

Several changes are taking place this week in Mecklenburg County as improvements are made in the fight against the novel coronavirus or COVID-19.

Starting today, Mecklenburg County will follow North Carolina's Stay at Home Order as part of the continued effort to minimize exposure to COVID-19.

Mecklenburg County's Stay at Home Proclamation, which was enacted on March 26 expired yesterday, April 29. By aligning with the State's Stay at Home Order, Mecklenburg County will be able to participate in the Governor's proposed phased reopening of North Carolina. In addition, the State's Stay at Home Order is less restrictive than the County's Proclamation and will allow businesses once considered non-essential by the County, such as car dealerships, real estate companies and landscaping businesses to operate.

The State's Stay at Home Order also increases the maximum number of persons allowed to gather for funerals to 50. The County's Proclamation only allowed for a gathering of 10.

Social distancing rules will still apply. Click <u>here</u> to learn more about the State's Stay at Home Order. Residents with questions about the change may call the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Stay at Home Proclamation Call Center at 704-353-1926 from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Another change taking place this week includes loosening of some restrictions at County parks. Starting today, parking lots at County parks, greenways, nature reserves and boat ramps will reopen. Tennis will also be allowed. The change comes as the County aligns with the State's Stay at Home Order. Playgrounds, sports courts and athletic fields and park restrooms will remain closed.

Click here to learn more about the changes at Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation facilities.

And on Friday, I will present my recommended budget for fiscal year 2021. For the first time in the County's history the recommended budget presentation will be made without an audience. The chamber of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center will not be open to the public as a health precaution. The public may watch the presentation live on the Government Channel or on <u>Mecknc.gov</u>. The Recommended Budget presentation will begin at 11 am.

Please continue to visit our COVID-19 webpage posted at <u>MeckNC.gov/COVID-19</u> to stay up to date with the latest information.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Dena. R. Diorio, Mecklenburg County Manager

## Department of Social Services COVID-19 Services Update

The Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services continues to work hard to support our community during the health pandemic. Here is a snapshot of what DSS has been doing and how the department continues to respond to the needs of the community.

- During the two weeks following implementation of the March 26 Stay-at-Home order, DSS received 7,927 online applications for Food & Nutrition Services benefits, an average of 566 per day and 646 percent more than the same period last month (1,063). While this measure only looks at our online applications, it does not take into account our mail-in, telephone, or faxed applications.
- On March 30, 2020, all families receiving Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) received the maximum amount allowed for March and April 2020 for their household size. Since April 1st, an additional \$3M of Food & Nutrition Services supplemental benefits were issued to families in Mecklenburg County. In addition, the state is implementing a Pandemic EBT program. The program provides benefits on an EBT card to North Carolina families whose children, under the age of 18, would receive free and reduced lunch.
- The Senior Citizen Nutrition Meal Program moved 521 Congregate Meal participants to the Homebound Delivered Meal program in April, bringing the total homebound participant count to 1,700. In addition, staff conduct approximately 1,600 weekly outreach calls to senior nutrition meal participants.
- Customers have expressed concerns and issues with EPASS, the online state system used to apply for benefits. If customers experience issues with completing the application online, they can download a copy to print and mail-in or they can pick up a hard copy outside of one of the two DSS locations.

For additional information on service trends and mapping, contact, Passion Newsome.

## News Releases:

- \*\*\*NEW Mecklenburg Transitions to State Stay at Home Order Thursday
- <u>County Manager to Virtually Present Fiscal Year 2021 Recommended Budget</u>
- \*\*\*NEW Park and Recreation Reopening Parking Lots and Boat Ramps
- \*\*\*NEW County Transitions to State Order as Local Stay at Home Restrictions Time Out
- \*\*\*NEW COVID-19 Data Update for April 27
- \*\*\*NEW Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Click here to view a full list of news releases.

# Media Update:

Mecklenburg County Manager Dena R. Diorio and Public Health Director Gibbie Harris are scheduled to give an update on COVID-19 cases in Mecklenburg County, on Thursday, April 30 at 2 pm.

A media advisory at least two hours prior to the event. Visit <u>https://mecklenburg.ravnur.com/live/media-feed</u> to watch a livestream of the media update.

# **Community Resources:**

## Mecklenburg County's Stay at Home Order:

Residents with questions about the County's transition to the State's Stay at Home Order can call 704-353-1926 Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

# COVID-19 Symptoms:

As the pandemic continues to impact the community, click here to view a list of COVID-19 symptoms.

COVID-19 Testing and Medical Advice:

Residents who feel they may have been exposed to the virus can contact the County's Public Health Hotline at 980-314-9400 to speak with a medical professional or for guidance on testing.

#### What to Do If You're Feeling Sick:

Click here for more information on what to do if you think you may have been exposed to the virus.

**Frequently Asked Questions - Residents:** 

Click here to view a list of the most frequently asked questions related to COVID-19.

#### **Resources for County Employees:**

#### **Employee Rights Under Families First Coronavirus Act**

On April 1, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act was signed to help provide additional paid leave for government employees affected by COVID-19.

Click here to learn more about the act.

The latest <u>MecklenburgCountyNC.gov</u>

#### **Board Bulletin**

is **now available** online.

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