indoors where we can queue people or test them in a cool environment so that's going to be a little tricky for us, but we're going to do the best we can on that.”

The casino will also not be open 24 hours as it had been prior to the coronavirus closure. Bauer said the casino will be shutting down from midnight to 8 a.m. each day so that casino staff can do a deep cleaning of slot machines and surfaces both on the gaming floor and the casino's back-of-house operations.

“You can't guarantee anyone a risk-free environment but we're going to do everything we can to make it less risky,” Bauer said.

Augustine is among a few Southern California casinos that have either not announced an opening date or have said that they plan to stay closed longer.

[Casino Pauma in Pauma Valley](#) announced that it would stay closed until further notice after Gov. Gavin Newsom sent a letter to tribal leaders asking them not to reopen and [San Manuel Casino in Highland said that it hoped to reopen sometime in June but it was too](#)

As other casinos reopen, here's why Augustine Casino remains closed – Press Enterprise

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 02 June 2020 17:43 -

[early to confirm that.](#)

San Manuel has also had to enact furlough and layoffs for some of its employees for the first time in its 34-year history.

Read more <https://www.pe.com/2020/06/02/as-other-casinos-reopen-heres-why-augustine-casino-remains-closed/>