Declaration of Local Emergency Order

WHEREAS, beginning in late 2019, the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, SARS-CoV-2, emerged causing a novel coronavirus disease, COVID-19, which has now become a worldwide pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Brian Kemp, following President Donald Trump’s national emergency declaration, declared a public health emergency in Georgia effective on March 14, 2020, to deploy all available resources for the mitigation and treatment of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, Barrow County began a public relations campaign encouraging citizens and businesses to take voluntary measures for social distancing and other measures outlined in the CDC Guidance to help slow the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the President of the United States in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued Coronavirus Guidelines for America – 15 Days to Slow the Spread; and

WHEREAS, these guidelines contain recommendations on how to protect oneself from the COVID-19 pandemic, including recommendations such as avoiding social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people for fifteen (15) days; and

WHEREAS, those guidelines include a recommendation that communities with evidence of community transmission consider closing restaurants, food courts, gyms, and other indoor and outdoor venues where groups of people congregate; and

WHEREAS, the CDC indicates that there is evidence of widespread community transmission in Georgia; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 03.23.20.01, which requires the Department of Public Health to order that certain specific higher risk populations to shelter in place for fourteen (14) days; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 03.23.20.01 further orders that no business, establishment, corporation, non-profit corporation, or organization shall allow more than ten (10) persons to be gathered at a single location if such gathering requires persons to stand or be seated within six (6) feet of any other person; and
WHEREAS, the confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State of Georgia continue to rise and have more than doubled since March 10, 2020; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Barrow County’s Code of Ordinances section 30-61, and O.C.G.A. § 38-3-28 (a), the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners has the ability to exercise such powers as may be deemed necessary to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian populations during an emergency; and

WHEREAS, I believe that it is necessary to temporarily close certain establishments, where the public gathers and where social distancing recommendations cannot be maintained, to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Barrow County in order to help protect the health and safety of the residents and businesses of Barrow County; and

WHEREAS, I further believe that it is necessary to require social distancing measures where businesses, corporations, non-profit entities, and other organizations continue to operate to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Barrow County;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that a Local State of Emergency now exist throughout Barrow County, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chairman of the Barrow County Board of Commissioners by local and state law;

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that;

(1) Gyms, fitness centers, fitness studios, theaters, live performance venues, bowling alleys, arcades, beauty salons/barber shops, nail salons and other similar establishments or any facility used for an activity that involves prolonged physical proximity of individuals, and any facility used for entertainment or social gatherings within unincorporated Barrow County be temporarily closed.

(2) Restaurants, food courts, brewpubs, breweries, and other eating establishments within unincorporated Barrow County cease offering dine-in and/or outdoor/patio service. Such establishments may continue to prepare and offer food to customers through delivery, takeout, and/or drive-thru service. Any establishment that is licensed for on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages shall be authorized for the duration of this declaration to sell unopened bottles or new, sealed growlers of beer or unopened bottles of wine curbside or to takeout customers only during the times specified by alcoholic beverage license and
pertinent Code sections. The County makes no representations as to the effect of these types of sales on an establishment’s state liquor license.

3) Cafeterias or on-site dining services in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other similar facilities within unincorporated Barrow County following previously issued state and federal public health guidelines shall not be subject to closure requirements of this Order.

4) All employers and business which remain open for use by the public must take the necessary steps to restrict in person contact and maintain a distance of 6 feet between individuals while in the establishment.

5) For the duration of this declared emergency, there shall be no public gatherings on any property owned or controlled by the County. A “public gathering” is defined as the organized gathering or assembly of ten (10) or more persons at a specific location; “property owned or controlled by the County” shall include any park, public square, public space, playground, recreational area, or similar place of gathering, but nothing herein shall prohibit individuals or families from using sidewalks or designated pedestrian areas of parks for walking or other exercise if they are not participating in an organized gathering.

6) The Board of Commissioners and all other Boards and Commissions of the County shall have authority to conduct required meetings and take votes by teleconference in accordance with O.C.G.A Section 50-14-1(g).

7) The Governor’s Executive Order No. 03.23.20.01 is hereby incorporated by reference herein, such that:

    a. All persons ordered by the Department of Public Health to isolate, quarantine, or shelter in place within their homes or place of residence shall comply with such executive order or administrative order. In accordance with the Governor’s executive, the following populations are specifically included:

       i. Those persons who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility;

       ii. Those persons who have chronic lung disease;

       iii. Those persons who are currently undergoing cancer treatment; and

       iv. Those persons included in any Department of Public Health Administrative Order.

    b. All businesses which possess a license to operate as or otherwise meet the definition of “bar” as defined in Official Code of Georgia Section 3-1-2(2.1) shall cease operation.
c. No business, establishment, corporation, non-profit, corporation, or organization shall allow more than ten (10) persons to be gathered at a single location if such gathering requires persons to stand or to be seated within six (6) feet of any other person.

(8) Under this emergency declaration, upon approval of the Chief Executive Officer; the bid and competitive portions of the County’s purchasing policy is hereby suspended for those purchases necessary for the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

(9) The provisions of this Order shall be effective beginning March 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM and shall expire on April 6, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.

This ___ day of March 2020.

[Signature]
Pat Graham, Chairman
Barrow County Board of Commissioners

[Signature]
Danielle Austin, County Clerk

[Signature]
Rebecca Whidden, Deputy Co Clerk for Barrow Co.
Barrow County Declares Public Health State of Emergency

In an effort to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 in Barrow County, the Barrow County Board of Commissioners Chairman Pat Graham has signed a Local Emergency Operation Declaration effective at noon on Thursday March 26, 2020. “Our Barrow County COVID-19 Task Force has been monitoring this situation in Barrow County, throughout the state, and the nation and we have advised the Chairman that is the in the best interest of our citizens,” stated County Manager Mike Renshaw. “These efforts are meant to help slow the spread of this virus in our county.”

The Board of Commissioners will have a special called meeting within 72 hours and are expected to confirm the local emergency declaration. It will stay in effect until 12:00 AM on April 6. The county will do all it can to contact business affected by the declaration. We are including the declaration with this release. “We are strongly encouraging citizens to stay at home when possible and only make absolutely necessary trips out,” commented Renshaw. “If you have to be out you need to practice social distancing and practice other protective steps, such as washing your hands. We must all work together to end this pandemic as quickly as possible.”

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