

**EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION OF THE HANCOCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE OF ENTRANCES TO CITY BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES, AS WELL AS TO PROHIBIT GATHERINGS OF MORE THAN 10 PEOPLE, TO LIMIT GATHERINGS TO THOSE OF 10 PEOPLE OR FEWER, AND TO CLOSE VARIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS AND LIMITING ACCESS THERETO IN HANCOCK COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the Governor of the State of Mississippi issued a similar declaration of emergency on March 14, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, the Hancock County Board of Supervisors, pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 45-17-3, et seq. and Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-17, et seq., issued a "Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency"; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a disease that can result in severe illness or death and can easily spread from person to person, and which is caused by a new strain of coronavirus that had not previously been identified in humans; and

**WHEREAS**, heretofore Federal, State, and Local Authorities have continually impressed upon the public the importance of heeding the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state departments of health, and the President concerning steps necessary to stop the spread of this outbreak, which has now been turned into a pandemic, one of the most significant of which is the need to "social distance" ourselves from others in all places, including in the public; and

**WHEREAS**, authorities have previously advised the citizens of the State of Mississippi to practice social distancing measures and to avoid large gatherings; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, the President of the United States recommended the avoidance of gatherings of more than ten (10) people; and

**WHEREAS**, unfortunately there are many in our communities who have refused to follow or otherwise ignored this guidance and promulgated aids in maintaining social distancing and who have persisted to congregate in the public, including at places of business, all of which have and, if permitted to continue, will contribute to and promote the spread of this disease and prolific exposure of our citizens to this emergent threat to public health and safety; and

**WHEREAS**, in an effort to curtail the lack of civic responsibility, to prevent the spread of this disease, and in an effort to curb the growth of cases of affected persons and conditions, authorities across the country are taking extraordinary measures to limit and inhibit close personal contact in the community through the issuance of orders and enactment of legislation, many of which have restricted access to areas that are routinely used for gatherings of people; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mississippi Department of Health ("MDOH") has reported that as of

March 20, 2020, there were one hundred thirty (130) positive cases of coronavirus in the State of Mississippi, including four (4) in Hancock County, Mississippi; and

**WHEREAS**, as of March 19, 2020, the MDOH reported one death related to COVID-19, which was in Hancock County, Mississippi; and

**WHEREAS**, trends across the world demonstrate that any “wait-and-see” approach is costly in terms of public health, including an increase in deaths; and

**WHEREAS**, as of March 20, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., the MDOH recommends that all restaurants and bars suspend dine-in services immediately and that various social and public events be limited or preferably canceled; and

**WHEREAS**, immediate extraordinary measures related to the prevention of the spread of the coronavirus are necessary and required to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our citizens and to protect the public peace while saving and preserving lives; and

**WHEREAS**, to comply with the directives and guidelines of the CDC and the MDOH, as well as the President of the United States, as part of an immediate effort to thwart the spread of this disease and to safeguard the health and safety of the public, including County employees, public entrances to all county buildings and facilities will be closed to the public as of 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21, 2020, and shall not re-open until further notice, with the understanding that the public can contact and perform business with County officials and employees through non face-to-face contact by utilizing telephone, e-mail, drive thru service (where available), and written communications (regular U. S. Mail, etc.) during this period of time; and

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of these efforts and interests, all public facilities previously closed by resolution of March 16, 2020 by the Supervisors shall remain closed until further notice; and

**WHEREAS**, in further promotion of these efforts and interests, certain events and gatherings of individuals in excess of ten (10) persons, shall be temporarily curtailed and other orders issued pertaining to various other matters.

**THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me by Mississippi Law, including, but not limited to, Miss. Code Ann. § 47-17-7, et seq. and Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-17, et seq., as amended, and in the public interest of Hancock County, and to safeguard and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, the Supervisors do hereby issue this Emergency Proclamation as set out herein.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED**, by the Hancock County Board of Supervisors that further to and in compliance with to comply with the directives and guidelines of the CDC, the Mississippi State Department of Health, as well as the President of the United States, as part of an effort to thwart the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), and to safeguard the health and safety of the public, including County employees, public entrances to all county buildings and facilities within the county shall be, and hereby are, temporarily closed to the public as of 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21, 2020, and shall not re-open until further notice or expiration of the ongoing State of Emergency related to this pandemic issued by the Supervisors, whichever shall occur first, with the understanding that the public can still contact and perform business with county officials,

departments and employees through non-face-to-face contact via the telephone, e-mail, drive thru service (where available), and written communications (regular U.S. Mail, etc.) during this period of time. It is further,

**ORDERED** that (1) all events of more than ten (10) people in the the unincorporated portions or areas under the jurisdiction of Supervisors hereby temporarily prohibited; and (2) all events of ten (10) people or fewer in those areas are limited, as provided herein:

1. An event, for purposes of this Proclamation, is defined to be “an organized, orchestrated or sponsored gathering that people are invited to attend or encouraged to attend through advertising or membership.” Further, an event is “a gathering for business, social, or recreational activity, including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, or sporting event; parades; concerts; festivals; funerals; conventions; fundraisers, large private parties, celebrations, or banquets; and artistic performances and spiritual and faith-based gatherings.”
2. An event, for purposes of this Proclamation, is not a public location where people pass through, such as transportation centers, airports, public squares, and shopping areas, Retail establishments such as grocery stores, gas stations, pharmacies, and banks are not events. Medical facilities, office environments, factories, schools, universities, and County-owned or leased buildings where essential functions and services are being carried out are not events.
3. Organizers of events of ten (10) people or fewer must ensure that:
  - (a) Older adults, specifically senior citizens, and individuals with underlying medical conditions that are at increased risk of serious COVID-19 are encouraged not to attend.
  - (b) Social distancing recommendations, as prescribed by the Mississippi State Department of Health, must be met.
  - (c) Proper hygiene and sanitation must be readily available to all attendees and individuals involved as per the recommendations of the MDOH and or CDC.
  - (d) Environmental cleaning guidelines from the CDC are followed.

**ORDERED** that all restaurants located in the the unincorporated areas of Hancock County and/or within the jurisdiction of Hancock County’s Board of Supervisors, whether with or without drive-in or drive-through services, may only provide take-out, pick-up, delivery, or drive-through services as allowed by law. There shall be no in-house dining, on-site or available sitting areas for the public. Any onsite dining is prohibited. Furthermore, there shall be no formation of lines of ten (10) or more people conjugating to pick-up food. It is further,

**ORDERED** that all bars, nightclubs, lounges, taverns, and private clubs in the the unincorporated areas of Hancock County and/or within the jurisdiction of Hancock County’s Board

of Supervisors shall close, except to the extent that such establishments may only provide take out, pick-up, delivery, or drive-through services for food as allowed by law. It is further,

**ORDERED** that only to the extent allowed by state and federal law and the United States Constitution, this Proclamation prohibiting and limiting events is applicable to spiritual and faith-based gatherings. It is further,

**ORDERED** that this Proclamation of Executive Order shall be: (1) filed with the County Chancery Clerk and spread upon the minutes of the Emergency Meeting of March 21, 2020; (2) distributed to the news media and other organizations reasonably calculated to bring its contents to the attention of the general public; and (3) distributed to others as necessary to ensure proper implementation of this Proclamation of Executive Order. It is further,

**ORDERED** that violations of this Proclamation of Executive Order may be subject to misdemeanor prosecution pursuant to State Law, including, but not limited to, Miss. Code Ann. § 45-17-9, as amended, as well as punishable as otherwise allowed by law, as well as the County’s ordinances. It is further,

**ORDERED** that, except for what is otherwise set out herein, this Emergency Proclamation shall be, and hereby is, effective at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21, 2020. It is further,

**ORDERED** that this Emergency Proclamation of Executive Order shall be, and hereby is, effective Saturday, March 21, 2020, at 8:00 p.m. and shall remain in effect until amended, rescinded, or superseded by another applicable Order or the termination of the current (and ongoing) State of Emergency related to this pandemic issued by the Hancock County Board of Supervisors, whichever shall occur first.

THIS, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2020, at \_\_\_\_\_ p.m.

This Proclamation was moved for approval by Supervisor District \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Supervisor District \_\_\_\_\_, with vote as follows:

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5

THUS APPROVED on this the 21st day of March, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board president, Scotty Adam

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_