



**Wednesday, March 18, 2020**

### **The Highlands COVID-19 Task Force, Update on Declarations**

Yesterday, the Alleghany Highlands worked to remain unified in its ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The City of Covington and Alleghany County, which covers the Towns of Clifton Forge and Iron Gate, formalized local emergency declarations. In doing so, we stand together as a Task Force and we will continue to communicate, collaborate and share resources to the greatest extent possible for the good of The Highlands. The local emergency declarations allow local government greater flexibility in its response efforts to stem the potential spread of COVID-19, by cutting down on “red-tape” when it comes to purchasing, using resources, mobilizing volunteers, etc.

It is important to note that effective March 17, 2020, there are new measures mandated for social distancing to inhibit the spread of COVID-19, such that restaurants, theaters and fitness centers must reduce seating capacity to ten (10) or less patrons at any one time, or close. We strongly encourage our local restaurants, fitness centers and theater to comply, so that they may remain in operation without violating the emergency order.

Restaurants that work to remain open by adopting the measures above, are encouraged to contact the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism as well as their local government, so that we can all work to get the word out on what is open, their hours and method of operation.

For more information on COVID-19, the following online resources are recommended, CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/>, or the VDH website: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/>. For those without internet, VDH now has a regional hotline 1-855-949-8378, as well as a state hotline, 1-877-ASK-VDH3, these hotlines can be used to contact public health workers with questions.

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