

City of Tuscaloosa Update – 3/13/2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19)

As I stated yesterday, my first responsibility is ensuring the safety of every person in Tuscaloosa. Even in these unprecedented times that have unpredictable outcomes, my commitment guides our actions.

This evening, the Alabama Department of Public Health confirmed the first case of coronavirus in Tuscaloosa. It will not be the last case for our community.

Understanding this, I have declared a state of emergency - not out of fear, but out of responsibility.

By issuing this declaration it provides the ability to respond at the speed of urgency, if needed, to ensure the safety of Tuscaloosa.

For weeks, our team has been preparing for this moment, and we are determined to navigate these uncharted waters.

Tonight, in addition to the emergency declaration based on the first confirmed case, and Governor Ivey's emergency declaration, I have ordered a 60-day extension of non-payment for water, sewer and garbage. This grace period will assist the most vulnerable and ensure access to clean water and sanitation.

I have also extended the cancellation of permits and events within the City and in our facilities, rights-of-way, and/or assets from March 31 to April 6.

With the delay of schools beyond spring break, this evening I discussed these challenges with Superintendent Mike Daria. The City will work side-by-side with the Tuscaloosa City Schools in many areas, which include the continuation of nutritious meals for our children.

As I close, remember that fear is our greatest threat.

For weeks, we knew this day would come and now that it is here life marches forward and we must continue to live our lives. I believe Tuscaloosa will be defined by meeting this unprecedented moment with unprecedented resolve.