



PRESS RELEASE

White County Government
Office of Public Safety – Emergency Management Division
1241 Helen Highway, Suite 100
Cleveland, Georgia 30528

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT: David Murphy
(706) 865-9500
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White County Implements Emergency COVID-19 Restrictions

Cleveland, Ga. – White County has closed all dine-in restaurant operations while allowing take-out, curbside, drive-thru and delivery options. Additionally, wineries, and breweries shall close tasting rooms, however may provide retail package sales of wines and malt beverages to be consumed off premises, no open container sales are allowed. While many of these impacted businesses support the county’s important tourism industry, leaders say the move is critical to preventing the spread of the Coronavirus.

Today, the White County Board of Commissioners enacted a local State of Emergency which establishes an emergency protective ordinance to help control the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). It is developed with much input and advice from Emergency Management and the Public Health Community that these measures have been adopted.

“We know that this decision will have a major impact on many of our businesses and on tourism in our area, however, the reality is that these measures are necessary to battle the spread of Coronavirus in our community,” said Travis Turner, Chairman of the White County Board of Commissioners. “We have taken the step to ban all public or private community gatherings of more than 10 people anywhere in the unincorporated area of the county to re-inforce social distancing when the 6’ distance cannot be maintained.”

The move to close dine-in of restaurants and other businesses came as part of a resolution declaring a state of emergency for the county. The White County Board of Commissioners passed the state of emergency resolution at a special called meeting on Thursday (March 26.) The resolution calls for the state of emergency to remain in effect until April 13. White County had one confirmed case of COVID-19 at the time of the meeting.

In addition to the resolution also closes 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. White County’s popular mountain biking and hiking trails at Yonah Preserve and all other county-owned recreational facilities are also closed.

On Wednesday, the City of Helen in White County also passed a resolution closing the dine-in operations of restaurants and limiting community gatherings.

And today, the City of Cleveland passed similar resolutions.

The U.S. Forest Service has 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 closed visitor's centers and playground areas to promote social distancing measures.

Local law enforcement with state and federal officers is patrolling these trails and campgrounds for gathering violations.

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

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