



PRESS RELEASE

White County Government
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White County warns people to observe COVID-19 restrictions

Cleveland, Ga. –White County Board of Commissioners recently enacted a local State of Emergency which establishes an emergency protective ordinance to help control the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Events over the March 27-28 weekend indicate that there are still many people not following the rules.

Among the areas of concern are entrances to outdoor recreation facilities located in the county including several USFS trailheads which have been closed. County officials stated that cars are parking on the side of county roads, such as Chambers Road that leads to the trailhead for Yonah Mountain, and are causing traffic and public safety issues. Many of the violators have out-of-county license plates, according to the White County officials. Barricades and signage notifying people of the closed trail has been posted on Chambers Road. White County will have extra deputies assigned to the Yonah Mountain trail head and one who will monitor the US Forest Service trailheads on Richard Russell Scenic Highway and at the head of the Chattahoochee River.

County officials have also chained the gate at Yonah Preserve, the county's mountain bike and hiking trailhead, because people had forced open the electronically closed gate.

White County has received numerous calls from concerned citizens asking why major roads entering the county are not closed to prevent people from other areas from traveling to our community. The main reason is that the main roads are federal and state highways and not under the jurisdiction of White County, according to county officials.

If citizens are aware of individuals or businesses that are in violation of the Governor's State of Emergency order, they can report those incidents the Governor's office at www.gov.georgia.gov and then click on "Contact Us" and then click on "Constituent Services" which will take you to a form to fill out. The following information is needed in the report:

1. Business Name/Location;
2. Address
3. County
4. Telephone Number
5. Specific details of the complaint

Last week, White County closed all dine-in restaurant operations while allowing take-out, curbside, drive-thru and delivery options. Additionally, wineries, and breweries have closed tasting rooms, however they may provide retail package sales of wines and malt beverages to be consumed off premises, however, no open container sales are allowed.

The resolution also closed all body care service businesses which require physical contact between the provider and client such as beauty or nail salons. All indoor recreations facilities are also closed.

Last week the cities Helen and Cleveland in White County also passed similar resolutions closing the dine-in operations of restaurants and limiting community gatherings.

The U.S. Forest Service also closed several popular hiking trails in White County including Ravan Cliffs Falls, Yonah Mountain, Dukes Creek Falls and Anna Ruby Falls, along with campsites at Anna Ruby Falls, Low Gap Campground, Andrews Cove and the Upper Chattahoochee campgrounds.

DNR State campgrounds have also closed visitor's centers and playground areas to promote social distancing measures.

Local law enforcement officers with state and federal officers are patrolling these trails and campgrounds for violations of community gatherings.

For more information concerning this press release contact the White County Emergency Management Agency at 706-865-9500.

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