



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2020

MEDIA CONTACT:

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DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA – Today, Mayor Bo Dorough, City of Albany, and Chairman Christopher S. Cohilas, Dougherty County Board of Commissioners, issued a Shelter-In-Place order in the wake of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic and under the Authority of the Georgia Emergency Management Act of 1981. The order is in effect for fourteen (14) days beginning 12:01 a.m. on March 21, 2020 through 11:59 p.m. on April 7, 2020.

Shelter-In-Place discourages all non-essential travel through the community and in and out of the community. It does not apply to those traveling to work in an essential business or essential government function, including health care operations, home health workers, essential infrastructure, including construction of housing and operation of public transportation and utilities, grocery stores, farmers' market, food banks, convenience stores, businesses that provide necessities of life for economically disadvantaged individuals and shelter facilities, pharmacies, healthcare supply stores and healthcare facilities, gas stations and auto repair facilities, banks, etc.

Businesses such as grocery stores will remain open, but are not to exceed 50 percent occupancy at one time. Those patrons should be reminded to keep a six-foot distance from others for extended periods of time. Restaurants are prohibited from providing services in their dining rooms, but may provide drive-through, pickup/curbside, and delivery services. Bars, gyms, and similar businesses will continue to fall under the temporary closure order.

AN ORDINANCE FOR THE SECOND DELARATION OF A LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY RELATED TO COVID-19; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, Dougherty County, Georgia has experienced an event of critical significance as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) disease (“COVID-19”); and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (the “CDC”) indicates that COVID-19 is a new and contagious respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and which has now been detected in more than 100 locations around the world, including in the United States; and

WHEREAS, as reported by the World Health Organization (“WHO”), the world has experienced a deep humanitarian crisis with more than 164,000 cases and more than 6,000 deaths due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is officially a global pandemic according to the WHO; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump has declared a national emergency for the United States of America in response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, Governor Brian Kemp declared a public health Emergency due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Chairman of Dougherty County Commission, Georgia adopted an Ordinance for the Declaration of Local State of Emergency related to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, as reported by the CDC effective as of March 17, 2020, Georgia now has 287 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and ten (10) COVID-19 related death; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has issued guidance on the emerging and rapidly evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to protect oneself from illness; and

WHEREAS, social distancing is recommended by the CDC to prevent the continued spreading of the illness in the community; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, President Donald Trump issued his Coronavirus Guidelines for America which instructs people to listen to their local authorities and to avoid social gatherings of more than (10) people; and

WHEREAS, Dougherty County, Georgia, have imposed temporary restrictions related to public and private gatherings to stop large numbers of people from gathering and staying in close proximity during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the CDC expects that additional cases of COVID-19 will be identified in the coming days, including more cases in the United States, and that person-to-person spread is likely to continue to occur; and

WHEREAS, local emergency hospital personnel have reported to the Mayor and Chairman that they are treating patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and that there is shortage of personal protective equipment which places the health, safety, and welfare of emergency medical personnel at risk and the general public;

WHEREAS, medical professionals have advised that if COVID-19 spreads in Dougherty County and the rest of Georgia, at a rate comparable to the rate of spread in other affected areas, it may greatly strain the resources and capabilities of county and municipal governments, including public health agencies, that provide essential services for containing and mitigating the spread of contagious diseases, such as COVID-19, and the situation may become too large in scope to be handled in its entirety by the normal county and municipal operating services in some parts of this State, and this situation may spread to other parts of the State; and

WHEREAS, in the judgment of the Chairman of the Dougherty County Commission, Georgia, as of the date of this Ordinance, there exist emergency circumstances as a result of COVID-19 within the geographical boundaries of Dougherty County, Georgia, as described in Section 1-102 of the Ordinance requiring extraordinary and immediate corrective actions for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Dougherty County and the surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, to prevent or minimize injury to people resulting from this pandemic, the Chairman finds that certain actions are required, including but not limited to, the social distancing measures set forth herein;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1-104 (d) of the Ordinance of Dougherty County, Georgia, the Chairman has the right, duty, power, privilege and authority to exercise and enjoy all other powers, duties, functions, rights, privileges, and immunities necessary and proper to promote or protect the safety, health, peace, security and general welfare of said government and its inhabitants and to exercise all implied powers necessary to carry into execution all powers granted in this Emergency Management Ordinance as fully and completely as if such powers were fully enumerated herein and to do and perform all of the acts pertaining to its property, affairs and local government which are necessary or proper in the legitimate exercise of its corporate powers and governmental duties and functions; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. Sec. 38-3-28, the Chairman are authorized to make, amend, and rescind orders, rules, and regulations as necessary for emergency purposes and to supplement carrying out the emergency management laws; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. Sec. 38-3-51, the Governor's declared public health emergency authorizes the Chairman to use emergencies powers in O.C.G.A. Sections 38-3-1 through 38-3-64; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. Sec. 38-3-6, during an emergency, O.C.G.A. Sections 38-3-1 through 38-3-64 are supposed to be liberally construed to effectuate their purposes;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Chairman of the Dougherty County Commission, Georgia hereby ordains that it is hereby declared that a local state of emergency exists within the territorial limits of Dougherty County, Georgia, and shall continue until the conditions requiring this declaration are abated.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

Article 1. That Dougherty County, Georgia of Emergency Management activates the Emergency Operations Plan;

Article 2. That the following sections of Dougherty County Code be implemented:

- a. Section 3-4-5 Additional Emergency Powers
- b. Section 3-4-9. Authority to Waive Procedures and Fee Structures
- c. Section 3-4-11. Social Distancing and Closed or Restricted Areas during Emergency as Ordered below:

1. The intent of this Order is to ensure that the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible, while enabling essential services to continue, to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the maximum extent possible. When people need to leave their places of residence, whether to obtain or perform vital services, or to otherwise facilitate authorized activities necessary for continuity of social and commercial life, they should at all times reasonably possible comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in Section 10 below. All provisions of this Order should be interpreted to effectuate this intent. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Order constitutes an imminent threat to public health.

2. All individuals currently living within the territorial limits of Dougherty County, Georgia shall shelter at their place of residence. To the extent individuals are using shared or outdoor spaces, they must at all times as reasonably possible maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any other person when they are outside their residence. All persons may leave their residences only for Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, or to operate Essential Businesses, all as defined in Section 10. Individuals experiencing homelessness are exempt from this Section, but are strongly urged to obtain shelter, and governmental and other entities are

strongly urged to make such shelter available as soon as possible and to the maximum extent practicable (and to utilize Social Distancing Requirements in their operation).

3. All businesses with a facility in the County, except Essential Businesses as defined below in Section 10, are required to cease all activities at facilities located within the County except Minimum Basic Operations, as defined in Section 10. For clarity, businesses may also continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own residences (i.e., working from home). All Essential Businesses are strongly encouraged to remain open. To the greatest extent feasible, Essential Businesses shall comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in Section 10 below, including, but not limited to, when any customers are standing in line.

4. All public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited purposes as expressly permitted in Section 10. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.

5. All travel, including, but not limited to, travel on foot, bicycle, scooter, motorcycle, automobile, or public transit, except Essential Travel and Essential Activities as defined below in Section 10, is prohibited. People must use public transit only for purposes of performing Essential Activities or to travel to and from work to operate Essential Businesses or maintain Essential Governmental Functions. People riding on public transit must comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in Section 10 below, to the greatest extent feasible. This Order allows travel into or out of the County to perform Essential Activities, operate Essential Businesses, or maintain Essential Governmental Functions.

6. This Order is issued based on evidence of increasing occurrence of COVID-19 within the County and throughout the State of Georgia, scientific evidence and best practices regarding the most effective approaches to slow the transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, and evidence that the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of the County places it at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in the general public, which is now a pandemic according to the World Health Organization, there is a public health emergency throughout the County. Making the problem worse, some individuals who contract the COVID-19 virus have no symptoms or have mild symptoms, which means they may not be aware they carry the virus. Because even people without symptoms can transmit the disease, and because evidence shows the disease is easily spread, gatherings can result in preventable transmission of the virus. The scientific evidence shows that at this stage of the emergency, it is essential to slow virus transmission as much as possible to protect the most vulnerable and to prevent the health care system from being overwhelmed. One proven way to slow the transmission is to limit interactions among people to the greatest extent practicable. By reducing the spread of the COVID-19 virus, this Order helps preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in the County.

7. This Order also is issued in light of the existence of 57 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the County, as of 12:00 noon on Friday, March 20, 2020, including a significant and increasing number of suspected cases of community transmission and likely further significant increases in transmission. Widespread testing for COVID-19 is not yet available but is expected to increase

in the coming days. This Order is necessary to slow the rate of spread and the Commission will re-evaluate it as further data becomes available. The Chairman also make the findings discussed in the “Whereas” paragraphs part of the factual findings of the Mayor and Commission.

8. This Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the March 16, 2020, Proclamation of a State of Emergency issued by Governor Brian Kemp.

9. This Order comes after the release of substantial guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Georgia Department of Public Health, and other public health officials throughout the United States and around the world, including a variety of prior orders to combat the spread and harms of COVID19. The Chairman will continue to assess the quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this Order, or issue additional Orders, related to COVID-19.

10. Definitions and Exemptions.

a. For purposes of this Order, individuals may leave their residence only to perform any of the following “Essential Activities.” But people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and people who are sick are urged to stay in their residence to the extent possible except as necessary to seek medical care.

i. To engage in activities or perform tasks essential to their health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members or partners or significant others (including, but not limited to, pets), such as, by way of example only and without limitation, obtaining medical supplies or medication, visiting a health care professional, or obtaining supplies they need to work from home.

ii. To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members, or to deliver those services or supplies to others, such as, by way of example only and without limitation, canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supplies, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products, and products necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.

iii. To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section, such as, by way of example and without limitation, walking, hiking, running, or bicycling. However, individuals shall not engage in team sports and/or activities which necessarily result in the congregation of 10 or more persons, or otherwise require or necessitate that individuals come closer than 6 feet of each other.

iv. To perform work providing essential products and services at an Essential Business or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Order, including Minimum Basic Operations.

v. To care for a family member or pet in another household.

b. For purposes of this Order, individuals may leave their residence to work for or obtain services at any “Healthcare Operations” including hospitals, clinics, dentists, pharmacies, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, other healthcare facilities, healthcare suppliers, home healthcare services providers, mental health providers, or any related and/or ancillary healthcare services. “Healthcare Operations” also includes veterinary care and all healthcare services provided to animals. This exemption shall be construed broadly to avoid any impacts to the delivery of healthcare, broadly defined. “Healthcare Operations” does not include fitness and exercise gyms and similar facilities.

c. For purposes of this Order, individuals may leave their residence to provide any services or perform any work necessary to the operations and maintenance of “Essential Infrastructure,” including, but not limited to, public works construction, construction and all related activities (in particular affordable housing or housing for individuals experiencing homelessness), airport operations, water, sewer, gas, electrical, oil refining, roads and highways, public transportation, solid waste collection and removal, internet, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services), provided that they carry out those services or that work in compliance with Social Distancing Requirements as defined this Section, to the extent possible.

d. For purposes of this Order, all first responders, emergency management personnel, emergency dispatchers, court personnel, and law enforcement personnel, and others who need to perform essential services are categorically exempt from this Order. Further, nothing in this Order shall prohibit any individual from performing or accessing “Essential Governmental Functions,” as determined by the governmental entity performing those functions. Each governmental entity shall identify and designate appropriate employees or contractors to continue providing and carrying out any Essential Governmental Functions. All Essential Governmental Functions shall be performed in compliance with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section, to the extent possible.

e. For the purposes of this Order, covered businesses include any for-profit, nonprofit, or private educational entities, regardless of the nature of the service, the function they perform, or its corporate or entity structure.

f. For the purposes of this Order, “Essential Businesses” means:

i. Healthcare Operations and Essential Infrastructure;

ii. Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supply, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products (such as cleaning and personal care products). This includes stores that sell groceries and also sell other nongrocery products, and products necessary to maintaining

- the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences;
- iii. Food cultivation, including farming, livestock, and fishing;
 - iv. Retail businesses selling any goods or services to the public;
 - v. Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;
 - vi. Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services;
 - vii. Gas stations and auto-supply, auto-repair, and related facilities;
 - viii. Banks and related financial institutions;
 - x. Hardware stores;
 - ix. Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, Essential Activities, and Essential Businesses;
 - x. Businesses providing mailing and shipping services, including post office boxes;
 - xi. Educational institutions—including private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities—for purposes of facilitating distance learning or performing essential functions, provided that social distancing of six-feet per person is maintained to the greatest extent possible ;
 - xii. Laundromats, drycleaners, and laundry service providers;
 - xiii. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery or carry out. Schools and other entities that typically provide free food services to students or members of the public may continue to do so under this Order on the condition that the food is provided to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. Schools and other entities that provide food services under this exemption shall not permit the food to be eaten at the site where it is provided, or at any other gathering site;
 - xiv. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home;
 - xv. Businesses or manufacturers that supply other essential businesses with the support or supplies necessary to operate;
 - xvi. Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods, or services directly to residences;

xvii. Airlines, taxis, and other private transportation providers providing transportation services necessary for Essential Activities and other purposes expressly authorized in this Order;

xviii. Home-based care for seniors, adults, or children;

xix. Residential facilities including hotels, motels, shared rental units and similar facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, and children;

xx. Professional services, such as legal, accounting services, real estate services, when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities;

xxi. All businesses which possesses a Class A, retail liquor package license; Class B, retail beer package license; or a Class C, retail wine package license shall be authorized, but only via drive-thru or in parking lots or at curb.

xxii. Any duly licensed business not otherwise restricted herein that operates with a minimum of six (6) feet of separation between employees at all times. Any such business shall insure such separation is maintained at all times, including when employees enter and exit the business.

xxiii. Any retail business (which by way of example shall include but not be limited to grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, building supply stores, etc.) offering goods for sale to the public shall not permit its premises to become occupied by any more than 50 percent of its approved occupancy level and shall further be responsible for encouraging social distancing of at least 6 feet between employees and consumers on its premises.

g. For the purposes of this Order, “Minimum Basic Operations” include the following, provided that employees comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section to the extent possible, while carrying out such operations.

i. The minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business’s inventory, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions.

ii. The minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences.

h. For the purposes of this Order, “Essential Travel” includes travel for any of the following purposes. Individuals engaged in any Essential Travel must comply with all Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section below.

i. Any travel related to the provision of or access to Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, Essential Businesses, or Minimum Basic Operations.

- ii. Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons.
- iii. Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services.
- iv. Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction.
- v. Travel required by law enforcement or court order.
- vi. Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the County. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of the County remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel.
- i. For purposes of this Order, residences include hotels, motels, shared rental units and similar facilities.
- j. For purposes of this Order, “Social Distancing Requirements” includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.

11. Enforcement and Remedies.

- a. **Individuals:** In recognition that Dougherty County, Georgia does not have the personnel or resources to monitor and police distancing or gathering limitations or shelter in place requirements for all individuals currently living within the territorial limits of Dougherty County, Georgia, and the Albany Police Department (APD), the Dougherty County Police Department (DCPD), and the Dougherty County Sheriff’s Office (DCSO), Georgia as deemed necessary by the manager under this Declaration are authorized to support compliance with this Order through information delivery and education of individuals regarding the imminent threat to public health posed by COVID-19.
- b. **Covered Businesses:** Any violations of this Order by covered businesses shall be considered ordinance violations subject to the general penalty provisions outlined in Section 1-1-5 of the Official Code of Dougherty County, Georgia.
- c. **Individuals Experiencing Homelessness:** The Chairman direct the Manager and County Administrator to engage with service providers to ensure that there is ample capacity to provide shelter to all homeless individuals in the territorial limits of Dougherty County, Georgia while utilizing Social Distancing Requirements, and empower the manager to utilize the facilities and resources of Dougherty County, Georgia, to accomplish this directive.

12. This Order shall become effective at 12:01 a.m. on March 21, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 7, 2020, or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Chairman.

13. Copies of this Order shall promptly be: (1) made available at Dougherty County, Georgia; (2) posted on Dougherty County, Georgia website; and (3) provided to any member of the public requesting a copy of this Order.

14. If any provision of this Order to the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the remainder of the Order, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.

Article 3. Severability

1. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Chairman that all sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this Ordinance are and were, upon their enactment, believed by the Chairman to be fully valid, enforceable, and constitutional.

2. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Chairman that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, each and every section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is severable from every other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance. It is hereby further declared to be the intention of the Chairman that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, no section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is mutually dependent upon any other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance.

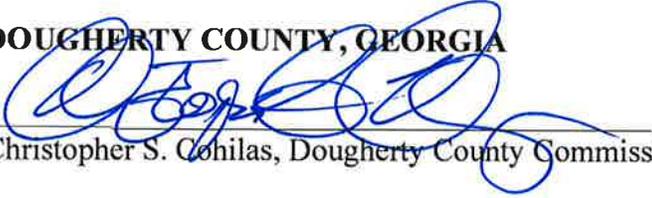
3. In the event that any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance shall, for any reason whatsoever, be declared invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, it is the express intent of the Mayor and Chairman that such invalidity, unconstitutionality or unenforceability shall, to the greatest extent allowed by law, not render invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or sections of the Ordinance and that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, all remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of the Ordinance shall remain valid, constitutional, enforceable, and of full force and effect.

Article 4. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed or set aside. The Ordinance adopted on March 20, 2020, by the Chairman of the Dougherty County Commission, Georgia for the Declaration of Local State of Emergency related to COVID-19 is hereby repealed.

Article 5. This Ordinance shall become effective following approval by the Chairman at 12:01 a.m. on March 21, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 7, 2020, or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Mayor and Commission.

SO ORDERED AND ORDAINED this 20th day of March, 2020.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA



Christopher S. Cochilas, Dougherty County Commission

For the full Shelter-In-Place Order, visit Dougherty.ga.us and the News and Events/Public Notices section. For more information, there is also a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section on this link.

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About Dougherty County, Georgia

Located in the heart of Southwest Georgia, Dougherty County is home to internationally recognized quail plantations, a university and technical institute. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for all citizens by being accessible and good stewards of our resources, delivering cost-effective, responsive services with integrity, fairness, and friendliness. For more information, visit Dougherty.ga.us. Or, find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Dougherty.ga.us](https://www.facebook.com/Dougherty.ga.us) or on Twitter @1doughertycoga.

City of Albany and Dougherty County Declaration of Disaster & Public Health Emergency FAQs

When does the order go into effect?

The order goes into effect at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, March 21, 2020

How long does the order last?

The order is in place through 11:59 p.m. on April 7, 2020.

What does shelter-in-place mean?

The order does not confine residents to their home as the lockdowns in Italy and China have done, but it directs residents to stay home unless participating in essential activities. Essential activities include grocery shopping, working, healthcare, caring for others – a full list can be found on the order. A full list of Essential Activities is defined in Article 2.10.f.i through Article 2.10.f. xxii of the order.

Non-essential activities throughout the community are prohibited. Non-essential travel in and out of the community are prohibited. Citizens are advised to travel only for essential business operations, to travel to and from work and to secure essential goods and services and other exceptions found in the order.

What are essential activities?

Individuals may leave their residence only to perform “Essential Activities” as defined in Article 2.10.a.i through Article 2.10.a.v of the executive order, which can be found at dougherty.ga.us under the News & Events Public Notices section.

Should my business close during this time?

The order does not require all private businesses to temporarily close, the list of essential businesses is outlined in Article 2.10.f.i through Article 2.10.f. xxii of the order.

Is my business considered “essential”?

Essential businesses are defined in Article 2.10.f.i through Article 2.10.f. xxii of the order.

Will grocery stores remain open?

Yes, grocery stores may remain open and are not to exceed 50 percent occupancy at any given time. Persons are to observe social distancing and are not to be within six feet of one another for extended periods of time.

Will retailers and shopping centers have to close?

Malls and shopping centers and other retail establishments may remain open at no more than 50 percent of the approved occupancy on the posted Certificate of Occupancy of the business. Persons are not to be within six feet of one another at all times.

Can production facilities and distribution centers stay open?

Yes, production facilities and distribution centers may remain open so long as social distancing guidelines of six feet are followed. Workers may travel to and from work.

If my restaurant/bar/gym limits access to 10 members or less at a time, does it have to close?

Restaurants are prohibited from providing service in their dining rooms. Restaurants may continue to provide drive through, pick up/curbside and delivery services. Bars, Nightclubs and other similar establishments are closed. Gyms and other similar businesses fall under the temporary closure order.

I'm an Albany State University student. Can I get my belongings from my dorm?

Due to the shelter-in-place order, students should not return to campus. Effective at 8 p.m. on March 20, the housing move-out process will be delayed until further notice. Additional student-related information will be provided by ASU.

Are daycares required to close under this order?

No. Childcare facilities are not included in this order but should maintain social distancing.

Does my church have to cancel in-person service?

Yes. However, virtual worship services are highly encouraged during this time of crisis in our community.

Can we still hold funeral services?

Yes, as long as indoor attendance is limited to less than 10 persons and social distancing is observed. Outdoor/graveside services are encouraged.

My hotel has a restaurant and/or continental breakfast buffet. Should that be closed?

Yes. Food should be delivered to rooms or picked up to-go during the effective period of the order.

Are beauty and barber shops allowed to stay open?

Social distancing guidelines of six feet are required.

Can dance studios continue classes that are limited to 10 students or less at one time?

No. A dance studio falls under the category of Indoor Recreational Facility and is subject to the requirements of the order.

Can employees of businesses not affected by the order still be allowed to come in to work, but remain closed to the public?

The order does not require all private businesses to temporarily close, the list of essential businesses is outlined in Article 2.10.f.i through Article 2.10.f. xxii Social distancing of employees is required.

Can we still maintain our dentist, eye doctor, and medical doctor appointments?

Yes. Hospitals and medical facilities are not included in the Community Gathering definition so long as persons are generally not within 6 feet of one another for extended periods. Please see the social distancing recommendations included with the order at dougherty.ga.us under the News and Events, Public Notices section.

Will the City work with people who cannot pay their utility bill due to being out of work as a result of COVID-19?

If you are unable to pay your bill, please contact Albany Utilities (229) 883-8330. As always, utilities staff is prepared to work with you on a payment plan for your bill.

Is public transit still running a full schedule?

Yes. Transit services are not prohibited under the order and are continuing as normal, with enhanced measures for cleaning. Travel should be essential. Six foot distancing still required.

Is the animal shelter remaining open?

Animal shelter operations are continuing as normal.

Are parks and playgrounds still open?

Outdoor recreational facilities such as parks and playgrounds remain open so long as there are not gatherings of 10 or more people and social distancing is required.

Organized and unorganized group sports are prohibited. Parks and Recreation has implemented an extensive cleaning schedule for all playground equipment, tables, benches and other outdoor facilities.

Will there be enforcement and how?

A violation of the order is a misdemeanor. If you have a complaint about businesses operating outside of the order or large community gatherings during the effective period, please notify the Emergency Operations Center at (229) 302-1900. The City and County may use other enforcement tools as allowed by law. To report a potential violation of the order, 229-431-2100 or 229-431-2132.