

## **COVID-19 - Industry Update 8: March 25, 2020**

Greetings to Travel Partners,

As we individually and collectively navigate the weeks ahead, please rest assured that as crisis gives way to recovery that the Wilmington and Beaches CVB will be taking the lead on working with local stakeholders and travel partners on tourism recovery efforts. Until then, here are the most recent industry updates.

### **Current Updates**

The Town of Carolina Beach Discontinues All Short Term Rentals (less than 90 days, including vacation rentals and hotels/inns) effective 2:00 p.m. on Friday, March 27, 2020, per Proclamation 20-2217:

[www.carolinabeach.org/home/showdocument?id=1248](http://www.carolinabeach.org/home/showdocument?id=1248)

The Town of Kure Beach Discontinues All Short Term Rentals (less than 90 days, including vacation rentals and hotels/inns) effective at 12:00pm on Saturday, March 28, 2020 (with some exceptions), per the amended State of Emergency (Section 7):

[https://www.townofkurebeach.org/sites/default/files/uploads/covid-19\\_declaration\\_signed\\_march\\_24\\_2020.pdf](https://www.townofkurebeach.org/sites/default/files/uploads/covid-19_declaration_signed_march_24_2020.pdf)

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

### **State of North Carolina Update:**

On March 23, Governor Roy Cooper implemented additional orders for North Carolina that mandates that some businesses where the public gathers are required to close effective on Wednesday, March 25 at 5 p.m. For details on businesses that are affected by this mandate, see Executive Order #120:

<https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO120.pdf>

All COVID-19 Executive Orders: <https://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](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina)

### **New Hanover County Updates:**

On March 24, New Hanover County identified its first case of community transmission of COVID-19:

<https://health.nhcgov.com/your-environment/public-health/coronavirus/>

On March 22, New Hanover County updated public playground guidance and asked the community for donations of personal protective supplies and equipment: <https://news.nhcgov.com/news-releases/2020/03/795159/>

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

City of Wilmington Updates: [www.wilmingtonnc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.wilmingtonnc.gov/coronavirus)

### **Wilmington and Beaches CVB Update:**

\*Social Media Messaging Tips for Travel Partners:

*Given the current state of affairs, the CVB is sharing a few top-level social media tips to keep in mind. We encourage you to continue sharing content on your social channels during this time, keeping in mind the following:*

- Remember social distancing recommendations when posting – Avoid showing images of people touching or being close to each other.
- Be sensitive in your captions – Pay close attention to your captions/messaging and make sure you aren't making any mentions of closeness, touching or in-person activities. You don't need to specifically call out COVID-19 in every post, but should keep posts inspirational and directed to future travel/visitation.
- If you are open for business, share your availabilities and/or alternate offerings.
- If sharing and posting older images pre-COVID-19, include a note at the bottom of all posts that says “\*Photo taken before social distancing guidelines were in effect.” Particularly do so if sharing images of people on the beaches or at places that might be closed.
- [Beware of virtue signaling](#) – It's okay to promote your company values if you are backing them with actionable items; be sure to take a customer-centric approach.
- Avoid driving physical traffic to real-world locations – Instead, think of ways you can drive virtual traffic; ex., craft packages to ship or offer free shipping for your customers, or run a special on gift cards so that customers can come back at another time.
- Find creative ways to bring people together virtually – Fitness locations can consider virtual workout classes; restaurants/breweries could host a virtual happy hour.
- According to a recent poll, half of Americans (50.9%) feel that persons traveling now should be ashamed. Be very careful of your messaging at this time.

### *Marketing Update*

- The CVB is meeting with the agency teams to strategize a united destination marketing campaign to be prepared for when it is safe to travel again.
- The CVB is moving forward with our regular research plan to conduct a visitor profile study given that most people are working from home in hopes this will garner more responses and to ensure that 2019 travel experiences are fresh on their mind.
- The CVB continues to work on the new website development in hopes to stay on track for a December launch.

### *Ways You Can Assist the CVB:*

- Inform CVB of your business closings / re-openings / occupancy levels
- Inform CVB of meeting/event cancellations due to COVID-19
- \*Respond to CVB surveys (answers are confidential; we report total percentages, trends)
- Share Coronavirus Best Practices (including virtual activities/tours) with Hannah Almeter, Communications/PR Specialist: [halmeter@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:halmeter@wilmingtonandbeaches.com).

**CVB COVID-19 Visitor Information:** [www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/covid-19-visitor-info/](http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/covid-19-visitor-info/)

### **More Industry Updates:**

**N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association:** To better serve the hospitality industry's needs, NCRLA has launched a new and improved COVID-19 microsite that is more organized and searchable. Here you will find excellent Coronavirus resources specifically designed for North Carolina's hospitality industry: [www.ncrla-covid-19.org](http://www.ncrla-covid-19.org).

**Longwoods International Travel Study:** According to a Longwoods International tracking study (March 18-19) of American travelers and the coronavirus pandemic, 75% of them are changing their travel plans for the next six months because of coronavirus, up from 58% a week ago. For details and highlights on the travel studies:

Wave 2: <https://longwoods-intl.com/news-press-release/covid-19-travel-sentiment-study-wave-2>.

Wave 1: <https://longwoods-intl.com/news-press-release/covid-19-and-travel-sentiment-survey>

**Destination Analysts Coronavirus Traveler Sentiment Study:** [www.destinationanalysts.com/update-on-coronavirus-impact-on-american-travel-week-of-march-22nd/](http://www.destinationanalysts.com/update-on-coronavirus-impact-on-american-travel-week-of-march-22nd/)

**N.C. Travel Industry Association newsletter:** <https://nctia.travel/news.php#Newsletter>

**Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Coronavirus Resources for Businesses:**  
[www.wilmingtonchamber.org/coronavirus-covid19-resources-for-business](http://www.wilmingtonchamber.org/coronavirus-covid19-resources-for-business)

**American Hotel & Lodging Association Coronavirus Facts:** [www.ahla.com/facts-about-coronavirus](http://www.ahla.com/facts-about-coronavirus)

**National Restaurant Association Coronavirus Information:** [www.restaurant.org/covid19](http://www.restaurant.org/covid19)

**U.S. Travel Association Travel Action Alert:** <https://p2a.co/gbHyHOL>

**Meeting Professionals International Coronavirus General Tool Kit:** <https://www.mpi.org/tools/coronavirus>.

### **Helpful Links & Information:**

**NHC Public Health Coronavirus Call Center:** 7 days a week (7:30am-6pm): 910-798-6800

**Center for Disease Control (CDC):** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

**NC Dept. of Health and Human Services Public Health Call Line:** 1-866-462-3821 (24 hrs.)

**Small Business Administration Loan Resources:** [www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources](http://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources)

**Golden Leaf Foundation and NC Rural Center NC COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Loan Program:**  
<https://ncrapidrecovery.org>.

Application: <https://loans.threadcap.org/agreements/new>.

**Families First Coronavirus Response Act:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6201>

**New Hanover County Disaster Coalition disaster recovery resources:**  
<https://www.newhanoverdisastercoalition.org/covid-19-updates.html>.

**NC Department of Commerce Employment Security Application Form:** <https://des.nc.gov/apply-unemployment/>

**Additional COVID-19 resources, research studies, etc. are available via the Partner Extranet.**

### **Accessing the Partner Extranet:**

1. Go to <https://wilmingtonnc.extranet.simpleviewcrm.com/>

2. Username is the email we have in our database associated with your name.
3. Password is whatever you chose.
4. The home page gives instructions on how to access the COVID-19 information.
5. If you have forgotten your password, the system will prompt you to change it.

6. If you do not have an email address or were using someone's who has left your business, you will have to contact Karla Thompson ([systems@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:systems@wilmingtonandbeaches.com)) to request new login credentials.

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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,**