



Joint Information

Media Contacts: Blount County Government - Amy Cowden, Executive Assistant to the Mayor 865-273-5700

City of Alcoa - Patricia Tipton, Public Information Officer & Special Projects 865-380-4787

City of Maryville - Jane Groff, Administrative Services Director 865-273-3406

Blount County Intergovernmental Public Advisory Governor's Reopening Plan

Blount County, Tennessee - April 24, 2020 - Gov. Bill Lee issued the first steps from the "Tennessee Pledge," the state's rollout of guidance and best practices for Tennessee businesses in 89 of the state's 95 counties to keep employees and customers safe during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The first industries to receive guidance through the plan include the restaurant and retail industries.

"Tennesseans pulled together to flatten the curve, and it is time for people to begin to get back to work and back to their businesses," Lee said. "We are pursuing a careful, measured approach to reopening our economy that does not depend on heavy-handed mandates but instead provides practical tools for businesses of all sizes."

As one of the 89 counties in Tennessee reporting to the Governor's Public Health Official, local Government leaders expect citizens and businesses in Blount County and any of its incorporated municipalities, to follow the guidelines. The health and safety of our citizens is our top priority.

Details can be found in the Governor's [Tennessee Pledge](#) for [Restaurants](#) and [Retail Stores](#).

We look forward to the Governor submitting more details and guidance for additional businesses to reopen. We expect to have further guidance next week regarding churches, gyms, hospitals and medical procedures.

The Governor emphasized that this first phase does not include all businesses. Close contact services including salons, barber shops, massage and tattoo parlors, etc. will not reopen until further notice.

In the meantime, we ask Blount County to move forward with caution. As Mayors, we are glad to hear the plans for a safe, slow and phased reopening of our economy. Our community has sacrificed so much and our economy has suffered. We recognize our citizens need to work to support their families and we are encouraged by the Governor's announcement today.

We appreciate so much the partnerships and cooperation we have with all of these Mayors here in Blount County, and throughout this Region. We all want the best for our citizens. Balancing our economic concerns with the health of our citizens means we begin reopening our economy WHILE adhering to all recommended physical distancing, sanitizing and safety measures in place. Again, we encourage our Blount County citizens to move forward slowly, stay local, continue to be diligent, and continue to be considerate of your neighbors. As we try to regain some normalcy, let's all take our individual responsibility seriously to keep the spread of COVID-19 slow. We do not want to undo all the progress we have made under the Executive Orders and invite restrictions back on our citizens. Let's continue to do all the things that make Blount County the best place to live.

The fluid nature of the COVID-19 crisis requires the need to re-evaluate constantly. More information will be available as it progresses. To help keep our community informed, [this site](#) has been established for the public to find contact information for local governments, schools and public facilities. News and information will also be distributed through our local media outlets.

-- END--