

**Resolution 2020-C**  
**Knox County Safer at Home and Business Guidance**

**WHEREAS**, on March 11, 2020, the novel Coronavirus 2019 Disease (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization; and

**WHEREAS**, as of December 6, 2020, Knox County was defined as a county in the Red Zone by the White House Coronavirus Task Force, meeting the requirements of “counties during the last week reported both new cases of 200 to 499 per 100,000 population, and a diagnostic test positivity result between 10.1% and 15%,” further stating, “Despite the severity of this surge and the threat to the hospital systems, many state and local governments are not implementing the same mitigation policies that stemmed the tide of the summer surge; that must happen now”; and

**WHEREAS**, as of December 16, 2020, Knox County new case rate and percent positivity are all above the Board of Health adopted metrics for escalation; and

**WHEREAS**, as of December 16, 2020, all five of the Knox County Health Department Benchmarks are rated as red; and

**WHEREAS**, a continuing public health emergency exists in Knox County, Tennessee, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and there is need for increased diligence among all citizens to practice the five core actions with fidelity in order to protect the public health and welfare; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Knox County Code § 38-33(a), the Knox County Board of Health has all of the powers and duties as required and provided for by state law; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-2-601(f), the powers and duties of the Knox County Board of Health include adopting rules and regulations as may be necessary or appropriate to protect the general health and safety of the citizens of Knox County and governing the policies of the Knox County Health Department; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-2-603(b) and Knox County Code § 38-32(f), the Knox County Health Director, as head of the Knox County Health Department, shall act in concert with, and meet all applicable policies established by, the Knox County Board of Health; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to T.C.A. § 68-2-609, the Knox County Health Officer is empowered to order (1) the quarantine of any place or person, if the county health officer finds that the quarantine is necessary to protect the public from an epidemic, (2) the closure of any public establishment, facility or building if the county health officer finds unsanitary conditions of such a nature and extent to significantly threaten the public health, or (3) the closure of any public establishment, facility or building, if the county health officer is otherwise authorized by law to take that action; and

**WHEREAS**, by Opinion No. 20-07 issued on April 27, 2020, the Attorney General of Tennessee confirmed that “local health officers confronted with an epidemic [have] the power—*indeed, the obligation*—to “[e]stablish appropriate control measures which may include

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examination, treatment, isolation, quarantine, exclusion, disinfection, immunization, disease surveillance, closure of establishment, education, and other measures considered appropriate by medical experts for the protection of the public's health" (quoting Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1200-14-01-.15) (emphasis added); and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Executive Order No. 67 issued by the Governor of Tennessee on October 30, 2020, the Knox County Health Department has the authority to issue additional orders or measures related to the containment or management of the spread of COVID-19, which may permit to a greater degree, or restrict to a greater degree, the opening, closure, or operation of businesses, organizations, or venues or the gathering of persons in Knox County, except with respect to certain subjects; and

**WHEREAS**, as of December 16, 2020, the foregoing authority remains in effect pursuant to Executive Order No. 67 issued by the Governor of Tennessee on October 30, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the Knox County Board of Health finds it necessary and appropriate to limit the spread of COVID-19 in order to protect the general health and safety of the citizens of Knox County during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, Knox Countians are encouraged to continue to engage in the healthy and essential activities of daily life, including supporting local businesses and their employees while adhering to the health and safety measures set forth in this Resolution, so that we will safeguard to the greatest extent possible the economic well-being of so many Knox Countians whose lives and work have been disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak and ensure that Knox County is best positioned to recover following this outbreak; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH AS FOLLOWS:**

1. All citizens of Knox County are urged to shelter at home as much as possible. When individuals leave their homes or places of residence, they should practice appropriate social distancing, staying at least six feet apart from those outside their household; wear a facemask; and assume others are infectious, regardless of whether they exhibit symptoms.
2. Businesses operating in Knox County are urged to facilitate the limiting of potential spread by implementing the following:
  - a. Provide and encourage the use of curbside pick up and delivery to reduce the number of people in the facility;
  - b. Limit the number of people in your facility to allow for at least 6 feet of distancing between households;
  - c. Require employees and patrons to wear cloth face coverings;
  - d. Allow employees to work from home as long as possible;

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- e. If possible, stagger schedules to reduce the number of people in the office/workplace;
- f. Create signs and barriers that reinforce 6 feet of physical distancing for the protection of your employees and the public, marking the floors where necessary to provide customers clear direction when waiting in line and implementing one-way aisles;
- g. Consider making stickers for employees to wear that remind customers to maintain 6 feet of distance;
- h. Creating plexiglass protective barriers for employees working registers or providing close proximity services;
- i. If the business has overhead announcements, regularly playing announcements encouraging the maintenance of 6 feet of distancing;
- j. Encouraging customers to come during non-peak hours, implementing special hours for seniors and other higher-risk individuals;
- k. Adhere to general sanitation practices that may include:
  - i. Encouraging employees to engage in hand washing (or the use of hand sanitizer if hands are not visibly soiled) after each customer interaction.
  - ii. Having hand sanitizer available at the entrance of the business for customers.
  - iii. Discouraging workers from using other employees' equipment, including phones, desks, offices or other work tools, when possible. When not possible, hand sanitizer should be used both prior to use of communal items and immediately after.
  - iv. Routinely sanitizing shared surfaces and equipment throughout the day and between users.
  - v. Offering customers single-use grocery bags.
  - vi. Considering placing limitations on returns or extending the window in which returns can be made to the place of business.
- l. Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces;
  - i. Having a clear plan for enhanced cleaning protocols, including who is responsible for each task. Modify business hours if necessary to allow for deep cleaning.
  - ii. Dedicating an employee to working at the entrance sanitizing carts and baskets and encouraging the use of hand sanitizer. Cleaning the credit card touch screen and/or keypad after each customer use. Regularly cleaning checkout lanes or counters.
  - iii. Cleaning pens, menus and other communal items after each use.

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- m. Limit business travel to only that which is necessary;
  - n. Screen all employees daily by asking the following questions:
    - i. Have you been told to quarantine/isolate by a medical provider or the health department?
    - ii. Have you had face-to-face contact for 15 or more minutes with someone who has COVID-19?
    - iii. Are you feeling ill and/or experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 (regularly check the CDC website for an updated list)?
    - iv. If yes to any of these questions, they should not enter the worksite and should contact their doctor.
    - v. While it is preferred that employers conduct daily employee temperature checks with a no-touch thermometer before they enter the workplace, employee daily temperature self-checks are appropriate when a thermal thermometer is not available or daily employer checks are not practical. Communicate the policy with employees. Daily temperature checks are a tool in your toolbox; they do not replace the need to follow the other recommendations.
  - o. Require any employee to quarantine/isolate according to the guidance of their medical provider or the Knox County Health Department when the employee is:
    - i. A positive case for COVID-19; OR
    - ii. Waiting for their results of a COVID-19 test; OR
    - iii. A close contact of someone with COVID-19.
  - p. Do not allow symptomatic people to physically return to the workplace until they are symptom-free and fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication or have been released from quarantine/isolation. Employees should not be required to have a negative test to return to work;
  - q. Consider implementing generous sick leave policies to encourage employees to report their illnesses and stay home;
  - r. Maintain employee privacy by not unnecessarily sharing information with others about their illness. Health information is protected by federal law; and
  - s. Consider implementing ways to track employee and patron interactions such as:
    - i. Keeping detailed appointment logs.
    - ii. Collecting contact information from patrons who agree to share this information.
3. To reduce the opportunity for the spread of COVID-19, the Knox County Board of Education is encouraged to limit extracurricular activities for the spring of 2021

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school session. If extracurricular activities continue, enact appropriate safety precautions.

4. To encourage compliance, all elected and appointed officials in Knox County are requested to publicly demonstrate and state their support for the Five Core Actions and enact this resolution under their authority where applicable.


**This Resolution shall be in effect upon its passage the public health and welfare requiring it.**

ADOPTED this day of December 16, 2020.

KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Gotcher, DMD, PhD/Chair      12/17/2020  
Date

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Martha Buchanan, MD/Secretary      12/17/2020  
Date