

Monday, March 30, 2020 – 5:00 pm

Today, March 30<sup>th</sup>, Governor Northam issued a statewide Stay at Home Order (Executive Order 55) to protect the health and safety of Virginians and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Executive Order 55 directs all Virginians to stay home except in extremely limited circumstances. Individuals may leave their residence for allowable travel, including to seek medical attention, work, care for family or household members; obtaining goods and services like groceries, prescriptions, and others as outlined in Executive Order 53; and to engage in outdoor activity with strict social distancing requirements. The executive order takes effect immediately and will remain in place until June 10, 2020, unless amended or rescinded by a further executive order.

Executive Order 55 continues the restrictions put in place last week under Executive Order 53 and provides for several additional restrictions. A brief overview of Executive Order 55 is as follows:

- To the extent that individuals use shared or outdoor spaces, they **must at all times maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from any other person**, with the exception of family or household members or caretakers. Individuals are still allowed to leave their residences to seek medical attention, food, care for family or household members, obtain goods and services like groceries, prescriptions and others as outlined in Executive Order 53, however 6 foot social distancing should be maintained as much as possible when attending to these essential functions.
  - Restaurants are still allowed to be open for take out and delivery and other non-essential retail businesses not closed under Executive Order 53 may continue to operate as long as they can provide for appropriate social distancing.
- **All public and private in-person gatherings of more than 10 individuals are prohibited.** This includes parties, celebrations, religious or other social events whether they occur indoor or outdoor. This restriction does not apply:
  - to the operations of businesses not required to close under Executive Order 53; or
  - to gatherings of family members living in the same residence.
- Institutions of higher education shall cease all in-person classes and instruction, and cancel all gatherings of more than 10 individuals.
- Effective 11:59pm April 1<sup>st</sup>, all **privately owned-campgrounds must close for short term stays** (reservations for overnight stays of less than 14 nights).
- **Closure of all public beaches** for all activity, except exercising and fishing. Social distancing requirements must be followed.

The above merely summarized Executive Order 55. We urge you to review the further specifics of Executive Order 55

here: [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf). Because Executive Order 55 builds on Executive Order 53's restrictions, the full text of Executive Order 53 can be found

here: [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf). We encourage you to review the full orders for further details.

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 and flattening the transmission curve remain the primary goals. It is critical to our systems (health care and food supply systems, for example) having the resources to deal with the impacts of the virus and to limit significant illnesses, deaths and other disruptions caused by COVID-19. The less diligent and successful we are at social distancing the further and more rapidly the virus will spread and the greater the impacts to both our health and the economy.

If you don't NEED to go out, stay at home. If you only WANT to go out, stay at home.