

When is it time to Reopen the Economy?

Our thoughts about balancing the desire to reopen the economy with the potential public health issues. April 20, 2020

We have to follow the science. No one understands better than we do that there is a difficult balance here, and at the root this pandemic is a public health dilemma. We have to lean on the expertise of scientists and our physicians and we must follow their guidance in terms of what the science tells us is the best approach and the right timing. The way to solve the economic problem is to snuff out the public health problem. The worst thing that can happen is if we prematurely go back to some form of "business as usual," only to find that a recurrence takes us back to square one.

A Three-Phased Approach of Reopening the Economy

When the time is right we will be ready. The White House COVID-19 Task Force has developed a three-phased approach based on the advice of public health experts, Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx. These much anticipated steps to reopen our economy will help state and local officials determine how and when to make the changes that will get people back to work safely and continue to protect American lives.

The guidelines can be implemented on a state or county basis. **However, in order to move into the first phase of reopening, states must follow the recommended gating process and have a decline of positive coronavirus cases for 14 days.** In addition, hospitals must also be able to treat all patients, without crisis care, all while conducting robust testing for at-risk healthcare workers, including the emerging antibody testing.

At this time we aren't quite through the first gate. Coffee County has not yet seen a sustained decline in positive cases. However we will if we continue to wear cloth masks in public, follow social distancing guidelines and shelter-in-place protocols through the end of the month as outlined by Governor Kemp.

Phase One

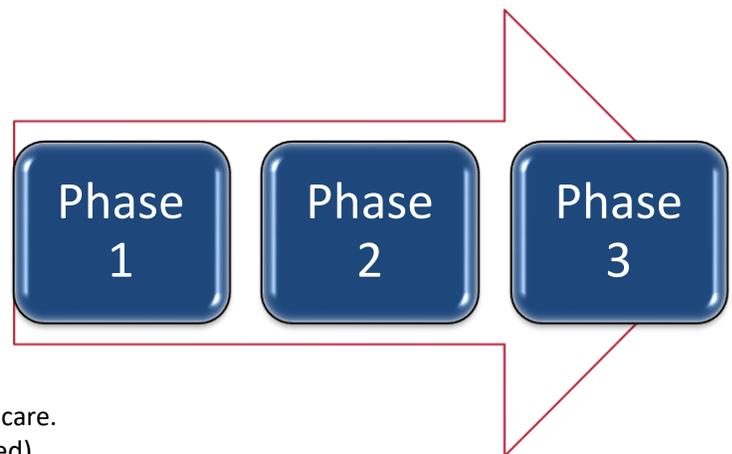
- Vulnerable populations must remain sheltered in place.
- Social distancing remains in place, with no gatherings of more than 10 people.
- Schools and non-essential businesses remain closed, and telework is encouraged.
- Visitors are prohibited at senior facilities and hospitals.
- Gyms can open under strict physical distancing and sanitation protocols.
- Large venues (movie theaters, arenas, places of worship) can operate under strict physical distancing guidelines.
- Bars remain closed.
- Non-essential travel is discouraged.
- Elective surgeries can resume on an out-patient basis.

Phase Two

- Vulnerable populations remain sheltered in place.
- Avoid settings of more than 50 people.
- Non-essential travel can resume.
- Telework remains encouraged.
- Schools, daycares, and camps can reopen.
- Visitors are still prohibited at senior facilities and hospitals.
- Large venues operate under moderate physical distancing.
- Bars can operate with diminished occupancy.
- Elective surgeries can resume with in-patient and out-patient care.

Phase Three (would remain in place until a vaccine is developed)

- Resume a "new normal" while maintaining good hygiene.
- Large venues can operate under "limited physical distancing protocols."



For full details visit The White House online at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/#phase-three>.

Vulnerable populations include elderly individuals as well as individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.

To Serve. To Heal. To Save.

