



CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 TRENDS
As of Thursday, March 26, 2020 @ 7 pm

Dear Chamber Members & Friends,

First of all, we hope that you are enjoying good health. Please know that your Chamber team is here supporting you. Our goal during this time is to provide you with the most helpful, relevant information possible to help you and your organization navigate the COVID-19 situation.

The nightly eblast contains a great deal of content and I would also invite you to visit our website VisitGeorge.com for updated information related to restaurants and other business adjusted hours and service.

Most of your Chamber team are working remotely for their health and safety. But we remain available by phone or email. You can find contact information for staff [HERE](#). Additionally, you can reach me via text at 843.430.4800.

It's been a busy day, but we remind you to:

Stay safe. Stay calm. Stay strong.

Wishing you all the best,

Beth S. Stedman
President & CEO
Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce

REGIONAL NEWS

The City of Myrtle Beach, the City of North Myrtle Beach and Horry County are suspending short term rentals. Additionally, the City of Myrtle Beach suspended many attractions, including golf courses, from opening. For details click the links:

[City of Myrtle Beach](#)

[City of North Myrtle Beach](#)

[Horry County](#)

Myrtle Beach International Airport will remain open. For information about how the airport is responding to COVID-19, click [HERE](#).

FEDERAL

The US Senate passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act last night with no amendments. For a summary from the US Chamber of Commerce, click [HERE](#).

Key highlights of the bill include:

- \$350 billion for forgivable small business loans
- Delay in employer-side payroll taxes for Social Security until 2021 and 2022
- Looser net operating loss-reduction rules that will allow businesses to offset more
- Expansion of unemployment benefit coverage and amount
- \$500 billion for corporate aid
- \$1,200 checks for certain single filers and \$2,400 for certain joint filers
- \$340 billion for healthcare-related programs
- \$150 billion for state and local governments

The US House expects to pass the legislation tomorrow, with the President signing shortly after.

All Non-Profits, including 501(c)6s will be eligible for \$10,000 Grants and SBA Disaster Loans.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) amends the SBA's

Emergency Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. Non-profits, including 501(c)6s, are eligible for loans under the EIDL program pending passage of the legislation by the US House. Click [HERE](#). (Source: US Chamber of Commerce)

US Department of Labor Issues Guidelines Regarding Paid Leave (Source: US Chamber of Commerce)

On March 24th, the Department of Labor released its first set of guidelines to help both employers and individuals navigate the expanded paid leave benefits available through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The guidance offers details about determining eligibility and coverage, small business exemptions, identifying benefits for part time employees, and calculating the benefit for individual employees.

- [Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights](#)
- [Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employer Paid Leave Requirements](#)
- [Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Questions and Answers](#)
- [Model Poster to meet Notification Requirements](#)

***For more information**, you can visit the [USDOL Wage and Hour Division's COVID-19 webpage](#)

The USDOL also announced that they would hold an online dialogue to allow employers and employees to offer their perspective as the Department develops further informational materials related to the FFCRA. Input is required by March 29th, 2020. Anyone interested can [participate online](#) from March 23rd through March 29th.

United States Census Timelines Extended: The U.S. Census Bureau published an [adjusted schedule for operations](#) to protect the health and safety of Census Bureau staff and the public, and to ensure an accurate count of the population. The Georgetown County Chamber encourages everyone to [complete their Census form online](#).

Completing Form I-9 for Telecommuting: Employers and employees are struggling to comply with completing in-person Employment Eligibility Verification documents due to COVID-19. The [Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](#) announced that the agency will temporarily suspend the in-person review of documents normally required to complete the Form I-9 for employers who have transitioned to a telecommuting policy.

STATE

Tonight from SCDHEC, South Carolina now has 456 people who have tested positive for Coronavirus with 9 deaths. By County, positive cases are located in Kershaw (64), Charleston (60), Richland (60), Greenville (51), Beaufort (29), Anderson (21), Horry (21), Lexington (20), York (19), Orangeburg (11), Sumter (10), Spartanburg (9), Berkeley (8), Darlington (8), Lancaster (7), Pickens (6), Clarendon (5), Florence (5), Abbeville (4), Aiken (4), Dorchester (4), Fairfield (4), Chesterfield (3), Georgetown (3), Jasper (3), Greenwood (2), Lee (2), Oconee (2), Calhoun (1), Chester (1), Colleton (1), Dillon (1), Edgefield (1), Marion (1), Marlboro (1), Newberry (1), Saluda (1), Union (1), Williamsburg (1).

Governor's Office: As of today, Governor McMaster is not implementing a statewide Stay-at-Home order.

As of Wednesday, March 25, 2020, SC's **Governor Henry McMaster requests all out-of-state visitors to South Carolina who plan to spend two or more nights in the state to self-quarantine for two weeks immediately upon arrival.** The request is intended to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus.) The state's priority is the health and safety of all individuals. South Carolina is taking bold steps now in order to keep everyone safe and eventually return to a preferred destination in months to come.

SC Unemployment Numbers: Click [HERE](#) for information concerning unemployment claims filed.

The SC Department of Employment and Workforce is encouraging impacted employers to consider filing on behalf of their employees to streamline the process for **filing unemployment claims** for all parties involved. Employer Filed Claims are more convenient and eliminate the step of an employer having to verify a worker's claim.

SC Department of Revenue: The SCDOR is aligning with the IRS and extending the Income Tax filing and payment due date from April 15, 2020 to July 15, 2020. For all other taxes administered by the SCDOR, tax returns and payments due April 1 – June 1 will now be due

June 1, 2020. Penalty and interest will not be charged if payment is made by June 1. Learn more [HERE](#).

SC State Parks, including Huntington Beach State Park, will reopen Friday, March 27. Click [HERE](#) for a list of hours for each park. No new cabin or campground reservations with arrival dates between now and May 7 will be made. Reservations that were already made with arrivals between now and May 7 are currently being honored. All programming and tours have been suspended through April 30.

GEORGETOWN COUNTY

Huntington Beach State Park, will reopen Friday, March 27. Click [HERE](#) for hours. Click [HERE](#) for additional important information.

The Georgetown County Bureau of Aging Services: SENIORS – if you are a homebound senior who is not able to obtain food, please contact (843) 325-6716 to schedule a meal delivery. Meals will be delivered to seniors regardless of whether or not they are an existing client.

Tidelands Health has closed its call for volunteers to help sew elastic straps on N95 respirators after more than 2,000 people came forward to help in just two days.

“We are blown away by the community’s support of our health care professionals on the front line of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic ,” said Pam Maxwell, chief nursing officer. “The outpouring of love and support means so much to our team. We are truly blessed.”

Delivery of Prescription Medicines: Beginning Monday, March 23, deputies with the Georgetown County Sheriff’s Office will begin delivering prescription medications to older adults and other county residents identified as high-risk to complications from the coronavirus, according to Sheriff Carter Weaver. Click [HERE](#) for information.

Waccamaw Community Foundation: Click on [this link](#) for information about how individuals, businesses, etc. may donate funding to the COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Fund, as well as information about how nonprofits can apply for grant funding.

For information about local business updates, click [HERE](#). For information about restaurants, hours, service, and more, click [HERE](#). Visit our website at www.VisitGeorge.com for updated information.

TRENDS WE ARE SEEING

- The U.S. Department of Labor reported a **record rise in unemployment** claims as more than 3 million U.S. workers filed for jobless benefits due to coronavirus.
- **States continue to take extreme measures to flatten the curve of COVID-19.** See a full list of state and city COVID-19 orders [here](#).
- **Countries around the world continue to implement measures to flatten the curve of COVID-19.** Most recently, Mexico's Deputy Health Minister Hugo López-Gatell Ramírez [announced](#) that the country will suspend non-essential federal government work to help contain the spread of COVID-19.
- [Miami](#) passed a curfew that begins Friday and will be in effect from 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Exceptions to the curfew are going or coming from work, medical emergencies and walking a dog within 250 feet of one's home.
- **New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu** has issued a stay-at-home order starting at midnight Friday. The order will last until the end of May.
- The **U.S. Department of Labor** reported a record rise in unemployment claims as more than 3 million U.S. workers filed for jobless benefits due to coronavirus.
- **Credit Bureaus Response** to COVID-19:
https://mcusercontent.com/7c81d80d7762c8bf04f36ce32/files/7bce8e24-1844-4e65-9c5c-c3163199974c/Coronavirus_The_Credit_Bureaus_Response.pdf
- **Crocs** is donating **10,000 pairs of free shoes** to U.S. healthcare workers **every day** until stocks last.
- Stores with special hours designated for seniors to shop:
 - [BI-LO](#): Stores and pharmacies will dedicate the hours of 8am to 9am, Monday – Friday, to seniors and those most at risk of COVID-19.
 - [Publix](#) is designating Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, 7 to 8 a.m., as senior shopping hours for customers age 65 and over. This change in hours will begin Tuesday, March 24, and continue until further notice. Publix Pharmacy will also be open at 7 a.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to serve our senior population."
 - [Lowe's Foods](#) is also designating Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, 7-8 am, for Seniors and others who are more vulnerable to the virus.
 - **The Fresh Market**: Monday through Friday, 8 – 9 am for seniors and other individuals most at risk
 - [Walmart](#) announced it is introducing [an hour-long senior shopping event](#) March 24 that will be held every Tuesday through April 28 for customers 60 and older.

The designated hour will start one hour before the retailer's 5,000-plus U.S. stores open.

- **Target**'s more than 1,800 stores nationwide will "reserve the first hour of shopping each Wednesday at stores nationwide for vulnerable guests," the company said, adding it is "encouraging other guests to plan their shopping trips around this timeframe."
- **Dollar General** also is dedicating time for senior shoppers – the first hour of shopping each day.
- **Kroger** Mondays through Thursdays, 7 - 8:00 a.m., designated shopping hours for seniors over 60 and high-risk individuals

ACCURATE & VALUABLE RESOURCES

During this time of heightened stress and anxiety, we ask that you please refer to **official sources** for information.

- **Governor Henry McMaster**, latest news and executive orders: <https://governor.sc.gov/>
- **Tidelands Health**: <https://www.tidelandshealth.org/>
- **SC Department of Environmental Control**: <https://scdhec.gov/health/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- **SCDHEC Care Line** at 1-855-472-3432.
- **Online COVID-19 Screenings: MUSC** <https://campaigns.muschealth.org/virtual-care/index.html>
- **Centers for Disease Control**: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/>
- **Guidance for businesses and employers**. This page includes strategies for employers to use now, and information about planning for a potential U.S. outbreak.
- **SC Department of Employment and Workforce**: <https://dew.sc.gov/individuals/apply-for-benefits>
- **SC Department of Revenue**: <https://dor.sc.gov/>
- **SC Department of Commerce**: <https://www.scommerce.com/doing-business-here/join-community/emergency-preparedness>
- **South Carolina Department of Insurance**: <https://www.doi.sc.gov/948/COVID-19>
- **US Department of Labor**: <https://www.dol.gov/>
- **Small Business Administration**: <https://www.sba.gov/page/guidance-businesses-employers-plan-respond-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

- Small Business Development Centers are good resources of information and can offer one-on-one counseling. <https://www.coastal.edu/sbdc/> or call 843.349.4010.
- **U.S. Chamber of Commerce:** <https://www.uschamber.com/>
- Visit [scdmh.net](https://www.scdmh.net) for stress, anxiety and mental health resources from the S.C. Department of Mental Health.