



Press Release

Hamilton County Health Department

Web: health.hamiltontn.org

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

May 4, 2020

Health Department Consolidates Reopening Guidance, COVID-19 Remains Present in Our Community

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – The Hamilton County Health Department urges residents to take a cautious approach to reopening. “Reopen responsibly” means to follow the guidance that allows businesses and other organizations to reopen, while protecting consumers and employees from COVID-19 infection.

“How we reopen our local economy will be the deciding factor,” said Health Department Administrator Becky Barnes, “Reopening doesn’t mean that we are free and clear of the virus, it is still here and has the potential to rapidly escalate if we don’t take the appropriate measures.”

The COVID-19 virus remains an ever-present danger throughout our community. Our success up to this point has been because Hamilton County residents have adopted healthy habits to protect each other. For this reason, it is imperative that residents avoid letting their guard down and continue doing what has been working.

The Governor’s [“Tennessee Pledge”](#) provides guidelines for the following sectors:

- [Retail](#)
- [Restaurants](#)
- [Gyms](#)
- [Close Contact Services](#)
- [Faith-based Organizations](#)
- [General Business](#)

If owners, employees, leaders, or customers have any additional questions about this guidance, they can call the Health Department’s COVID-19 hotline at 209-8383.

The [importance of wearing a face covering](#) in Hamilton County cannot be overstated. The virus specifically spreads through droplets coming from the mouth or nose. These droplets escape not just while coughing or sneezing, but also while talking and singing. Masks catch these droplets before they can reach others. According to the CDC, asymptomatic persons can transmit the virus.

The cornerstone of personal responsibility remains the [President’s Coronavirus Guidelines for America](#):

- Practice good hygiene: Wash hands frequently, avoid touching the face, sneeze or cough into a tissue or the elbow, and disinfect surfaces frequently.
- Wear a mask if you are going to a public place, even if you feel well. This protects against asymptomatic transmission by you or from others. Wearing a face covering means you care.
- Avoid social gatherings or more than 10 people.
- If you are a [high-risk person](#), stay home and away from other people.
- If you are sick, stay home. If there are others in the sick person’s household, keep everyone at home. Do not go to public places.
- Avoid discretionary travel.

For more information, visit the Health Department’s [website](#) or call the COVID-19 hotline at 209-8383.

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