

**ORDER OF THE JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER SUSPENDING
CERTAIN PUBLIC GATHERINGS DUE TO RISK OF INFECTION BY COVID-19**

WHEREAS, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) has been designated by the Alabama Department of Public Health to be a disease of epidemic potential, a threat to the health and welfare of the public, or otherwise of public health importance; and

WHEREAS, *Ala. Code § 22-3-5(2)* authorizes the County Health Officer to “institute immediate measures to prevent the spread of such [notifiable] disease.”

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a dangerous disease that should be immediately isolated and reported in the interest of public health; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has noted that COVID-19 (SARS-Coronavirus-2) is highly infectious and deadly for certain vulnerable groups.

WHEREAS, the Alabama Department of Public Health has noted that COVID-19 is highly infectious and deadly.

WHEREAS, a rapidly growing number of cases of COVID-19 is being detected in Jefferson County, and there are certain to be many more undetected cases in the county and surrounding areas.

WHEREAS, scientific analysis has found that COVID-19 has case fatality rates varying from 1.0% of cases to as high as 2.3%; and

WHEREAS, the County Health Officer having examined the evidence is of the opinion that official orders should issue.


NOW THEREFORE, THESE PREMISES CONSIDERED, it is ordered by the County Health Officer:

1. Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, all gatherings of 25 persons or more, or gatherings of any size that cannot maintain a consistent six-foot distance between persons, are prohibited until further notice. This Order shall apply to all such gatherings including, without limitation, community, civic, public, leisure, exercise, faith-based, and sporting events with spectators, concerts, conventions, fundraisers, parades, fairs, festivals, or any similar event or activity that brings 25 or more persons in a single room or single space at the same time.
2. Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, all Senior Citizen Center gatherings shall be closed.
 - a. Senior Citizens Centers and their partners are urged to assure that their clients continue to receive needed meals via curbside pick-up or delivery.

3. Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, all Nursing Home/Long Term Care Facilities shall prohibit visitation of all visitors and non-essential personnel, except for certain compassionate care situations such as end of life.
4. Effective Thursday, March 19, 2020, all of the following shall be closed until April 6, 2020:
 - a. Private Schools (all grades through 12th grade)
 - b. Preschools and Childcare Centers with 12 or more children.Prior to April 6, 2020, a determination shall be made about whether to extend the above closures.
5. Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, any restaurant, bar, brewery or establishment that offers food or drink, including those in food courts, shall not permit on-premises consumption of food or drink for one week. This order shall be reevaluated prior to Tuesday, March 24, 2020 for possible modification.
 - a. Such establishments may continue to offer food for take-out or delivery provided the social distancing protocols including maintaining a consistent six-foot distance between persons are followed.
 - b. Such establishments are strongly encouraged to offer online ordering and curbside pick-up of food.
 - c. Hospital food service areas are excluded from this order provided they have their own social distancing plan.
6. Notice of this order shall be announced publicly, including via social media, telephone, email, radio, newspaper, flyers, and other paper notices. All persons in Jefferson County are hereby assumed to be aware of this order, but where possible individual notice shall be given to large event organizers, sponsors, or similar entities.
7. If the organizer or sponsor of an otherwise suspended event desires, they may submit a request for an exemption from this order, at the discretion of the County Health Officer. While the County Health Officer is under no obligation to grant such an exemption, it shall be fairly considered based on the following criteria:
 - a. Effective measures have been taken to identify those attending the event that may potentially be affected with COVID-19, including but not limited to personal testing for the disease or submission of current medical clearances to the organizer.
 - b. Effective measures have been taken to prevent the spread of infection even by those that are infected while not symptomatic, including the provision of anti-infection measures such as proper facemasks, personal sanitation measures, and other measures that may be considered proper.
8. Requests for an appeal must be submitted AT LEAST two weeks in advance of any scheduled event.

9. This order is effective until it is either (1) withdrawn in writing or (2) COVID-19 is removed from the Alabama Department of Public Health's notifiable diseases schedule.

DONE AND ORDERED on this the 16th day of March, 2020.



Mark E. Wilson, M.D.
County Health Officer