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OFFICE OF
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For Release: March 20, 2020

City of Charleston March 20 Coronavirus Update

Charleston, S.C.—Effective at 5 p.m. today, the city of Charleston shifted to OPCON-1 and closed all remaining offices and facilities, including recreation centers, to the public.

Many city staff members will transition to working remotely effective Monday, with departments unable to telecommute dividing crews into A and B teams that will alternate workweeks, so as to reduce contact with other city staff.

The Police and Fire Departments will continue to operate normally, with enhanced safety protocols, in order to preserve public safety.

Beginning on Monday, and for the duration of the week, trash collection will be suspended citywide, in order to make additional crews available to operate the A/B schedule for garbage collection. This suspension applies to the city of Charleston as whole, including areas serviced by contractors (Daniel Island, Cainho, Outer West Ashley and Johns Island).

Citizens are asked to remove any existing curbside yard debris and bulk/miscellaneous items and to refrain from placing these materials at the curb until collection resumes.

While using public spaces, citizens are encouraged to observe the following National Recreation and Park Association recommendations:

- Refrain from using parks or trails if exhibiting symptoms.
- Follow CDC's guidance on personal hygiene prior to and during use of parks or trails.
- Prepare for limited access to public restrooms or water fountains.
- While on trails, warn other users of their presence and as they pass, and step aside to let others pass.
- Follow CDC guidance on the recommended size of social gatherings including outdoor picnicking, pick-up sports and other group hangouts, and maintain proper physical distance at all times.
- Observe CDC's minimum recommended social distancing of 6 feet from other individuals at all times. If this is not possible, users should find an alternate location or depart that space.

At an emergency meeting, Charleston City Council passed an emergency ordinance to suspend both the accrual of city business license late fees and the enforcement the city's code pertaining to environmentally acceptable packaging and products (plastic bag ban) for 60 days.

Additionally, the ordinance extends the expiration date for chauffer’s licenses issued between March 18, 2019 and April 1, 2019.

Today, the city began implementing temporary curbside parking relief zones to provide support for local businesses that are fulfilling curbside pickup and delivery orders in lieu of dine-in service. The temporary pickup zones will be clearly marked with “Temporary Curbside Parking” signs, which will be in place by tomorrow morning.

Most of the zones are being implemented where there are currently loading zones, on-street metered parking or time-restricted parking. These spaces are free for use by restaurant employees, delivery drivers and curbside pickup patrons while fulfilling orders to enable an efficient flow of business. A map of the zone locations is available here: www.charleston-sc.gov/curbside-parking-relief.

Decision-making regarding the selection of these temporary zones is ongoing, based on the number of businesses providing these services, the physical restrictions that may exist, and the availability of city resources. Businesses and organizations are encouraged to provide feedback about zone locations, including requests to add or move temporary curbside pickup zones, at curbside@charleston-sc.gov.

In order to ensure that SC Chief Justice Don Beatty's order halting all evictions statewide is followed here in Charleston, the city has established an on-call magistrate to intervene should any illegal evictions be attempted.

The city is currently working with the Small Business Administration and City Council to make low-interest disaster loans available to help small businesses overcome this temporary loss of revenue and survive this extraordinarily difficult time. These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact.

Applicants can apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at disasterloan.sba.gov. Applicants may also call SBA’s Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on available SBA disaster assistance. The deadline to apply is Dec. 21, 2020.

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