



## Joint Information

### Blount County Intergovernmental Public Advisory Governor's Order to Stay Home Unless Engaging in Essential Activities

March 30, 2020

**Blount County, Tennessee** – In response to the Governor's Executive Order Number 22 issued March 30, local government leaders of Blount County, the cities of Maryville, Alcoa, Friendsville and Townsend, and the towns of Rockford and Louisville are issuing a joint statement supporting the Order.

Local health care leaders are advising that the situation is urgent, and that community members must stay home, away from crowds, and follow the guidelines of the CDC in order to prevent the escalation of the number of COVID-19 cases in our county.

Today the Governor issued a new Order "directing Tennesseans to stay home unless engaging in essential activities to limit their exposure and spread of COVID-19."

#### Summary of the Governor's Executive Order 22

- All persons in Tennessee are urged to stay at home, except for when engaging in "essential activity" or "essential services" as defined in the Order.
- Businesses or organizations that do not perform "essential services" shall not be open for access or use by the public or its members.
- All persons are strongly encouraged to limit the frequency of engaging in "essential activity or services."
- To the extent possible, employers should take steps to equip and permit employees to work from home.
- Employers shall not require or allow employees with COVID-19 to work.

The new Order builds upon the previous orders including no social gatherings of 10 or more people as well as the following provisions regarding restaurants, bars, and similar food and drink establishments:

- Establishments are to **exclusively** offer drive-thru, take-out or delivery options to support families, businesses and the food supply chain during this emergency.
- Establishments may sell alcohol by take-out or delivery (with the purchase of food) in closed containers to those who are age 21 and up.
- Gyms and fitness/exercise centers or substantially similar facilities **are to temporarily close and suspend in-person services – now extended until April 14, 2020**. In the interim, these businesses are encouraged to pursue digital programming if possible.
- Visitation to nursing homes, retirement homes, and long-term care or assisted-living facilities is now limited to visits involving essential care only.
- Businesses are encouraged to enact policies that take extra steps to assist vulnerable populations by considering measures such as shopping hours exclusive from the general public.

The Governor also issued an Order expanding Executive Order No. 17 to cover similar services and venues necessary to minimize the continuous spread of COVID-19.

### Summary of the [Governor's Executive Order 21](#)

- Businesses and organizations that perform close-contact personal services shall not be open to members or the public. Such businesses or organizations include, but are not limited to:
  - Barber shops;
  - Hair salons;
  - Waxing salons;
  - Threading salons;
  - Nail salons or spas;
  - Spas providing body treatments;
  - Body-art facilities or tattoo services;
  - Tanning salons; or
  - Massage-therapy establishments or massage services.
  
- Entertainment and recreational gathering venues shall not be open to members or the public. Such venues include, but are not limited to:
  - Night clubs;
  - Bowling alleys;
  - Arcades;
  - Concert venues;
  - Theaters, auditoriums, performing arts centers, or similar facilities;
  - Racetracks;
  - Indoor children's play areas;
  - Adult entertainment venues;
  - Amusement parks; or
  - Roller or iceskating rinks.
  
- Effective immediately, this Order shall be effective and enforceable at 12:01 a.m., Central Daylight Time, on March 23, 2020, and shall remain in effect until 11 :59 p.m., Central Daylight Time, on April 14, 2020, at which time the suspension of any state laws and rules and the other provisions of this Order shall cease and be of no further force or effect.

"This is a time to make the right decision for yourself and your family, taking into consideration the recommendations we have all received. The COVID-19 virus will not be going away. We all must shift our way of thinking about how we do business," said Blount County Mayor Ed Mitchell. "Our country cannot afford to keep our businesses closed but we cannot risk people's health. It's a very difficult line to balance and we are all trying to do the right thing," said Mitchell.

Order No. 22 states, "Because protecting personal liberty is deeply important, this Order is not a shelter-in-place mandate and instead strongly urges Tennesseans to stay at home when at all possible for the protection of themselves and their community; and because with personal liberty comes great personal responsibility, all Tennesseans must do their part by staying at home whenever possible for a limited period of time to avoid exposure to, and slow the spread of, this virus, which will limit the burden on health care resources and allow normal activities to resume sooner."

Mitchell said, "I strongly urge our business community to strictly adhere to the recommendations we all have received. I know you are making difficult decisions that have a negative impact on your households and on your businesses in order to comply with the Governor's previous [Executive Order 17](#), [Executive Order 21](#) and [Executive Order 22](#), along with the CDC recommendations. These sacrifices speak to your love for this community and your desire to protect it, and they demonstrate what makes Blount County such a great place to live and work."

“If your business does not fall into the clear categories as listed in the Governor’s Executive Order 17 and today’s issued Executive Order 21, I urge you to follow your heart on this situation and do what is right for this community,” continued Mitchell. “Alter your business practices as advised to exercise proper social distancing and no social gatherings of more than ten people. Tough decisions are required to ensure the safety and health of our employees, friends, family, and neighbors.

We hope we can look back on this situation and say it brought out the best in all of us.”

The fluid nature of the COVID-19 crisis requires the need to re-evaluate constantly. More information will be available as it progresses. To help keep our community informed, [this site](#) has been established for the public to find contact information for local governments, schools and public facilities. News and information will also be distributed through our local media outlets.

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