



## **Dear Gatlinburg Business Community & Citizens:**

We know this has been an uncertain and anxious time for many of you as the COVID-19 pandemic has created unusual times for all of us, during what is normally one of the most beautiful times of the year here in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains.

Earlier today, Governor Bill Lee announced the Tennessee Pledge – Reopening Tennessee Responsibly guidelines on reopening restaurants and retail businesses across most of the state, including Sevier County and Gatlinburg.

The Tennessee Pledge allows restaurants to open on Monday, April 27 at 50 percent capacity and allows retail entities to open on Wednesday, April 29 at 50 percent capacity, while also following several specific health guidelines, including frequent cleaning and sanitization of facilities as set forth by CDC guidelines.

As always, the health and safety of our City and its citizens, businesses and employees are our first and foremost concern, as we take the necessary steps to getting our economy on its feet in a responsible manner.

With tourism being our major industry, Sevier County leaders have collaborated and developed additional recommendations to further support the statewide guidelines, to help keep our community healthy and safe.

While non-essential travel is still discouraged and our state partners have asked for tourists to delay their trips to Tennessee destinations, we have been taking steps and precautions to ensure the health of everyone involved.

Sevier County and its municipalities also crafted additional recommendations for our businesses to coincide with the Governor's Tennessee Pledge.

We have recommended that restaurants close by 11 p.m., encouraging contactless payment, cleaning credit card machines between each use and emailing receipts when possible. The County and each City are also not actively marketing to visitors at this time.

Governor Lee's office soon will release plans regarding the reopening of close-contact businesses, tourism attractions, medical practices and other sectors of the economy. We will share that information with you as it becomes available.

Gatlinburg businesses and residents have made these uncertain times easier with their cooperation in helping combat the spread of COVID-19. We ask that you continue to take the steps to keep the best interests of everyone in mind as we combat this virus.

**See below for a message from the Sevier County mayor and the mayors and city managers of Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Pittman Center and Sevierville**

In addition to the Tennessee Pledge – Reopening Tennessee Responsibly guidelines released by the state, the cities and county have recommendations. We are doing so because our major industry is tourism and we feel these additional steps will help protect our residents and visitors. The cities and the county are not actively marketing to visitors at this time to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. These additional recommendations are as follows:

**RESTAURANTS**

- Close by 11 p.m.
- Bars remain closed
- No more than 50% seating capacity
- No more than 6 guests per table
- Encourage contactless payment
- Recommend frequent cleaning and sanitizing of restrooms within the business as set forth by the CDC and Health Dept. guidelines

**RETAIL**

- Recommend credit card machines be disinfected between each use
- When possible, email receipts to customers instead of printing
- Recommend frequent cleaning and sanitizing of restrooms within the business as set forth by the CDC and Health Dept. guidelines