

Governor Cooper Extends School Closure Date to May; Orders Group Limit to 50 People *Executive Order No. 120 Enforces Social Distancing, Limits Visitors to Long-term Care Facilities Governor Cooper Requests*

Today, Governor Roy Cooper ordered tighter limits on gatherings and extended school closures statewide to May 15, 2020. The order also closed some businesses that require close social interaction and limited visitors to long-term care centers.

The Executive Order's effective date will be Wednesday, March 25.

"Each and every choice we are making is intended to flatten the curve and provide our health care system the ability to treat the sickest patients in the coming months. This is what we need to do to slow the spread of this illness and protect the health and safety of North Carolinians," Governor Cooper said.

Also Monday, the Governor's request for a major disaster declaration for North Carolina was received by FEMA. This specifically requested Individual Assistance, Crisis Counseling Program, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance and more.

50-PLUS MEMBER GATHERINGS BANNED; CLOSE-CONTACT BUSINESSES CLOSED

Today's announcement prioritized social distancing by lowering the threshold on large gatherings to ban crowds of more than 50 people. To stay consistent with this number, it will require certain businesses to close, including:

- Bingo Parlors, including Bingo sites operated by charitable organizations
- Bowling Alleys
- Indoor Exercise Facilities (e.g. gyms, yoga studios, martial arts facilities, indoor trampoline and rock-climbing facilities)
- Health Clubs
- Indoor Pools
- Live Performance Venues
- Movie Theaters
- Skating Rinks
- Spas
- Sweepstakes Lounges
- Video game arcades
- Barber Shops
- Beauty Salons (including waxing and hair removal centers)
- Hair Salons
- Nail Salons/Manicure/Pedicure Providers
- Massage Parlors
- Tattoo Parlors

Grocery stores and restaurants providing takeout and delivery will remain open. Additionally, Governor Cooper reminded North Carolinians to show restraint in buying groceries and supplies.

“I know today’s orders cause hardship for a lot of people. I do not treat these decisions lightly,” added Governor Cooper. “We have made them in the interest of health and safety.”

SCHOOL DEADLINE EXTENDED, EDUCATION LEADERSHIP TO BUILD PLAN FOR EDUCATION

The May 15 school closure date is based on current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As the situation in North Carolina evolves, more may be needed. Governor Cooper has asked the State Board to collaborate with the Department of Public Instruction and legislators to:

- develop a plan to ensure access to a quality education for students through the remainder of the school year.
- provide students with remote learning while school buildings are closed.
- ensure that all school employees – including janitros, bus drivers, teaching assistants and cafeteria workers -- will work in safe environments and be paid.

MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS, SUPPLIES NEEDED

Also Monday, Cooper highlighted the need for medical and health care workers and urged qualified, available professionals to volunteer by signing up at ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus. Already more than 300 people have volunteered.

Specifically, the Governor highlighted the need for doctors and nurses, pharmacy, imaging and respiratory care, and facility maintenance and administrative support workers.

Critical supplies and equipment like masks, gloves, and gowns are low. Governor Cooper is convening North Carolina’s top manufacturers to explore transitioning production lines to start making these critical supplies.

The full order is available [HERE](#).

Make sure the information you are getting about COVID-19 is coming directly from reliable sources like the CDC and NCDHHS. For more information, please visit the CDC’s website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and NCDHHS’ website at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus, which includes daily updates on positive COVID-19 test results in North Carolina.

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