

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (April 24, 2020)

Rutherford County Mayors' Caucus



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Rutherford County Mayors' Caucus Discusses Governor Lee's "Tennessee Pledge" and Its Impact Locally

Rutherford County, TN—The Rutherford County Mayors' Caucus (RCMC) met Friday after the release of Governor Bill Lee's guidelines for "reopening Tennessee responsibility," also known as the "Tennessee Pledge," to discuss how it will impact the citizens of Rutherford County.

Governor Lee announced Thursday afternoon that restaurants will open Monday, April 27, operating at 50 percent of seating capacity; retail will open Wednesday, April 29, operating at to 50 percent or less of store occupancy based on Tennessee's Building and Fire Code in the 89 Tennessee counties that are not Metro Health Department jurisdictions. Rutherford County is one of the 89 counties.

"Tennessee Pledge" provides businesses, employers, employees, and consumers with guidance and recommendations to responsibly modify operations and activities. We expect to have further guidance next week regarding churches, gyms, and medical procedures. Close contact services including salons, barber shops, etc. will not re-open until Phase 2. You'll hear more about the phasing next week.

Governor Lee placed emphasis on personal responsibility for Tennesseans and noted that businesses will be expected to follow the guidelines, while committing to and posting the "Tennessee Pledge" for their workers and customers.

Local government facilities will slowly modify their operations as well.

"On Friday, May 1, we are bringing all staff back to work, but continuing to limit public access to our facilities," said Rutherford County Mayor Bill Ketron. "We will follow the Governor's guidelines for

safeguarding employees, while continuing to provide services to the public through phone, online, and by email. Certain in-person meetings may also be permitted by appointment only and by following social distancing practices.”

“Town Manager Brian D. Hercules will have all personnel back in the offices on May 4, 2020 but will continue to have modified operational processes in place to serve citizens. We have safeguards in place to follow CDC guidelines and protect our employees. Town Hall will continue to be closed to the public; the drive-through will remain open, and citizens will continue to have the ability to conduct business online and by phone,” noted Smyrna Mayor Mary Esther Reed. “Our Parks and Recreation Department and Golf Course will resume modified operations on May 1, 2020, while our Event Center and Smyrna Outdoor Activity Center remain closed.”

City of Eagleville Mayor Chad Leeman said Eagleville City Hall will remain closed through next week, but staff are answering phones and responding to emails. “We are doing everything we can to assist the needs of the public while protecting their health and the health of our employees,” he said.

“The City of La Vergne building lobbies will continue to be closed, and we will remain on a modified work schedule to maintain the health and welfare of our residents and city employees,” said City of La Vergne Mayor Jason Cole. “I strongly urge our residents to use online services, assistance by phone, or the drive-through options provided at City Hall.”

"It is imperative that we all continue to be responsible, consider ourselves at risk for exposure to and contraction of COVID-19 and that includes the responsibility of businesses to protect patrons and employees," said City of Murfreesboro Mayor Shane McFarland. "We all have the power to turn our everyday actions into a first line of defense against the contraction and further spread of this virus. Continue to stay home as often as possible, wear face coverings when you must go out in public, wash hands thoroughly and often, disinfect frequently-touched items and surfaces, and check in on yourselves and each other."

“Our local businesses should also understand that even opening restaurants for dine-in and retail outlets on reduced capacity, many patrons will continue to stay home after the restrictions are lifted until they are convinced it’s safe to go out. That’s why being responsible is so important,” added Mayor McFarland.

Alert Rutherford is a quick and easy way to receive updates and notifications during this ongoing event. Citizens can opt-in by texting “RCCOVID” to 888777.

There is also an online form available for citizens to submit non-health related COVID-19 concerns and questions. Persons filling out the form are encouraged to select the category that best fits the question being asked as well as their jurisdiction in order to make sure the question is directed to the person to best answer it. To access the form, visit <http://rutherfordcountyttn.gov/covid19>.

“Rutherford County is a resilient and vibrant community; we will emerge from this stronger than ever,” said Mayor Reed. “Maintain your space. Cover your face. To help us remain #RutherfordCountyStrong.”

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