

THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF HEIDELBERG

Open letter from Mayor Prof. Dr. Eckart Würzner
to all citizens of Heidelberg



Dear Heidelberg citizens,

We are experiencing a truly exceptional situation. Public life has come to a halt. Nearly every business in Heidelberg is closed. Only shops offering basic provisions may remain open. When leaving our houses we can only go out alone, in twos, or with our families. Only weeks ago, such a situation was unimaginable in Germany.

All these restrictions take a toll on our lives and personal freedoms. But they all serve the same purpose: slowing the spread of the corona virus. This is the only alternative to avoid overwhelming our hospitals. Protecting the elderly and people with preexisting conditions is paramount.

Most are abiding by these rules, which I greatly appreciate and implore you to continue. Please remain at home and avoid contact whenever possible. Maintain social distance. Definitely keep in touch with acquaintances, friends, parents, and grandparents – but do so via phone or social media.

Our clinics are currently under immense and unrelenting pressure. Fortunately, we are home to one of Germany's largest and best healthcare facilities: Heidelberg University Clinic. Doctors, nurses, lab technicians, teams in various healthcare facilities, private practices, and the public health office are all striving under pressure to support us. We are simply unable to thank them enough.

I would also like to acknowledge cashiers in supermarkets and truckdrivers making extra runs. Your city government is contributing as well. Our childcare staff are offering emergency childcare. Senior centers are providing help for the elderly. We are supporting local businesses. The social services office, local authorities, city workers processing time-sensitive paperwork, and waste disposal teams continue serving our city reliably.

It is astounding how our schools were able to put together a digital curriculum overnight. Employers have made home office an option. Workers across the board are playing their part. My thanks go out to each and every single one of you.

Wonderful support initiatives have been established by clubs, church groups, and youth groups, plus neighbors offering to help. This is proof you are not alone, even if you can't leave the house. We are there for you. This is admirable and is what it truly means to call Heidelberg home.

We are all in this together. Therefore, I ask you all to do your part. Stay home when possible and help those in need. We are a strong community, and as a community we will overcome these difficult times.

Thank you

Yours sincerely,
Eckart Würzner