



**DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN DURHAM COUNTY, NC  
TO COORDINATE PROTECTIVE ACTIONS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19**

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a severe respiratory illness that is spread from human to human and can cause severe injury or death. This is a new strain, previously unidentified, highly contagious, and for which no vaccine currently exists; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 has been declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the World Health Organization; and

**WHEREAS**, the President of the United States has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a National Emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has declared a public health state of emergency in the United States for COVID-19 under section 319 of the Public Health Services Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has confirmed several cases of COVID-19 within the State of North Carolina; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor has declared a State of Emergency in order to coordinate protective actions and prevent the spread of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the Durham County Public Health Director has determined that the COVID-19 virus presents an imminent public health threat; and

**WHEREAS**, the Durham County Public Health Director has specific responsibility, for protecting the public from communicable diseases under Article 6 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes of the State of North Carolina, and is granted commensurate authority by the General Statutes to perform those duties; and

**WHEREAS**, public health departments must use all preventative measures including services, personnel, equipment, facilities and resources to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, emergency protective actions are required to provide for the public health and safety and to provide adequate protection for all persons including our businesses, education institutions hospitals, congregate care facilities, government, and emergency responders.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Chair of the Board of Commissioners of Durham County under Section 19.22, Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes and Chapter 10, Article III of the Durham County Code of Ordinances:

1. A State of Emergency is hereby declared within the County of Durham, North Carolina and by consent of the Mayor, for the City of Durham within its corporate limits.
2. The following restrictions and prohibitions are imposed:
  - A. **Public Gatherings:** It is recommended that events which would gather 100 or more persons be cancelled or delayed until this declaration has been rescinded.

**B. Social Distancing:** It is recommended that all residents, visitors, and employees maintain the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended social distance of 6 feet for all personal and business interactions.

**C. Public Health Investigation of Possible COVID-19 Cases:** Durham County Public Health Officials must have cooperation from the public and unobstructed access to persons, records, residences and facilities to perform their statutory duties to investigate actual and potential COVID-19 cases. A failure to cooperate not only increases the risk of further infection and possibly death but is also a criminal violation of state law.

**D. Quarantine and Isolation:** It is essential that individuals comply with quarantine and isolation orders issued and posted by the Durham County Public Health Department. These orders restrict activities by both specific persons and the general public. Failure to comply not only presents a health risk but is a criminal violation of state law.

**F. Sanitation:** It being essential that utilities not be disrupted in order to provide for the safe sanitation of all persons, the City and County utility services will not disconnect any resident for failure to pay their bills during the duration of this declaration. It is hoped that private utilities will also provide their customers this relief during the duration of this declaration.

**G. Emergency Responders:** All persons within the County of Durham are required to adhere to and follow the instructions of all Fire, EMS, Emergency Management, 911 Communications, and Law Enforcement personnel.

4. I hereby order all county employees and all other emergency management personnel subject to my control to cooperate in the enforcement and implementation of the provisions of this Declaration, all applicable local ordinances, state and federal laws, and the Durham City/County Emergency Operations Plan. I further request the full cooperation of the Sheriff of Durham County in the implementation and enforcement of the foregoing.

5. I hereby delegate and otherwise authorize the Durham County Manager and/or his designee, all power and authority granted to me pursuant to Article 1A of Chapter 166A and Article 36A of Chapter 14 of the North Carolina General Statutes, and by Article III of Chapter 10 of the Durham County Code of Ordinances for the purpose of implementing the Emergency Operations Plan and to take such further action as is necessary in order to maintain public order or afford adequate protection for lives, safety or property as needed.

6. I hereby order this declaration: (a) to be distributed to the news media and other organizations calculated to bring its contents to the attention of the general public; (b) to be filed with the Clerk to the Durham County Board of Commissioners and (c) to be distributed to others as necessary to ensure proper implementation of this declaration.

7. This declaration shall become effective immediately.

8. This declaration shall not expire until rescinded.

DECLARED this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

  
Wendy Jacobs, Chair,  
Durham County Board of Commissioners