

Covid-19 Industry Update 21

New PPP Loans, SVO Grant, NHC Tourism Webinar (Jan. 28), NCTIA Legislative Boot Camp (Jan. 21), New Visitor Research & More Industry News

January 20, 2021

Greetings to Travel Partners,

As 2021 brings hope for recovery with the imminent availability of vaccines on the horizon, our industry continues to meet the challenges inflicted by Covid-19. Your efforts to adapt, pivot, rise and survive are no less than heroic. As we continue to face and address difficult times, the Wilmington and Beaches Convention & Visitors Bureau shares the latest research, advocacy efforts, resources and news with partners and stakeholders.

CURRENT CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

On January 6, NC Governor Roy Cooper signed [Executive Order 188](#) that continues Phase 3 modified stay at home order until January 29, 2021, requiring people to stay at home between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. Also issued was a [Secretarial Directive](#) telling North Carolinians to stay home except for essential activities and avoid gathering, especially indoors, with people who do not live with you: [Executive Order 181 FAQs](#) and [Secretarial Directive FAQs](#)

Coronavirus Relief Bill Passes: On December 22, 2020 Congress passed a year-end funding bill that included the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Package. The legislation provides access to relief programs and offerings that will help the travel industry, including: Paycheck Protection Program; Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program; Live Venue Grant Program; Employee Retention Tax Credit; Coronavirus Relief Fund; [Grants for airports and concessionaire relief](#); Troubled Debt Restructuring; Airline Payroll Support Program; Unemployment Insurance; Business Meal Expense Deduction. A more [comprehensive summary can be found here](#).

New PPP Loans Provide Relief: A second round of Paycheck Protection Program loans provide another chance for relief for struggling small businesses. This time around there are changes to both the loan amounts and who will qualify. Restaurants and hotels will automatically be eligible to receive a loan of 3.5 times their total payroll amount. Second-time applicants have to show documentation of where the first round of funding went, and that they've had at least a 25% decline in revenue. The National Restaurant Association has created a PPP 2nd Draw User Manual: <https://restaurant.org/downloads/pdfs/advocacy/ppp-jan2021-update>

Shuttered Venue Operators Grant offers Emergency Assistance for Eligible Venues: The US Small Business Administration is overseeing the [Shuttered Venue Operators Grant](#). Applicants must have been in operation as of Feb. 29, 2020; and venue or promoter must not have received a PPP loan on or after Dec. 27, 2020. In addition, SVO is only open to small entities with up to 50 employees. The Shuttered Venue Operators (SVO) Grant program was established by The Economic Aid to Hard-Hit Small Businesses, Nonprofits, and Venues Act, signed into law on Dec. 27, 2020. The program includes \$15 billion in grants to shuttered

venues, to be administered by the Small Business Administration's Office of Disaster Assistance. The SBA is in the process of setting up the grant program and is not yet accepting applications. Small businesses who have suffered the greatest economic loss will be the first applications processed. Visit the [SBA website](#) for mor info on eligibility requirements and applications.

NC Restaurant & Lodging Association Partners with Operation PPE: [NCRLA](#) is partnering with [Operation PPE](#), an initiative that will offer free personal protection equipment to small businesses at no cost, including: face shields, touchless thermometers, hand sanitizer, and antibacterial soap. Operation PPE will host five events across the state and businesses are encouraged to indicate their desired quantities via online sign-up forms prior to the respective event(s) at which they plan to attend. Events and locations will be announced shortly thereafter with the goal of hosting drive-thru events in NC cities, including Wilmington. Please use this [Google form](#) to sign up to help Operation PPE to gauge interest and inventory. For more NCRLA news: www.ncrla.org.

WILMINGTON AND BEACHES CVB UPDATES:

- **Reminder of New Hanover County Tourism Webinar for Partners & Stakeholders (January 28, 10am):** The Wilmington and Beaches CVB will host a 90-minute Tourism Webinar on January 28 at 10am for industry partners and stakeholders that will address room occupancy tax revenues, upcoming tourism marketing plan, latest COVID research, new tourism website, and more. Guest speakers include Kim Hufham, President/CEO of the Wilmington and Beaches CVB; Kimberly Vince-Cruz, Vice President of Destination Analysts; Destination Marketing Agency French West Vaughan. **Register for the webinar via [this link](#).**
- **Reminder of Travel Industry Legislative Boot Camp (January 21, 2pm):** As a member of the NC Travel Industry Association [NCTIA], the Wilmington and Beaches CVB is pleased to share information about a free virtual one-hour legislative training session for the travel industry that is being offered free of charge as a Live Zoom event to NCTIA members and nonmembers. Training includes an update on the new biennium of the General Assembly, the unveiling of NCTIA's new legislative power map, and a discussion of issues that the Travel Industry faces in the new General Assembly. **Non-members may Register as a Guest at <https://nctia.travel/meet-reg1.php?mi=35194&id=21>**
- **Popular Count On Me NC Program Still Going Strong:** As Covid cases continue to rise, visitors are seeking businesses with safe practices. The [Count On Me NC](#) website is an increasingly effective tool to drive visitors who use it to find businesses that are committed to the highest standards of operation during Covid 19. If your business has not already completed the Count On Me NC free training, it only takes a half-hour to complete the module. Once completed, you can download the COMNC toolkit with certificates, logos, and visuals for display. You will also be added to the WilmingtonandBeaches.com [list and map](#) of partners with certificates. Can we count on you to increase the number of [Count On Me NC](#) participants in New Hanover County?
- **New Tourism Website Coming Soon to a Device Near You:** Be on the lookout for a new dynamic and immersive Wilmington and Beaches tourism website that will launch in the coming weeks.

NEW HANOVER COUNTY & CAPE FEAR MUSEUM ANNOUNCE VIRTUAL RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE: New Hanover County's Office of Diversity & Equity and Cape Fear Museum are partnering for a series of panel discussions with local historians and guests about the history of race, civil rights, and the role of social justice in the community's past, present, and future. This four-week virtual institute will take place each Tuesday evening in February from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Panelists will explore some of the ideas about race and racism that have shaped the community and what steps can be taken to promote social justice and equity. There is no cost to attend the Race & Social Justice Institute, but pre-registration is required. [Click here to sign up now!](#)

SEA-TECH CULINARY & HOSPITALITY SHOWCASE SEEKS BUSINESSES: The Southeast Area Technical High School [SEA-Tech] Culinary & Hospitality program seeks businesses to provide demonstrations and vocational displays during its spring Showcase for students pursuing studies and internships in hospitality and tourism. The one-hour SEA-Tech Culinary & Hospitality Showcase is scheduled to take place on two dates: March 16 (9th grade) & March 18 [10th & 11th grades), from 3:15pm-4:15pm each day: Contact Brandi Berry, Career Development Coordinator, for details: brandi.barry@nhcs.net.

DOWNTOWN ALIVE UPDATE: Downtown Business Alliance's outdoor street dining and shopping initiative, [Downtown Alive](#), was so successful in 2020 that DBA is working toward a 2021 parklet program that seeks a long-term solution to allow for attractive extended seating that businesses can opt-in to participate. A proposal is being prepared for City Council consideration.

NEW TRAVEL RESEARCH:

[Longwoods International COVID-19 Travel Sentiment Study - Wave 28](#)

[Destination Analysts Update on Coronavirus' Impact on American Travel-Week of January 18](#)

[Smith Travel Research – U.S. hotel results - Week ending January 9](#)

[The Harris Poll COVID-19 Survey - Wave 45](#)

[U.S. Travel Association: Weekly Coronavirus Impact on U.S. Travel Expenditures](#) (Dec. 17)

REOPENING & SAFETY GUIDANCE

The Wilmington and Beaches [COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Resources page](#) includes a Travel Industry [Reopening & Safety Guidance section](#) with links to trade and government resources that our industry can use to reopen and stay open safely.

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Thank you. We invite your feedback to help the CVB respond to industry needs and concerns.

Be well and stay tuned,