

FAYETTE COUNTY JUDGE PRESS RELEASE OF 1 APRIL 2020

To the people of Fayette County — following our President’s recent extension thru the month of April of his coronavirus guidelines, and upon yesterday’s issuance by our Governor of Executive Order #14, I want to clarify to all, in as simple terms as possible, just what this means to Fayette County with respect to applicability and adherence at this point in time:

1. All government entities and businesses in Fayette County will continue to provide essential services during the COVID-19 disaster, and all critical infrastructure in the County will remain operational. Essential services are intended to ensure continuity of functions critical to public health and safety and consist of the following:
 - a. Staffing operations centers
 - b. Maintaining and repairing critical infrastructure
 - c. Operating dispatch and call centers
 - d. Working construction
 - e. Performing operational functions
 - f. Support of crucial supply chains
2. Workers who support the above include those in the fields of Medical and Healthcare, Telecommunications, Information Technology, Defense, Food and Agriculture, Transportation and Logistics, Energy, Water and Wastewater, Law Enforcement and Public Works. Any questions regarding these essential functions and/or workers who perform them should be addressed to the office of the Fayette County Emergency Manager or the office of the Fayette County Judge.
3. People shall avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants, and food courts, or visiting gyms, massage establishments, tattoo studios, piercing studios, or cosmetology salons to include barber shops and hair styling salons.

4. Drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options for food and drinks is allowed and remains highly encouraged.
5. County residents are not prohibited from accessing essential services or engaging in essential daily activities, such as going to grocery stores or gas stations, providing or obtaining other essential services, visiting parks, hunting or fishing, or engaging in physical activity so long as the necessary precautions are maintained to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and to minimize person to person contact with people not in the same household.
6. People within the county shall not visit nursing homes, state supported living centers, assisted living facilities, or long term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.
7. Schools shall remain temporarily closed to in-person classroom attendance and shall not recommence before May 4, 2020.
8. Any questions concerning the above imposed restrictions should be addressed to the Fayette County office of Emergency Management or the office of the Fayette County Judge. Failure to comply with the Governor's Executive Order is an offense punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1000 and/or confinement in jail not to exceed 180 days.
9. The above directives and restrictions take effect at 12:01 a.m. on April 2, 2020.
10. At this time Fayette County is not under a County mandated shelter in place.

In summary, I believe that if all the executive orders and guidelines issued at the federal, state and county levels were condensed into a simple recommendation, it would read something like this:

- Wash your hands continuously and correctly and avoid touching your face and eyes
- Keep a distance of at least 6 ft. from those you encounter
- Avoid crowds of more than 10 people
- If you feel sick, stay home and call your local health provider
- Call first before seeking essential county services or assistance regarding potential coronavirus symptoms. For medical emergencies always call 911.

- Stay home unless you are associated with providing or receiving essential services
- Cease all activities and travel outside of the household that are not absolutely necessary
- Get plenty of rest and stay hydrated

If we all do the above, we will be doing those things we have direct control over , and we will be doing the most important things in preventing the spread of the virus within our County. I believe Fayette County is on the right path to curbing the spread of the virus, but we can expect more cases. Community spread is here and now is the time to not let our guard down in adhering to the above. The Fayette County office of Emergency Management is working closely with our EMS, local health providers, community leaders, first responders and State agencies to ensure we are prepared to treat and deal with the more severe cases should they arise and to maintain the protection of our most vulnerable and the protection and capability of our local healthcare providers. We are implementing procedures to better manage the flow of information between local health providers, the County and our Regional State Health officials. Invaluable help and assistance in doing this is being provided by our local school nurses in conjunction with our EMS and office of Emergency Management. We are also working on consolidating and centralizing COVID-19 testing should that become necessary to reduce the burden on our local healthcare providers and their facilities and to better accommodate increased testing as more and better test kits become available. Thru creative and imaginative thinking your Commissioners, the offices of Emergency Management, and EMS are procuring additional personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitizer and distributing these as required. The Emergency Operation Center remains at level 2 and ready to be fully manned and operational when directed. Please continue to go to the Fayette County website for all accurate and current information with respect to the number of confirmed cases within the county and additional information with respect to small business loans, unemployment applications and other economic recovery measures becoming available. There are links that can direct you to state and federal agencies which will provide the information you will need.

In conclusion, I thank all of you for the effort you are making in preventing the spread of the virus within our county. If we continue to take care of ourselves and our loved ones in the manner our health experts continually preach to us, we will come thru these trying times together.....just as we have in the past.

Joe Weber
Fayette County Judge