



**City of Tuscaloosa Update
Coronavirus (COVID-19)
March 12, 2020**

My first responsibility is ensuring the health and safety of every person living and working in Tuscaloosa. Even in these unprecedented times that have unpredictable outcomes, my commitment guides our actions.

It is not only a commitment to our City – It is a commitment to my family. I am husband, dad and son. Tuscaloosa is our home and we are all in, and so are the families of our team who is working tirelessly. You deserve the best from the City and you will get it.

For the past three weeks, the City has taken the Coronavirus seriously and we have planned responsibly.

On February 28, I activated our Incident Command to Level 1 with Fire Chief Randy Smith leading our efforts.

This morning, I authorized a Level II activation that will provide personnel, financial and legal resources of the City to be directly applied to this global pandemic.

Understanding this, I want to share with you the actions I have taken to mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus in our community:

1. All Public Events hosted at city facilities are cancelled through March 31st. This includes tonight's town hall meeting at Northington Elementary School regarding Snow Hinton Park.
2. All public events permitted on City rights-of-way, facilities and/or assets are cancelled through March 31st. City staff will be making contact with event planners that are directly impacted. My initial plan is to provide an update each week of closings that will likely cover a 2 week time period. The coronavirus is likely coming to our community. This means that starting now, we need to be keeping as many people at home as possible.



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3. All events that are sponsored or hosted by Tuscaloosa Tourism and Sports are cancelled through March 31. TTS is also cancelling the Druid City Arts Festival for April 3rd and 4th.
4. The Tuscaloosa County PARA is reviewing all plans and implementing best practices in accordance with CDC guidelines. This includes the Bama Theater operations and sports at their facilities.
5. All regulatory meetings will continue for the near future (i.e. Council, Planning Commission, ZBA, Elevate, Historic), but we will continue to evaluate.
6. All professional travel for city employees has been cancelled effective immediately. All personal travel for city employees that is out of state will require reporting through human resources.
7. The City is actively working side-by-side with our partners at Tuscaloosa County EMA, DCH, University of Alabama and many others.

For all the work of federal, state and local officials, the most effective response will come from you by focusing on four key elements: Precaution; Planning; Communication; Common Sense.

Precaution

- If you are sick, stay home.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



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Planning

It is important that you have a plan for your family and/or place of employment. Everything from telecommuting to having your prescriptions filled needs to be in your calculus. It is time to plan.

The more you think through the potential issues, the more prepared you will be and the less unknowns you will encounter.

Communication

It is important that you seek information from reliable sources. I would encourage everyone to monitor the CDC and Alabama Department of Public Health websites.

The City has also compiled helpful information from multiple sources at [Tuscaloosa.com/covid19](https://tuscaloosa.com/covid19).

Reject rumors and seek reliable resources.

Common Sense

Lastly, let us apply more common sense.

1. The precautions we use for the flu apply to the Coronavirus.
2. Although it is cold comfort to those who have lost their lives to the Coronavirus, severe cases are still relatively low.
3. In the weeks ahead, avoid large public gatherings and restrict travel as much as possible.
4. Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms or have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19.



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5. It is important to think long-term and not panic each time the breaking news banners flash.

If you remember one thing, remember this – Tuscaloosa is resilient and ready to meet the challenges on the horizon.

Although this is new territory, the more cooperation we demonstrate and the more common sense we apply, I know we will restore peace of mind, and meet this moment together.



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