



Press Release

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For more information, please contact:
Susan Saylor | Communications Director
ssaylor@washingtoncountyttn.org
(423) 753-1620

Washington County ready to reopen under Governor's guidelines

JONESBOROUGH – With the announcement of Governor Lee's guidelines to reopen Tennessee businesses, Washington County Mayor Joe Grandy is optimistic and enthusiastic to reopen our economy.

The Tennessee Pledge program the Governor unveiled listed basic, common sense things for opening restaurants on Monday and retail businesses on Wednesday safely. Phase two of the openings, which will include hospitals, dental offices, gyms and churches, will hinge on how well Tennesseans do in Phase One.

"We are lucky in this area that we do not have the clusters of cases like middle and west Tennessee, but we need to stay vigilant," Grandy said.

To encourage the safe opening of our county, he formed a task force of local leaders to look at how to open up businesses while attempting to keep COVID-19 numbers in check. The task force plans to launch a web page that lists restaurants and businesses that are open and compliant with the Tennessee Pledge. While Governor Lee did not put any additional enforcement measures in place, there are preestablished monitoring processes.

"Our local health inspectors will provide guidance and oversight to local restaurants during the next couple of months before resuming an inspection schedule," explained Christen Minnick, Director of the Washington County Health Department. "Proper handwashing is key for employees as is checking to make sure no one has a temperature 99.9 degrees or greater."

Restaurants opening are to keep capacity at 50 percent, space out patrons, encourage reservations and continuously sanitize. The Governor encourages temperature checks for customers as well, suggesting that those with temperatures above 99.9 degrees not be permitted.

Businesses are to follow the same basic guidelines set forth for restaurants, with the addition of one-way aisles and traffic patterns that encourage social distancing.

"The Governor is encouraging the use of cloth masks when in public, along with using curbside, pickup and delivery service options when possible," Grandy said.

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