

ORDINANCE

NO. _____

An ordinance declaring a State of Emergency in Columbus, Georgia; prohibiting all gatherings of more than ten (10) persons, extending certain tax and licensing deadlines established by local law; extending time allowed for local officials to act under certain local code provisions; providing for an effective date, and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, the President of the United States declared a National Public Health Emergency on Friday March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Georgia declared a State Emergency in Georgia on March 14, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) a world health emergency and a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, O.C.G.A. §38-3-28 grants to political subdivisions the authority "to make, amend, and rescind such orders rules and regulation as may be necessary for emergency management purposes" as necessary to supplement the State's exercise of emergency powers; and

WHEREAS, the Charter of the Columbus, Georgia Consolidated Government grants to this Council the power to protect the safety, health, peace, security and general welfare of the inhabitants of the consolidated government, Charter of the Consolidated Government Columbus, Georgia (hereinafter, "Columbus Charter") § 3-104 (2); and

WHEREAS, the Columbus Charter also grants to the Council the power to determine that a state of emergency exists due to a natural disaster and adopt an ordinance addressing the emergency without a second reading of that Ordinance, Columbus Charter § 3-201(3); and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have recommended that any gathering of over ten (10) people be discontinued or prohibited; and

WHEREAS, there are several locally mandated business and tax deadlines that might cause hardships on local citizens and prevent their efforts to self-isolate.

NOW THEREFORE, in a public and regularly called meeting, held in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(g), the Mayor and Columbus Council declare and ordain as follows:

Section 1.

The Mayor and Council adopt and make the findings discussed in the "Whereas" paragraphs the factual findings of the Council.

Section 2.

The Mayor and Council hereby declare a state of emergency in Columbus, Georgia.

Section 3.

This Council hereby confirms the Declaration of Local Emergency ordered by the Mayor on March 20, 2020 which is attached hereto and incorporated herein. The Declaration includes restrictions on gatherings of more than ten (10) people and business activities which shall remain in effect until April 6, 2020 unless further extended.

Section 4.

The Mayor and Council suspend the bid and competitive portions of the City's Procurement Policy and authorize the City Manager to utilize the single-source policy and to require departments to provide a written justification for the procurement until April 30, 2020.

Section 5.

The April 1 deadline for obtaining business licenses and paying any business occupational tax as required by Columbus Code Sections 19-47 and 19-53 is hereby extended to May 1, 2020.

Section 6.

All Alcohol Distributor Excise tax: Mixed Drinks Excise tax and Vehicle Rental Excise tax payments falling due during the month of April 2020, shall be extended by thirty (30) days.

Section 7.

Any action, determination, or decision required of an official, board, or commission of the Columbus Consolidated Government under the provisions of the Columbus Code is hereby extended by thirty (30) days.

Section 8.

All Boards, Commissions, and Authorities of the Columbus Consolidated Government are hereby authorized to cancel any scheduled meeting during the emergency period or alternatively they may take advantage of the availability of teleconferenced meetings during the period of emergency as long as the requirements of O.C.G.A. 50-14-1(g) pertaining to public access are met.

Section 9.

The Board of Honor met on March 11, 2020 with one member of the quorum participating by telephone, the results of that meeting are declared to be official due to the current state of emergency.

Section 10.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage by the Mayor and Council and shall expire by its own terms as noted in each section above unless extended by further action of this Council. Provided however, the Mayor may act as required by exigent circumstances to extend any provision hereof in additional increments of up to thirty (30) days until dissolved by Council.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 24th day of March, 2020; and adopted at said meeting after one reading in accordance with Section 3-201(3) by the affirmative vote of ____ members of Council.

Councilor Allen	voting	_____
Councilor Barnes	voting	_____
Councilor Crabb	voting	_____
Councilor Davis	voting	_____
Councilor Garrett	voting	_____
Councilor House	voting	_____
Councilor Huff	voting	_____
Councilor Thomas	voting	_____
Councilor Thompson	voting	_____
Councilor Woodson	voting	_____

Sandra T. Davis
Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson, III
Mayor

DECLARATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, Columbus, Georgia has experienced an event of critical significance as a result of the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) has recommended that all events with more than ten (10) people should be cancelled to curb the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, in the judgment of the Mayor of Columbus, Georgia, with advice from the Emergency Management Agency and state and local health officials, there exist emergency circumstances located in Columbus, Georgia requiring extraordinary and immediate corrective actions for the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Columbus, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, to prevent or minimize illness or injury to people and damage to property resulting from this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in the Mayor by local and state law,

IT IS HEREBY DECLARED that a local state of emergency exists in Columbus, Georgia and shall continue until the conditions requiring this declaration are abated.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

Section 1.

That, due to dangers from the possible spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and to protect the safety of all citizens, a local emergency is hereby declared in Columbus, Georgia.

Section 2.

That, pursuant to authority contained in state law and Ordinance No. 11-56, the Columbus/Muscogee County Emergency Management Division, Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services, shall activate the Emergency Operations Plan.

Section 3.

That, all public or private Community Gatherings of more than ten (10) people anywhere within Columbus, Georgia are prohibited for the duration of this Order. A “Community Gathering” is defined as any indoor or outdoor event or convening, subject to the exceptions below, that brings together or is likely to bring together ten (10) or more persons at the same time in a single room or other single confined or enclosed space, such as an auditorium, stadium (indoor or outdoor), tent arena or event center, music venue, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space. A community gathering does not include the following or similar uses, so long as persons attending the Community gathering are generally not within six (6) feet of each other for extended periods: (1) spaces where persons may be in transit or waiting for transit such as airports, bus stations or terminals; (2) office or manufacturing space, child-care facilities, residential buildings or any type of temporary sheltering or housing; (3) grocery stores or pharmacies; and (4) hospital or medical facilities.

Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, the following business use categories will be regulated as follows: (1) Restaurants open to the public shall close except to provide take-out or curbside service to include alcoholic beverages in sealed containers which they are otherwise licensed to dispense; (2) All

business locations with on-premise consumption alcoholic beverage licenses which are not also restaurants shall be closed for business; (3) All establishments providing body care services which require close physical contact between the provider and client such as barbering, hair design, cosmetology, esthetics, massage therapy (except for medically licensed physical therapy), tattooing, or nail care shall be closed for business; (4) All indoor recreation facilities, to include gyms, health studios, indoor amusement facilities, bowling alleys, pool halls and theaters shall be closed for business; and (5) All other retail sales establishments will be permitted to remain open subject to the following restrictions : Businesses having less than 30,000 square feet shall have no more than ten (10) customers on their premises at any one time, and businesses with more than 30,000 square feet of retail space shall have no more than fifty (50) customers on their premises at any one time; and customers shall generally not be within six (6) feet of each other for extended periods.

Section 3 of this declaration shall take effect at midnight on March 20, 2020 and shall expire by its own terms on April 3, 2020 unless extended by further action of the Mayor or Columbus Council. Violations of this order will be punished as provided by Section 1-8 of the Columbus Code.

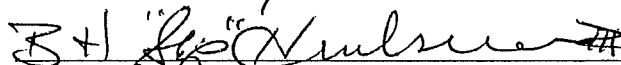
Section 4.

In order to lessen the burdens of citizens and reduce the possibility of congregation in public buildings, the following deadlines imposed by local law are hereby extended by this declaration:

- (1) The April 1 deadline for obtaining business licenses and paying any business occupational tax as required by Columbus Code Sections 19-47 and 19-53 is hereby extended to May 1, 2020;
- (2) All Alcohol Distributor Excise tax: Mixed Drinks Excise tax and Vehicle Rental Excise tax payments falling due during the month of April 2020, shall be extended by thirty (30) days; and
- (3) Any action, determination, or decision required of an official, board, or commission of the Columbus Consolidated Government under the provisions of the Columbus Code is hereby extended by thirty (30) days.

SO ORDERED,

This 20th day of March, 2020.



B.H. "Skip" Henderson, III,
Mayor of Columbus, Georgia