



MEDIA CONTACT:
Leigh G. Krehling
Community Relations Officer
lkrehling@opelika-al.gov
334-705-5136

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR GARY FULLER

Dear Opelika Citizens:

Today, Governor Kay Ivey issued an amended Public Health Order that suspends certain public gatherings due to the risk of infection by COVID-19. I understand that these are drastic measures, but it is critical that we all do our part to help stop the spread of this virus. I want to assure you we are here for you during this uncertain time. Please be patient and remain calm, as we are all in this together. Congress has passed the CARES Act and with that will come federal funding relief. I know this has already had a huge impact on your business. Myself, the city council and all of our employees care deeply about the each and every one of our local businesses and industries, and want nothing more than for this to be over. What I ask from you today is to stay home, do your part to flatten the curve so we can resume our normal lives.

Please review the information below regarding federal business relief and Governor Ivey's newest order.

Business Relief

Today, Congress approved a massive package aimed at supporting the economy. Small businesses will have access to \$350 billion in **forgivable loans** if they meet certain requirements. Loans will be available to companies with 500 or fewer employees. Businesses can receive up to \$10 million, based on how much the company paid its employees between Jan. 1 – Feb. 29. The loans would convert to grants that don't have to be repaid for amounts spent on items such as payroll, rent or utilities, with the grants reduced when workers are laid off. Here is the full text of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

<https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/20059055/final-final-cares-act.pdf?mod=article inline&mod=article inline>

Public Health Order Changes

The new order, which is administered by Gov. Kay Ivey and the Alabama Department of Public Health, states that all non-work related gatherings of 10 persons or more, or non-work related gatherings that cannot maintain a consistent six-foot distance between persons is prohibited. The biggest change to the order is that the following non-essential businesses, venues and activities shall be closed to non-employees or not take place. Non-essential includes:

Entertainment venues as follows:

- (1) Night clubs
- (2) Bowling alleys
- (3) Arcades
- (4) Concert venues
- (5) Theaters, auditoriums, and performing arts centers
- (6) Tourist attractions (including museums and planetariums)
- (7) Racetracks
- (8) Indoor children's play areas
- (9) Adult entertainment venues
- (10) Casinos
- (11) Bingo halls
- (12) Venues operated by social clubs

Athletic facilities and activities as follows:

- (1) Fitness centers and commercial gyms
- (2) Spas and public or commercial swimming pools
- (3) Yoga, barre, and spin facilities
- (4) Spectator sports
- (5) Sports that involve interaction with another person of closer than 6 feet
- (6) Activities that require use of shared sporting apparatus and equipment
- (7) Activities on commercial or public playground equipment

Close-contact service providers as follows:

- (1) Barber shops
- (2) Hair salons
- (3) Waxing salons
- (4) Threading salons
- (5) Nail salons and spas
- (6) Body-art facilities and tattoo services
- (7) Tanning salons
- (8) Massage-therapy establishments and massage services

Retail stores as follows:

- (1) Furniture and home-furnishings stores
- (2) Clothing, shoe, and clothing-accessory stores

- (3) Jewelry, luggage, and leather goods stores
- (4) Department stores
- (5) Sporting goods stores
- (6) Book, craft, and music stores

You can read the order in its entirety at

<https://governor.alabama.gov/assets/2020/03/Amended-Statewide-Social-Distancing-SHO-Order-3.27.2020-FINAL.pdf>.

Opelika Parks & Recreation

Per the Governor's order, we are keeping open-air parks open; however, the playground equipment is closed. If you plan an outdoor activity, please stay off of the playground equipment as it is an obvious place that harbors germs. If you are in our parks, please maintain a less than 10 person per gathering rule and a keep 6-foot distance between you and other people. The Opelika Police Department will be monitoring these areas and asking people to disperse if there are groups of more than 10 people.

Thank you for your cooperation.