

COVID-19 - Industry Update 14: April 30, 2020

Greetings to Travel Partners,

This has been a busy week for updates and research that affect our industry. The Wilmington and Beaches Convention and Visitors Bureau continues to share the latest COVID-19 updates, resources and research.

Current Update

In conjunction with several other industry partners, and at the request of the White House, the **U.S. Travel Association** is leading the development of a set of safety protocols that can be adopted industry-wide. U.S. Travel is collaborating with member organizations in every industry segment and partner associations, as well as medical experts, as they work to make Americans feel safe throughout every part of their travel experience. Stay tuned for more details when they become available next week.

NCRLA is asking the hospitality industry to Take Action Today to help save restaurants by asking lawmakers to allow temporary cocktails to-go/delivery during the pandemic state of emergency. The floor vote is expected today so if you support this measure, taking action now is key to its success. Here's a link to the form: <https://p2a.co/Elzyt5n>

NC Restaurant & Lodging Association (NCRLA) is partnering with NCDHHS, NCSU and VisitNC to create COVID-19 Training Modules for restaurants and attractions. Once developed, restaurants and hospitality businesses will commit to best practices (e.g. sanitation, social distancing, etc.) and customers make a promise to adhere to social distancing and avoid dining out or traveling when sick. Upon completion of the training, restaurants and attractions earn a health & safety certification they can display publicly. This certification will ensure customers that the business is taking necessary steps to protect employees and guests. Stay tuned for details as the program and modules are developed.

On April 23, N.C. Governor Roy Cooper extended Stay at Home Order through May 8, 2020

(<https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO135-Extensions.pdf>), along with a three-phase plan for lifting restrictions based on virus trends: <https://governor.nc.gov/news/governor-extends-stay-home-order-through-may-8-plans-three-phase-lifting-restrictions-based>

On April 27, the Towns of Carolina Beach and Kure Beach opened limited beach access for individual, non-stationary exercise with limitations and parking closures to the general public through May 8, 2020, unless otherwise extended. Details:

Carolina Beach: www.carolinabeach.org/Home/Components/News/News/154/16

Kure Beach: www.townofkurebeach.org/alerts/important-notice-regarding-beach-restrictions

On April 28, the Town of Wrightsville Beach extended limited beach access for non-stationary exercise, the closure of all parking for beach access, and the prohibition of all short-term rentals until May 8, 2020 at 5pm, or until rescinded.

On April 27, the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners announced that they will not extend the county's local restrictions put in place in response to COVID-19, set to expire on April 29 at 5 p.m. The announcement went on to explain that "The City of Wilmington and the towns of Carolina, Kure, and Wrightsville beach may continue with additional restrictions that limit access to beaches, short-term rentals, facility openings, and more – based on their individual communities." The County remains under the State's current Stay at Home Order. <https://news.nhcgov.com/news-releases/2020/04/nhc-lifts-local-restrictions>.

On the morning of April 29, mayors for the City of Wilmington, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach and Wrightsville Beach held a joint press briefing to announce the extension of some County-wide restrictions that were set to expire. You can watch the announcement here: www.facebook.com/cityofwilmington/videos/253680049152434/

- On April 29, the City of Wilmington issued a Proclamation that retains and extends six of the nine former restrictions, applicable within the city limits. Proclamation details: www.wilmingtonnc.gov/home/showdocument?id=11810.
- **City of Wilmington Short Term Rentals:** On April 29, the City of Wilmington issued a Proclamation amending its State of Emergency that orders hotels, motels and short-term rentals within the City limits to remain closed for non-essential purposes. Extended stay hotels or rental properties may continue to offer lodging for terms of no less than 28 days. This order will remain in place until May 4 at 5pm, unless otherwise amended. For additional information, the City of

Wilmington has developed a **Frequently Asked Questions** sheet (by category) to answer specific questions about local restrictions: www.wilmingtonnc.gov/home/showdocument?id=11582

- During the press briefing the mayors of the Beach Towns thanked residents for their cooperation and recapped restriction extensions that were approved in recent days by their Town Council members. Each Beach Town amended their respective State of Emergency orders—Carolina Beach (4/24/20), Kure Beach (4/27/20) and Wrightsville Beach (4/28/20)—to extend their previous bans of Short Term Rentals (hotels, motels, short term rentals) through May 8 at 5pm, unless otherwise amended. Details:

Carolina Beach: www.carolinabeach.org/Home/Components/News/News/152/16

Kure Beach: www.townofkurebeach.org/news/information-continued-emergency-meeting-april-27-2020

Wrightsville Beach: www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com/DocumentCenter/View/3661/Press-Release-COVID-19-4282020

New Travel Research:

Destination Analysts Update on Coronavirus' Impact on American Travel (week of April 27, 2020)

www.destinationanalysts.com/blog-post-update-on-coronavirus-impact-on-american-travel-week-of-april-27th. Of special interest to tourism businesses, is the section about what the future will look like for the travel industry. To get a gauge on this, Destination Analysts polled a recent webinar audience and asked **which common business practices they expect in the coming year**. Here are the results: www.destinationanalysts.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Common-Business-Practices-Expected.jpg

Weekly Coronavirus Impact on Travel Expenditures in the U.S. (April 22, 2020

update): www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/media_root/document/Coronavirus_WeeklyImpacts_04.23.20.pdf

Longwoods International COVID-19 Travel Sentiment Study–Wave 7 – Despite Some States Starting to Reopen, Americans Not Ready to Travel Yet (April 28, 2020): <https://longwoods-intl.com/news-press-release/covid-19-travel-sentiment-study-wave-7>

Smith Travel Research – U.S. Hotel Results (week ending April 18, 2020): <https://str.com/press-release/str-us-hotel-results-week-ending-18-april>

The Harris Poll COVID-19 tracker – Wave 9 (April 25-26): <https://theharrispoll.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/The-Insight-Wave-9.pdf>

Adara COVID-19 Traveler Trends (updated frequently): <https://adara.com/traveler-trends-tracker/>

Arrivalist Daily Travel Index (updated frequently): www.arrivalist.com/daily-travel-index/

Below are updates from state and county officials, followed by CVB updates and helpful links.

State of North Carolina Updates:

All COVID-19 Executive Orders: www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina/executive-orders

N.C. Dept. of Health and Human Services COVID-19 updates: www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina

New Hanover County Updates:

New Hanover County State of Emergency: https://health.nhcgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3-28-2020_COVID-19_Prohibitions_Restrictions.pdf

New Hanover County Expands Testing Beginning April 27: <https://health.nhcgov.com/your-environment/public-health/coronavirus/screening-testing/>

New Hanover County Public Health updates: <https://health.nhcgov.com/your-environment/public-health/coronavirus/>

New Hanover County Reduce Risk Resources in English and Spanish: <https://health.nhcgov.com/your-environment/public-health/coronavirus/reducerisk/>

Wilmington and Beaches CVB Update:

Marketing/Communications

Preparation for National Travel & Tourism Week Observance (May 3-9, 2020)

- Finalized videos for visitors and local industry
- Submitted Proclamation for County Commissioner consideration at May 4 meeting
- Developing industry resources – industry outreach
- Drafting social media posts – visitor outreach
- Drafting local press release – community outreach

Ways You Can Assist the CVB:

- Share your post-COVID-19 safety policies and protocols. Send to cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.
- Share virtual events, activities, tours. Send to cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.
- Inform CVB of closings, re-openings, occupancy levels and meeting/event cancellations
- Respond to CVB surveys (answers are confidential; we report total percentages, trends)

Wilmington and Beaches COVID-19 Resource Pages:

- COVID-19 Hospitality Employer & Employee Information (updated frequently): www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/covid-19-hospitality-resources
- CVB COVID-19 Visitor Information: www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/covid-19-visitor-info
- Virtual Tours and Events: www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/virtual-tours

TRAVEL INDUSTRY UPDATES & RESOURCES

N.C. Restaurant Association shares the National Restaurant Association COVID-19 Reopening Guidance for the Restaurant Industry (April 23, 2020): https://ncrla.help/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NRA-REOPEN_GUIDANCE_CoBranded_NC.pdf

Visit N.C. is hosting tourism webinars related to COVID-19, including last week's presentation on "Visit NC Legislative Updates" and this week's presentation on "Research Insights into the American Traveler and NC Lodging Industry." The webinars can be accessed online at <http://partners.visitnc.com/COVID-19>.

N.C. Travel Industry Association Newsletter (April 20-24, 2020): <https://nctia.travel/news.php#Newsletter>

U.S. Travel Association Guide to CARES Act Eligibility for the travel industry: www.ustravel.org/toolkit/covid-19-cares-act-relief-resources

American Hotel & Lodging Association's Hospitality for Hope Initiative www.ahla.com/ahla-hospitality-hope-initiative and Toolkit: www.ahla.com/sites/default/files/hotels_supporting_healthcare_covid_toolkit-4.23.20_0.pdf

American Bus Association is compiling a Tour Supplier Database to assist tour operators in accessing information on the status of destinations, hotels and attractions, as well to build a database of contacts. This information will be shared on ABA's COVID-19 Tourism Strong web page www.busesmoveamerica.com/tourism-strong. If your hotel or attraction welcomes bus groups, here's a link to the form: www.surveymonkey.com/r/TourismStrong.

Sojern, a company that specializes in traveler path-to-purchase data, recently hosted a webinar with tips for how attractions can prepare for recovery: www.sojern.com/blog/covid-19-insights-on-travel-impact-attractions-19/

US Bartenders Guild COVID-19 Resources: <https://www.usbg.org/help/covid-19-resources>

ADDITIONAL COVID-19 RESOURCES:

Below, please find some additional COVID-19 resources. To see previously listed resources, please refer to past Industry Updates or you can access a complete list via the Partner Extranet.

LOCAL, STATE & NATIONAL ASSISTANCE:

Federal Unemployment Assistance Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Tip Sheet. Beginning April 24, N.C. independent contractors and self-employed workers out of work because of COVID-19 can apply for federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance: https://files.nc.gov/des/press-release/files/pua_tipsheet_apr24_m.pdf

US Bartenders Guild Foundation – Bartender’s Emergency Assistance Program: www.usbgfoundation.org/beap

One Fair Wage Emergency Fund: <https://ofwemergencyfund.org/>

Small Business Administration resumed processing PPP applications on Monday, April 27. For a list of Frequently Asked Questions about these loans: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Paycheck-Protection-Program-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) updated job openings across the state: <https://edpnc.com/north-carolina-immediate-employment-opportunities/>

CDC & FEDERAL GUIDANCE

CDC Guidance for Building Water Systems when Reopening. Ensure the safety of your building water system and devices after a prolonged shutdown: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html

Center for Disease Control (CDC) Travel Health (updated frequently): wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel

CDC Expands COVID-19 Symptoms: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html

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Thank you for keeping the CVB informed. Your feedback is very important and helps us to respond to industry needs and concerns as the situation evolves.

Be well, keep safe and stay tuned