



Joint Information

Blount County Intergovernmental Public Advisory

April 29, 2020

Blount County, Tennessee – Based on the Governor’s April 29 press conference, certain close-contact businesses will be provided guidance that will allow them to open on May 6 in Blount County. The Governor indicated more information will be available from the Economic Recovery Group by the end of this week. When we receive confirmation directly from the Governor’s Office of any new information or Orders that impact citizens and/or businesses within Blount County, we will do our best to pass that information along as soon as possible.

The information included in this Advisory is the most currently released information and subject to change as the Governor’s Orders develop.

As part of the 89 counties that follow the Governor’s “Tennessee Pledge” plan for reopening, the governments of Blount County, the cities of Maryville, Alcoa, Friendsville and Townsend, and the town of Louisville hope to educate the public on the Governor’s Orders and how they relate to our community compared to the six metro counties – including Knox. Knox County’s Plan, “A Community Strategy for Phased Reopening” can be found here:

<https://covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/pdfs/A-Community-Strategy-for-Phased-Reopening.pdf>

We must continue to remain vigilant to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. As we know, it is a highly contagious virus and as we begin to participate in more normal activities, we also must continue to take measures to protect ourselves and others – especially those who are most vulnerable. This remains our individual responsibility to protect our families, friends, neighbors and loved ones.

As local government leaders, **we are concerned about the confusion** caused by how the Governor’s Orders are applied and communicated. As one of 89 counties that must follow the Governor’s Orders, we are subject to laws that are different to our neighboring Knox County which is one of the six metro counties allowed to provide their own plans.

The Attorney General provided an Opinion that explains the Governor’s authority in a public health emergency and the inability of local governments (89 counties) to override the Governor’s decisions. The opinion states, “Regardless of the choice that he might make, political subdivisions may not take any action that undermines the executive orders. Thus, a political subdivision may not take any action that is either more restrictive or less restrictive as to the subjects addressed in the orders. Such action would be at cross purposes with the orders and, therefore, constitute an impermissible legal conflict.” [The entire document is available here.](#)

Summary of the Governor's [Executive Order 30](#)

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| Business Activity | Blount County (89 counties) <i>Effective April 29 – May 29 unless otherwise noted.</i> |
| Interpersonal Gatherings | No social gatherings of 10 or more. |
| Restaurants | April 27 by Order 29. Open at 50% capacity with restrictions. Take-out alcohol sales by restaurants and limited-service restaurants to continue in order to encourage carryout or delivery orders. |
| Retail | April 29 by Order 29. Open at 50% capacity with restrictions. |
| Exercise facilities | May 1 by Order 30. Open with restrictions |
| Elective medical procedures | Prohibited through April 30 by Order 25. |
| Elective dental procedures | Prohibition extended through May 6 by Order No. 31 |
| Social Gatherings (10 or more) | Prohibited. Includes festivals, fairs, parades, youth and adult sporting events, overnight youth camps, other social or recreational assemblies or gatherings. |
| Places of Worship | Are not considered social gatherings in the Order and are not mandated to close. Online services are strongly encouraged. Guidelines are forthcoming. |
| Weddings, Funerals | Religious services, rites, or gatherings; weddings and funerals are not considered social gatherings in the Order and are not mandated to close. Online services are strongly encouraged. Guidelines are forthcoming. Public celebration of weddings and funerals are strongly encouraged to be postponed or attended only by close family members. |
| Nursing homes, retirement homes, long-term care facilities, or assisted living facilities. | Closed to visitors with two strict exceptions – providing critical services or visiting residents receiving imminent end-of-life care. |
| Businesses serving vulnerable populations | Adhere to all precautions advised by the President and CDC, refrain from physical contact to the extent possible. Allow special opportunities for vulnerable populations exclusive of general population when possible. |
| Barber shops, hair salons | As early as May 6 per the Governor's April 29 press conference – more information to follow |
| Waxing, threading, and nail salons or spas | As early as May 6 per the Governor's April 29 press conference – more information to follow |
| Spas providing body treatments | Closed to the public |
| Body-art facilities or tattoo services | Closed to the public |
| Tanning salons | Closed to the public |
| Massage therapy establishments or massage services | As early as May 6 per the Governor's April 29 press conference – more information to follow |
| Entertainment, recreational, and certain other gathering venues such as bowling alleys, arcades, concert venues, sporting event venues, theaters, auditoriums, performing arts centers and similar facilities, racetracks, indoor children's play areas, adult entertainment venues, amusement parks, senior centers or equivalent facilities, roller or ice-skating rinks | Closed to the public Includes festivals, fairs, parades, youth and adult sporting events and venues, overnight youth camps, other social or recreational assemblies or gatherings, public playgrounds, pools, splashpads, and dog parks. |
| Bars | Closed (limited-service restaurants may continue to encourage carryout or delivery orders.) |
| Libraries | Blount County library opening no sooner than May 18 (based on Federal and Governor's guidance) |

Governor Lee holds live press conferences daily at 4:00 p.m. EST.

To 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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