



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 28, 2020

### **Mayor renews “State of Emergency” including “Safe at Home” Guidance for COVID-19**

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** — Murfreesboro Mayor Shane McFarland issued a renewed order, amending the local ‘State of Emergency’ for the City of Murfreesboro in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The renewed order goes into effect at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 28, and remains in effect until 6:00 p.m. on April 4. The order is attached.

“As of March 28, Rutherford County had 46 confirmed cases by the Tennessee Health Department, but we know it will get worse. We need to continue to be proactive to stop the spread and save lives,” said Mayor Shane McFarland. “Our top priority is protecting the health and safety of our citizens. Whether these local and state orders closing schools, restaurants, fitness centers and now smoking lounges must be maintained beyond April 4, I wish I could answer. We just don’t know at this time.”

The renewed Order adds sections, ordering or encouraging, among other things:

- Cigar Bars and Hookah Lounges: Orders all cigar bars, hookah lounges, and other establishments whose business involves offering a place for people to gather and smoke tobacco and similar products to close and remain closed to any member of the public, (effective at 6:00 p.m. Saturday, March 28, 2020), except for the sale of tobacco and related products to be used or consumed at a location other than the establishment’s premises;
- Safe at Home Guidance: Strongly encourages all individuals living within the City to remain at their place of residence except as is necessary to maintain their health and economic well-being. While this Order does not mandate sheltering in place, individuals must comply with all other provisions of this Order and any other law, order or rule related to the containment of COVID-19 whenever it is necessary for them to travel away from their residence. Individuals whose residences are unsafe or become unsafe, such as victims of domestic violence, are urged to leave their home and stay at a safe alternative location;

- CDC Guidelines: Strongly encourages all members of the public to comply with the guidance and directives issued by the federal CDC pertaining to the containment of COVID-19, which can be found by going to <https://www.cdc.gov/>;
- Social/Physical Distancing: Strongly encourages individuals using shared or outdoor spaces to maintain physical distancing of at least six (6) feet from any other person with whom they do not share a residence;
- Mass Gatherings: In accordance with Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order No. 17, social gatherings of more than ten (10) people occurring outside a single household or living unit are prohibited. This provision does not prohibit the gathering of members of the same household;
- City Parks: Prohibits sporting events, athletic practices or games, or any other gathering involving ten (10) or more people (who do not resident together) from taking place in any City park or on the property of an elementary or secondary school within the City. The City's greenways and other park facilities remain open, provided individuals using the greenways comply with Section 10 of this Order and abide by the physical distancing requirements recommended by the CDC.

The provisions of the Order issued on March 21 remain in effect, including the following:

- Restaurants and On-Site Food and Alcohol Service: Orders that establishments whose primary business is alcohol service or food service remain closed for on-site consumption as required by Governor Lee's Executive Order No. 17 or as may be required by any subsequent order of the Governor amending or superseding Executive Order No. 17. The order does not prohibit pick-up, take-out, delivery, or drive through service that is conducted in accordance with Executive Order No. 17. In addition, the order does not apply to non-profit or government organizations providing food at no cost to individuals who are homeless or are otherwise in need of such services;
- Gyms and Exercise and Fitness Facilities: Orders that all gyms and exercise and fitness facilities within the City remain closed until this Order is withdrawn;
- Authorizes the City Manager to take reasonably necessary steps to limit person-to-person contact, including limiting public access to City offices and facilities and to develop and implementing alternative work arrangements and schedules to protect City employees during this pandemic;
- Suspends certain procedures and formalities otherwise required under the Murfreesboro City Code or Tennessee law pertaining to how the City conducts its operations;
- Encourages all members of the public and businesses to follow and comply with guidance and directives issued by the federal CDC as well as the Tennessee and Rutherford County departments of health <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>; and
- Encourages all members of the public to remain calm, to resist panic purchasing, consider their neighbors who have need, and to look after and help those most at risk to this pandemic to include the elderly and those with suppressed immune systems.

The Mayor issued the March 21 and March 28 orders pursuant to special emergency powers granted to local governments pursuant to state law and follows Executive Orders No. 15-20 issued by Governor Bill Lee in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For detailed information, visit the Office of Governor website at <https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19.html>.

Both federal and state health officials have advised that extraordinary and immediate measures must be taken to respond quickly to COVID-19, to prevent community spread, and to alleviate the suffering of people exposed to and those infected or potentially infected with the virus. Effective, Wednesday, March 25, 2020, the City closed City Hall until further notice.

**“Mayor McFarland** stated: “City employees continue to deliver critical services to our residents and will continue to do so throughout the length of this local emergency. We must do all we can to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by maintaining social distancing, adhering to restrictions for gatherings, practicing good personal hygiene and sanitizing surfaces at home and work.”

**City Manager Craig Tindall** stated, “While operating under alternative staffing to reduce the potential spread of the virus in our offices and facilities, critical services (public safety, water solid waste, sewer service, and emergency management) are operating fully and other City services (planning, codes, finance) continue to serve customers. The City continues to encourage everyone to follow CDC and Tennessee Department of Health guidelines and recommendations.”

Citizens can follow the latest City Coronavirus Information, including information from County, State and Federal partners at the City of Murfreesboro website: <https://www.murfreesborotn.gov/1690/Coronavirus-Information>. Residents are also encouraged to watch CityTV for the updates, including closings and postponements as well as CDC videos.

The City urges all citizens to follow CDC practices:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your cough and sneezing.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice social distancing.
- Stay home when you are sick and call your physician or the County Health Department at 615-898-7880 for guidance.
- Stay home if you come into contact with someone who is sick.
- Clean and disinfect objects (e.g., cell phone, computer) and high touch surfaces.
- Make sure you continue to have adequate supplies, such as medications, if needed.

For information from the Tennessee Department of Health, visit <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>.

For the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) COVID-19 webpage and most recent information and guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

*For City News online, visit [www.Murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.Murfreesborotn.gov).*

**Graphics and Declaration Order attached:**

1. *City of Murfreesboro Logo.jpg*
2. *Murfreesboro Order Renewing Declaration of Emergency.pdf*
3. *CDC Social Distancing.jpg*

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