

Northern Michigan casino closes to help slow spread of COVID-19

Written by Administrator

Friday, 20 November 2020 20:47 -

MANISTEE, MI – Little River Casino Resort will close for more than two weeks in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 as the novel respiratory virus surges across Michigan.

The casino announced it will voluntarily close at 10 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22, and plans to reopen at 8 a.m. Dec. 9, according to a release issued Friday by Little River Casino Resort.

The Manistee casino joins [six tribal casinos in Michigan's Upper Peninsula](#) that have voluntarily closed this week in response to a surge in coronavirus cases.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services announced a “three-week pause” on Sunday halting indoor dine-in service at bars and restaurants, casinos, movie theaters and bowling alleys. Among the restrictions was the closure of the three non-tribal casinos in Detroit.

Tribal casinos are not required to adhere to state orders, but some tribes have since voluntarily closed their gaming facilities.

The decision to close Little Rive Casino Resort, including its hotel and Little River Trading Post, came as a result of discussions within the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal management on slowing the spread of COVID-19, according to Friday's news release.

“We are supportive of our leaders and the healthcare officials who are the real heroes during this fight,” casino leadership wrote in the news release. “We know that the initiatives being taken by them along with the support of us and the community will help to get this situation under control.”

The announcement comes three days after Little River Casino and Resort had [previously announced](#) it would remain open, but with restricted occupancy and hours of service.

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Seventeen of the [24 tribal casinos](#) in Michigan are expected to remain open with COVID-19 precautions. Some announced restaurant closures, entertainment cancellations, gaming restrictions and updated procedures.

Bay Mills Resort and Casino in Brimley and all five Kewadin Casinos announced earlier this week they would close for three weeks to help curb the spread of COVID-19.

RELATED: [6 tribal casinos close, most remain open amid new Michigan COVID-19 restrictions](#)

The Bay Mills Indian Community closed its Bay Mills Resort and Casino at noon Wednesday, Nov. 18, according to a [news release](#). It is set to reopen on Tuesday, Dec. 8, which is the same date the state's restrictions are scheduled to end. The tribe set aside CARES Act funding in case of another shutdown, and that will allow them to pay employees while the casino is closed, the release said.

The Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians elected to close all five of its Kewadin Casinos at noon on Wednesday. Reopening is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 9. The closure includes Kewadin Casino Christmas, Kewadin Casino Sault Ste. Marie, Kewadin Casino Hessel, Kewadin Casino St. Ignace and Kewadin Casino Manistique.

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