

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: March 17, 2020

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COLLETON COUNTY ANNOUNCES BUILDING RESTRICTIONS AND VIRTUAL SERVICES

Based on the intelligence collected and recommendations from public health officials, including the CDC, Colleton County will be enhancing preventative measures to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Beginning March 18th, 2020, the following County buildings will be closed to walk-in traffic to the public: J.P. Harrelson, Old Jail, all Library branches, Recreation Center, The Restaurant at Dogwood Hills, Voter Registration, Jefferson Howell, Walterboro-Colleton Chamber of Commerce Economic Development, Museum, Farmers Market & Commercial Kitchen, Colleton Civic Center, Alcohol and Drug Abuse (effective March 19th) and Veteran's Affairs.

The Colleton County Courthouse will be closed following Family Court tomorrow.

The Sheriff's Office will still be allowing public inquiries for the time being, but this is subject to change in the future.

The Colleton County Landfill and Solid Waste Convenience Sites will remain open according to their regular schedules.

Law Enforcement and Fire-Rescue services will continue to operate normally with no reduction in services.

Information regarding how to contact specific County offices and departments is as follows.

Treasurer's Office

Payment options that are free of charge: individuals can mail their check to Post Office Box 8, Walterboro, SC 29488 or deposit their payment in the dropbox at the back entrance of the J.P. Harrelson Building (door next to the Treasurer's office; look for the red DROPBOX sign).

Payment options with convenience fee added: individuals can pay by telephone by calling 1-844-281-7837; pay online at www.colletoncounty.org, Pay & Search Taxes (on left of page); or by requesting an emailed PAYPAL link to be sent to you by calling above number or emailing us at treasurer@colletoncounty.org.

Tax Assessor's Office

All Applications and forms are online and can be downloaded and returned by US mail.

<https://www.colletoncounty.org/assessor> then Documents

If you have a questions or other inquiries call 843-549-1213.

Probate

For all estate, guardianship, conservatorship, mental health, and marriage license questions, please contact the Probate Court by telephone (843-549-7216) or email (probate@colletoncounty.org). You may mail any probate documents to P.O. Box 1036, Walterboro, SC 29488.

Auditor's Office

Phone 843-549-2131

Email auditorstaff@colletoncounty.org

Fire-Rescue

For ambulance billing and/or fire reports, please call 843-539-1960 or email mellis@colletoncounty.org.

Register of Deeds

The Register of Deeds will be able to accept documents via e-file, which can be accessed at the link below. Register of Deeds will be accepting walk in documents by appointment only by calling 843-542-2745 or emailing dgusler@colletoncounty.org.

Records can also be accessed from this link. <https://www.colletoncounty.org/register-of-deeds>

Veteran's Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs Appeals Management has suspended all in-person hearings and will offer telephonic conferences. I will implement the same process effective March 17th for all letter reviews and file claims on behalf of those who have already appointed me as their VA Representatives. The Veteran's Affairs office can be contacted by phone at 843-549-1412 or by email at cvao@colletoncounty.org.

Planning and Development

Please call (843) 549-1709; extension 1255 for anything having to do with Building Permits, Planning & Zoning, Code Enforcement, Floodplain Information, and Trash & Debris Removal.

All Applications shall be acquired online by going to the County Website at <https://www.colletoncounty.org/planning-and-development>, and then selecting "Documents" for the appropriate applications needed by the customer. These applications can be submitted via U.S. Mail to Colleton County Planning and Development, Post Office Box 98, Walterboro, SC 29488.

Magistrate Court

Please be advised that by Order of the Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court dated March 16, 2020 all Magistrate Court jury trials, traffic court, criminal court, civil court and evictions and roll calls are cancelled until further notice to stem the spread of Coronavirus. The magistrate office will remain open to except court filings, payments and conduct emergency hearings only (including but limited to restraining orders, orders of protection and bond court).

At this time, we are unable to re-schedule court dates. When we are able to re-schedule your court dates parties will receive in the mail at the address the Court has on file a written Magistrate Court Summons hearing notice with the new court date.

In the meantime, if a party moves or changes their mailing address it is their responsibility to notify the court immediately and provide their new mailing address. Failure to provide their new mailing address could result in trial in their absence.

As of now the Magistrate Office will continue to be open during regularly hours to receive court filings and payments, conduct emergency hearings, and conduct bond court. This is subject to change by Order of the Governor, the South Carolina Supreme Court, or the County of Colleton. We encourage you to monitor local media for the latest information on closings.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at (843)549-1122.

Colleton County Memorial Library

The Colleton County Memorial Library System (Walterboro Main Library, Cottageville Library, Edisto Beach Library, Mobile Library) will be closed to the public, beginning March 17 through March 31 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Patrons may call (843) 549-5621 and speak with a library staff member during business hours Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM if they need basic reference services or have general questions. There will be no late fees charged on library materials during this closure. The library's Book Return will also be closed during this time and patrons are asked to return their library materials once the library reopens to the general public.

All library events, including the Friends of the Library annual meeting, scheduled for March 24 have been canceled and will be rescheduled.

Library officials have been monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic regularly and have made the decision to close the library in the best interest of our community and to limit the possible spread of the virus. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we navigate this most difficult time for our country.

Colleton Museum, Farmers Market and Commercial Kitchen and Colleton Civic Center

Please call 843-549-2303, callers will then need to listen to the prompts to find the right person. All general Colleton Museum, Commercial Kitchen and Civic Center questions can come to Matt Mardell at mmardell@colletoncounty.org.

All Farmers Market questions to Ian Dillinger at idillinger@colletoncounty.org

Any Colleton Museum rental questions can come to Eartha Cunningham at ecunningham@colletoncounty.org.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Alcohol and Drug Abuse will be open from 8:30 AM until 3:00 PM on March 18, 2020 for MAT vouchers, relapse prevention packets, and narcan distribution only.

Effective March 19, 2020, all treatment and prevention services are cancelled until further notice. The clinical staff will be available daily via telephone or text message at (843)510-3580.

Delinquent Tax

Please call 843-549-5433 or email us at delinquenttax@colletoncounty.org for service information.

Voter Registration

Any candidate seeking a political party's nomination for any office in the 2020 General Election must file with the appropriate county board of voter registration & elections or the South Carolina Election Commission during the upcoming filing period.

Filing opens noon, March 16, 2020, and closes noon, March 30, 2020

SEC Filing hours: Weekdays: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

County Board of Voter Registration and Elections Filing hours: Weekdays: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Filing Form: The Statement of Intention of Candidacy & Party Pledge (SICPP) form required for filing is available in the "Candidate Information" section of scVOTES.org and at the county elections office.

Filing Fee: Filing fees are paid at the time of filing by candidates seeking the nomination of a party nominating by primary. The list of filing fees is available at scVOTES.org and at the election commission office. Filing fee checks should be made payable to the appropriate state political party. A candidate seeking the nomination of a party nominating by convention does not pay a filing fee.

State Ethics Filings: Candidates are required to file a Statement of Economic Interests and a Campaign Disclosure online with the State Ethics Commission at <http://ethics.sc.gov>. Failure to file these documents may result in a candidate fine but will not disqualify a candidate from the election. Contact the State Ethics Commission for more information.

All other offices can be contacted using the email addresses and phone numbers on the County's website at colletoncounty.org. If you do not have access to the County's website, please call 843-549-5221.

REMINDERS AND HELPFUL LINKS

The chain of command and direction and control during a public health emergency is different than what is exercised during a natural or human-made disaster. The [South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control \(DHEC\)](http://SouthCarolinaDepartmentofHealthandEnvironmentalControl(DHEC)) is the lead agency. DHEC officials are working closely with our federal partners at the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://CentersforDiseaseControlandPrevention(CDC)).

If you are concerned about the coronavirus (COVID-19) or experiencing respiratory or flu-like symptoms such as fever and/or cough, MUSC recommends you speak to an online virtual care

provider. Virtual COVID-19 screenings are free. Just use the code COVID19 when you follow the link below and log in to MUSC's Telehealth service. No appointment is necessary, and this service also covers other conditions, such as allergy/hay fever, sinus infection, pink eye, sore throat, or the common cold. You can also call 843-261-5940 for more information.

<https://campaigns.muschealth.org/virtual-care/index.html>

For more information, please visit the links below.

- SCDHEC - <https://www.scdhec.gov/health/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- John Hopkins Center Global Tracker – <https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>
- CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- Colleton County Government – <https://www.colletoncounty.org/Coronavirus>

Should you have any questions, please visit Colleton County Fire-Rescue's Emergency Management Division webpage at www.colletonfire.com. Colleton County Fire-Rescue's Emergency Management Division and all of our Emergency Support Function partners have been collaborating for several days now and will continue to monitor COVID-19.