

**AN EMERGENCY DECLARATION BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF CANTON  
RELATED TO COVID-19.**

WHEREAS, City of Canton, Georgia has experienced an event of critical significance as a result of the Coronavirus disease (“COVID-19”); and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (the “CDC”) indicates that COVID-19 is a new and contagious respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and which has now been detected in more than 100 locations around the world, including in the United States; and

WHEREAS, as reported by the World Health Organization (“WHO”), the world has experienced a deep humanitarian crisis with more than 454,000 cases and more than 20,000 deaths due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is officially a global pandemic according to the WHO; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump has declared a national emergency for the United States of America in response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, Governor Brian Kemp declared a public health Emergency due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, the City Council declared a state of public health emergency to exist related to COVID- 19;

WHEREAS, as reported by the Georgia Department of Public Health effective as of March 25, 2020, Georgia now has 1247 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and Cherokee County has 31 confirmed cases; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has issued guidance on the emerging and rapidly evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to protect oneself from illness; and

WHEREAS, social distancing is recommended by the CDC to prevent the continued spreading of the illness in the community; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, President Donald Trump issued his Coronavirus Guidelines for America which instructs people to listen to their local authorities and to avoid social gatherings of more than ten (10) people; and

WHEREAS, many cities, states, and counties have imposed temporary restrictions related to public and private gatherings to stop large numbers of people from gathering and staying in close proximity during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the CDC expects that additional cases of COVID-19 will be identified in the coming days, including more cases in the United States, and that person-to-person spread is likely to continue to occur; and

WHEREAS, local emergency hospital personnel have reported to the City Council that they are treating patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and that there is a shortage of personal protective equipment which places the health, safety, and welfare of emergency medical personnel at risk and the general public;

WHEREAS, medical professionals have advised that if COVID-19 spreads in the City of Canton and the rest of Georgia, at a rate comparable to the rate of spread in other affected areas, it may greatly strain the resources and capabilities of county and municipal governments, including public health agencies, that provide essential services for containing and mitigating the spread of contagious diseases, such as COVID-19, and the situation may become too large in scope to be handled in its entirety by the normal county and municipal operating services in some parts of this State, and this situation may spread to other parts of the State; and

WHEREAS, in the judgment of the City Council of the City of Canton, Georgia, as of the date of this Ordinance, there exist emergency circumstances as a result of COVID-19 within the geographical boundaries of the City of Canton as described in Section 2-24 of the Charter of the City of Canton, Georgia and Sections 2-52 of the City of Canton Code of Ordinances requiring extraordinary and immediate corrective actions for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City of Canton; and

WHEREAS, Section 1.14 (8) of the Charter for the City of Canton gives the City Council authority carry out all reasonable provisions deemed necessary to deal with or meet such an emergency for the protection, safety, health or well-being of the citizens of the city and Section 1.14(43) grants the City Council the authority to exercise and enjoy all other powers, functions, rights, privileges and immunities necessary or desirable to promote or protect the safety, health, peace, security, good Declaration, comfort, convenience, or general welfare of the city and its inhabitants; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. Sec. 38-3-28, the City of Canton is authorized to make, amend, and rescind orders, rules, and regulations as necessary for emergency purposes and to supplement carrying out the emergency management laws; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. Sec. 38-3-51, the Governor's declared public health emergency authorizes the City of Canton to use emergencies powers in O.C.G.A. Sections 38-3-1 through 38-3-64; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. Sec. 38-3-6, during an emergency, O.C.G.A. Sections 38-3-1 through 38-3-64 are to be liberally construed to effectuate their purposes;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 26-4(2) of the Code of the City of Canton the Mayor is authorized to take action to provide for the health and safety of persons and property when an emergency exists;

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2020 the City Council delegated to the Mayor the authority to issue this emergency declaration to include "shelter in place" restrictions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Mayor of the City of Canton, Georgia hereby declares that a local state of emergency exists within the territorial limits of the City of Canton, Georgia, and shall continue until the conditions requiring this declaration are abated.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

1. The intent of this Declaration is to ensure that the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible, while enabling essential services to continue, to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the maximum extent possible. When people need to leave their places of residence, whether to obtain or perform vital services, or to otherwise facilitate authorized activities necessary for continuity of social and commercial life, they should at all times reasonably possible comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in Section 10 below. All provisions of this Declaration should be interpreted to effectuate this intent. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Declaration constitutes an imminent threat to public health.

2. All individuals currently living within the territorial limits of the City of Canton, Georgia (the "City") shall shelter at their place of residence. To the extent individuals are using shared or outdoor spaces, they must at all times as reasonably possible maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any other person when they are outside their residence. All persons may leave their residences only for Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, or to operate Essential Businesses, all as defined in Section 10. Individuals experiencing homelessness are exempt from this Section, but are strongly urged to obtain shelter, and governmental and other entities are strongly urged to make such shelter available as soon as possible and to the maximum extent practicable (and to utilize Social Distancing Requirements in their operation).

3. All businesses with a facility in the City, except Essential Businesses as defined below in Section 10, are required to cease all activities at facilities located within the City except Minimum Basic Operations, as defined in Section 10, unless such business is operating while adhering to the guidelines of the CDC and the Executive Order of the Governor of Georgia calling for no more than ten (10) individuals in such business, which includes employees and customers, and that such individuals may conduct the business with at least six feet of spacing at all times. For clarity, businesses may also continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own residences (i.e., working from home). All Essential Businesses are strongly encouraged to remain open. To the greatest extent feasible, Essential Businesses shall comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in Section 10 below, including, but not limited to, when any customers are standing in line.

4. All public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited purposes as expressly permitted in Section 10. Nothing in this Declaration prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.

5. All travel, including, but not limited to, travel on foot, bicycle, scooter, motorcycle, automobile, or public transit, except Essential Travel and Essential Activities as defined below in Section 10, is prohibited. This Declaration allows travel into or out of the City to perform Essential Activities, operate Essential Businesses, or maintain Essential Governmental Functions.

6. This Declaration is issued based on evidence of increasing occurrence of COVID-19 within the City and throughout the State of Georgia, scientific evidence and best practices regarding the most effective approaches to slow the transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, and evidence that the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of the City places it at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in the general public, which is now a pandemic according to the World Health Organization, there is a public health emergency throughout the City. Making the problem worse, some individuals who contract the COVID-19 virus have no symptoms or have mild symptoms, which means they may not be aware they carry the virus. Because even people without symptoms can transmit the disease, and because evidence shows the disease is easily spread, gatherings can result in preventable transmission of the virus. The scientific evidence shows that at this stage of the emergency, it is essential to slow virus transmission as much as possible to protect the most vulnerable and to prevent the health care system from being overwhelmed. One proven way to slow the transmission is to limit interactions among people to the greatest extent practicable. By reducing the spread of the COVID-19 virus, this Declaration helps preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity in the City.

7. This Declaration also is issued in light of the existence of 31 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Cherokee County, Georgia, as of 12:00 noon on Wednesday, March 25, 2020, including a significant and increasing number of suspected cases of community transmission and likely further significant increases in transmission. Widespread testing for COVID-19 is not yet available but is expected to increase in the coming days. This Declaration is necessary to slow the rate of spread and the City Council will re-evaluate it as further data becomes available. The City Council also makes the findings discussed in the "Whereas" paragraphs part of the factual

findings of the City Council.

8. This Declaration is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the March 16, 2020, Proclamation of a State of Emergency issued by Governor Brian Kemp.

9. This Declaration comes after the release of substantial guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Georgia Department of Public Health, and other public health officials throughout the United States and around the world, including a variety of prior Declarations to combat the spread and harms of COVID19. The City Council will continue to assess the quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this Declaration, or issue additional Declarations, related to COVID-19.

10. Definitions and Exemptions.

a. For purposes of this Declaration, individuals may leave their residence only to perform any of the following “Essential Activities.” But people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and people who are sick are urged to stay in their residence to the extent possible except as necessary to seek medical care.

i. To engage in activities or perform tasks essential to their health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members or partners or significant others (including, but not limited to, pets), such as, by way of example only and without limitation, obtaining medical supplies or medication, visiting a health care professional, or obtaining supplies they need to work from home.

ii. To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members, or to deliver those services or supplies to others, such as, by way of example only and without limitation, canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supplies, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products, and products necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.

iii. To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section, such as, by way of example and without limitation, walking, hiking, running, golfing, tennis, or bicycling.

iv. To perform work providing essential products and services at an Essential Business or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Declaration, including Minimum Basic Operations.

v. To care for a family member or pet in another household.

b. For purposes of this Declaration, individuals may leave their residence to work for or obtain services at any “Healthcare Operations” including hospitals, clinics, dentists, pharmacies, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, other healthcare facilities, healthcare suppliers, home healthcare services providers, mental health providers, or any related and/or ancillary healthcare services. “Healthcare Operations” also includes veterinary care and all healthcare services provided to animals. This exemption shall be

construed broadly to avoid any impacts to the delivery of healthcare, broadly defined. “Healthcare Operations” does not include fitness and exercise gyms and similar facilities.

c. For purposes of this Declaration, individuals may leave their residence to provide any services or perform any work necessary to the operations and maintenance of “Essential Infrastructure,” including, but not limited to, public works construction, construction and all related activities (in particular affordable housing or housing for individuals experiencing homelessness), airport operations, water, sewer, gas, electrical, oil refining, roads and highways, public transportation, solid waste collection and removal, internet, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services), provided that they carry out those services or that work in compliance with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section, to the extent possible.

d. For purposes of this Declaration, all first responders, emergency management personnel, emergency dispatchers, court personnel, and law enforcement personnel, and others who need to perform essential services are categorically exempt from this Declaration. Further, nothing in this Declaration shall prohibit any individual from performing or accessing “Essential Governmental Functions,” as determined by the governmental entity performing those functions. Each governmental entity shall identify and designate appropriate employees or contractors to continue providing and carrying out any Essential Governmental Functions. All Essential Governmental Functions shall be performed in compliance with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section, to the extent possible.

e. For the purposes of this Declaration, covered businesses include any for-profit, nonprofit, or private educational entities, regardless of the nature of the service, the function they perform, or its corporate or entity structure.

f. For the purposes of this Declaration, “Essential Businesses” means:

i. Healthcare Operations and Essential Infrastructure, Pharmacies, Drug Stores;

ii. Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supply, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products (such as cleaning and personal care products). This includes stores that sell groceries and also sell other nongrocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences;

iii. Food cultivation, including farming, livestock, and fishing;

iv. Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;

v. Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services;

- vi. Gas stations and auto-supply, auto-repair, and related facilities;
- vii. Banks and related financial institutions;
- viii. Hardware stores;
- ix. Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, contractors, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to constructing and maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, Essential Activities, and Essential Businesses;
- x. Businesses providing mailing and shipping services, including post office boxes;
- xi. Educational institutions—including private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities—for purposes of facilitating distance learning or performing essential functions, provided that social distancing of six-feet per person is maintained to the greatest extent possible;
- xii. Laundromats, drycleaners, and laundry service providers;
- xiii. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery or carry out. Any establishment with a license to pour alcohol may sell wine or beer in unopened containers for carry out. Schools and other entities that typically provide free food services to students or members of the public may continue to do so under this Declaration on the condition that the food is provided to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. Schools and other entities that provide food services under this exemption shall not permit the food to be eaten at the site where it is provided, or at any other gathering site;
- xiv. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home;
- xv. Businesses or manufacturers that supply other essential businesses with the support or supplies necessary to operate;
- xvi. Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods, or services directly to residences;
- xvii. Airlines, taxis, car rental services, and other private transportation providers providing transportation services necessary for Essential Activities and other purposes expressly authorized in this Declaration;
- xviii. Home-based care for seniors, adults, or children;
- xix. Residential facilities including hotels, motels, shared rental units and similar facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, and children;

xx. Professional services, such as legal, accounting services, real estate services, when necessary to assist in compliance with time-sensitive legal matters, and other legally needed or mandated activities;

xxi. Unless otherwise preempted by state law, childcare facilities providing services that enable employees exempted in this Declaration to work as permitted. To the extent possible, childcare facilities must operate under the following mandatory conditions:

1. Childcare must be carried out in stable groups of 12 or fewer (“stable” means that the same 12 or fewer children are in the same group each day).
2. Children shall not change from one group to another.
3. If more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room. Groups shall not mix with each other.
4. Childcare providers shall remain solely with one group of children. g. For the purposes of this Declaration, “Minimum Basic Operations” include the following, provided that employees comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined this Section, to the extent possible, while carrying out such operations:

g. For the purposes of this Declaration, “Minimum Basic Operations” include the following, provided that employees comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this

Section to the extent possible, while carrying out such operations:

- i. The minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business’s inventory, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions.
- ii. The minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences.

h. For the purposes of this Declaration, “Essential Travel” includes travel for any of the following purposes. Individuals engaged in any Essential Travel must comply with all Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section below:

- i. Any travel related to the provision of or access to Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, Essential Businesses, or Minimum Basic Operations.
- ii. Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons.



- iii. Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services.
- iv. Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction.
- v. Travel required by law enforcement or court order.
  
- vi. Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the City. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of the City remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel.
  
- i. For purposes of this Declaration, residences include hotels, motels, shared rental units and similar facilities.
  
- j. For purposes of this Declaration, “Social Distancing Requirements” includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.

#### 11. Enforcement and Remedies.

- a. Individuals: In recognition that the City of Canton does not have the personnel or resources to monitor and police distancing or gathering limitations or shelter in place requirements for all individuals currently living within the territorial limits of the City of Canton, Georgia, the Canton Police Department and other departments of the City of Canton, Georgia as deemed necessary by the City Manager under this Declaration are authorized to support compliance with this Declaration through information delivery and education of individuals regarding the imminent threat to public health posed by COVID-19.
  
- b. Covered Businesses: Any violations of this Declaration by covered businesses shall be considered ordinance violations subject to the general penalty provisions outlined in Section 1-12 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Canton.
  
- c. City Manager: The City Manager shall provide guidance to any business within the City limits as to whether said business meets the definition of Essential Business, or is exempted from this Declaration.

#### 12. Funding:

- a. The City of Canton, Georgia shall seek reimbursement from the State of Georgia and from Federal Emergency funds for all eligible expenditures.
  
- b. The City of Canton, Georgia shall pursue ways and explore the possibility of providing relief to Canton residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. Copies of this Declaration shall promptly be: (1) made available at City Hall for the City of Canton, Georgia; (2) posted on the City of Canton's website; and (3) provided to any member of the public requesting a copy of this Declaration.

14. If any provision of this Declaration to the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the remainder of the Declaration, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Declaration are severable.

**Article 3. Severability**

1. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Mayor that all sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this Declaration are and were, upon their enactment, believed by the Mayor to be fully valid, enforceable, and constitutional.


2. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Mayor that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, each and every section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Declaration is severable from every other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Declaration. It is hereby further declared to be the intention of the Mayor that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, no section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Declaration is mutually dependent upon any other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance.

3. In the event that any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Declaration shall, for any reason whatsoever, be declared invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, it is the express intent of the Mayor that such invalidity, unconstitutionality or unenforceability shall, to the greatest extent allowed by law, not render invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or sections of the Declaration and that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, all remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of the Declaration shall remain valid, constitutional, enforceable, and of full force and effect.

**Article 5.** This Declaration shall become effective at 9:00 p. m. on March 25, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 12, 2020, or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing.

**SO DECLARED** this 25<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

**THE CITY OF CANTON, GEORGIA**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Grant, Mayor  
City of Canton, Georgia

ATTEST:

  
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Billy Peppers, City Manager