

**County Mayor Lee Harris Remarks
Regarding COVID-19 Shelby County Health Directive #3
Delivered on May 4, 2020**

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We are renewing the Health Directive for 14 days.

The new Health Directive will embody Phase 1 of the Back to Business Plan.

On the advice of our doctors and the Health Department, we are moving barbers and hair stylists into that phase. However, other close contact businesses, like nail salons, massage businesses, tattoo parlors, will remain closed. Additionally, the new Health Directive will incorporate the new orders from the state on places of worship and elective surgeries.

This process has had to have some level of elasticity to deal with a rapidly changing environment, to incorporate feedback from medical experts, and to respond with practical realities.

For instance, the Governor threw us a bit of a curve ball last week. He had originally told us that he would not open close contact businesses until Phase 2. He announced that he has reversed course on Wednesday of last week. This greatly changed the settled expectation of many of the leaders around here, and caused some disruption at the end of last week. However,

in Shelby County, we need to keep working at unity, even when it gets tricky, because that's the only way we have a chance of reducing spread.

Consensus is important because different rules from one community to the next will not work. This virus does not recognize the boundary between Memphis and Millington or the boundary between Germantown and Collierville. The Back-to-Business plan gives us a uniform approach. It takes a lot of work to keep this train on the tracks. But, it's necessary work. We must ensure that there is one set of rules and safety measures that apply for all of Shelby County.

Additionally, we have had to deal with the practical realities and limits of enforcement.

We are unlikely to be able to stop people from touching their face, or force people to cover their mouth with their cough. Similarly, we have not stopped people from getting their hair cut. People are cutting and styling hair right now. They are doing it at their kitchen table or in their garage. The problem is that they are likely not following safety protocols at all and that is increasing the chance of spread. You can't easily regulate what happens in a garage. We need some way to regulate this and move this activity out into the open. Adopting a new way of doing business is how we strike the right balance and how we can prevent spread.

We will move forward.

We will not move as fast as the rest of the state.

There is no Executive order from the Governor at this time to help us ascertain how close contact businesses will ultimately be treated by the state. The guidance that is out there does not seem to mandate any safety precautions whatsoever. The state has articulated some guidelines. However, there are, practically speaking, no safety requirements in light of COVID.

That will not work for Shelby County. We will not be able to open up most of these businesses and we cannot open any close-contact business without restrictions in light of COVID. On the advice of the doctors and the Health Department, our approach will require barbers and salons to take a number of steps prior to re-opening.

1. Employees must have their temperatures checked before entering the work area and cannot be permitted to enter if they have a fever or any other symptoms of COVID-19.
2. Salons and shop owners must sufficiently stock their place of business with hand sanitizer, soap, and/or sanitizing wipes before reopening.
3. Owners must maintain an appointment book that includes, at a minimum, customer name, date, and time of service.
4. Face coverings should be worn by stylists and customers whenever practical. All employees (including stylists and barbers) should wear face coverings and gloves while providing services.
5. Items such as capes, smocks, drapes, and neck strips should be one-time-use between cleanings or disposable as much as possible.
6. Salon and shop owners must make appropriate modifications to accommodate social distancing. For instance, active workstations should be at least six-feet apart, with additional measures taken as necessary to ensure that all people stay six-feet apart at all times except for a staff member providing a service to a client. Physical barriers should be used where necessary.
7. Stylists should be encouraged to get tested before coming to work and to stay home if they test positive or have COVID-19 related symptoms.
8. Customers must be served by appointment only, but walk-ins may be permitted if walk-in customers wait in their vehicle for their turn.
9. There must be at least 15 minutes between client appointments for sanitizing the client area.
10. Salon and shop owners must perform regular disinfection of high-touch surface areas and equipment (e.g., door handles, counter space, light switches, tools and instruments).
11. Unless the customer is a minor, barber shops and hair salons must not allow non-customer companions to accompany customers during a service.

We acknowledge that not all of these businesses will be able to open on the same timetable and some may not be able to open any time soon. But, we have to reasonable restrictions in place and this is the advice we have received from the public health and medical experts.

Again, we will keep working at this—building consensus and working together—even when the going gets tough. We want to get through this together. Together, we will get through this.

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