

23.4.2020

Dear Espoo-based organisations, communities, associations and local actors,

We are living in exceptional times that require us to adapt and to be flexible. I would like to extend a warm thank you to all of you who are involved in enabling us to overcome these challenging times.

The most important task of the city is to ensure sufficient availability of services for our residents in a completely new situation. Our particular concern is for the most vulnerable Espoo residents, namely the elderly and those who are ill. Accepting the restrictions caused by the coronavirus is easy when we remember that this may protect someone from getting so ill that their life is in danger. However, everyday challenges may become impossible to solve if there is no one at home who could go out to get food or medicines or if there are other major challenges going on.

Part of the Finnish sense of responsibility has always been to take care of each other. Delightfully many Espoo residents have also offered support and practical help to their previously unfamiliar neighbours. We can make things work every day if we simply keep working together. The contribution of volunteers is an important source of support for us.

Support for everyday life

Here is a summary of our most important helplines during the crisis. As the situation continues to change, some changes may also be made to these services (for example to their opening hours). Up-to-date information about our services during this exceptional situation is always available at www.espoo.fi/coronavirus.

- Nestori – Guidance and Service Counselling for Senior Citizens offers advice and solutions to everyday situations, such as getting groceries if an elderly person's own support network is unable to help. Tel. 09 816 33 333, Mon–Fri 8:00–16:00. Please help us make sure that elderly people in Espoo are aware of Nestori's services. You could for example leave the phone number on your building's noticeboard.
- The best way to contact Welfare Services for Families with Children is to use the Get help form at www.espoo.fi/gethelp or call tel. 09 816 23600, Mon–Fri 8:30–15:00.
- Food assistance, tel. 09 816 22 040, Mon–Fri 8:00–11:00. The city's goal is to make sure that people with a low income, risk groups and families with children who need special support have food during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Social Services for Adults Helpline, tel. 09 816 45000, Mon–Fri 8:00–12:00
- Disability Services Helpline, tel. 09 816 45285, Mon–Fri 9:00–15:00
- Advice in plain Finnish and in English, tel. 09 816 22610, Mon–Fri 12:00–15:00
- Advice in foreign languages, tel. 09 816 22620, Mon–Fri 12:00–15:00 (Arabic, Russian, Dari, Farsi, Persian, Somali, Turkish, Estonian, Albanian, French, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Visayan)

You may also call these helplines if you would like to volunteer or work together with the City of Espoo.

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Contact us preferably by phone or chat

The Service Points in Leppävaara, Matinkylä and Espoonlahti have been closed. The Service Points that are currently open are in Tapiola, Espoon keskus and Kalajärvi. However, we recommend that all customers postpone their non-urgent errands or contact the Service Points by phone or chat. The general customer service number and the chat window are available at www.espoo.fi/asiointi.

Cultural grants in the coronavirus situation

The Culture Committee decided on 31 March that the annual grants for 2020 will not be claimed back from grant recipients whose activities have been changed or cancelled due to the coronavirus epidemic. We will also give grant recipients some flexibility with regard to the deadlines for the approved appendices required for annual grant applications and for the reports on the use of grants. The Culture Committee and the Cultural Unit of the City of Espoo both appreciate your active efforts for the good of Espoo residents. With these decisions, we wish to make the situation easier for active organisation members.

[The City of Espoo's cultural grants and the exceptional situation caused by the coronavirus](#) (Media release on 2 April 2020)

Support available to companies

The Business Espoo network that provides business services is ready to give its full support to local entrepreneurs. Business Espoo provides information on support opportunities, helps with applications and refers entrepreneurs to the legal and financial experts in its network.

At its meeting on 6 April 2020, the Espoo City Board approved the Espoo Package. It is a package of measures that help companies and communities at risk to cope with the coronavirus situation. Read more about the support measures at: www.espoo.fi/espoopaketti

The city's aim is to open the application process for the operating support for sole entrepreneurs by 26 April. If you plan to apply, please prepare well in advance. If you need assistance, please call the operating support helpline, tel. 09 816 40500. The helpline is open from Monday to Friday between 8:00 and 15:00.

Further information for companies: www.espoo.fi/yritystenkoronatuki

Together we will succeed

I have often said that Espoo will succeed in everything we do together! Now more than ever we need collaboration and caring to make sure that we overcome this exceptional situation and no one is left without support.

Comprehensive, up-to-date information for Espoo residents is always available on our website: www.espoo.fi/coronavirus

Jukka Mäkelä
Mayor