

**CITY OF GROVETOWN
COVID-19 EMERGENCY ORDINANCE
ORDINANCE NO. 2020-03-05**

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GROVETOWN, GEORGIA UNDER SECTION 2.24 OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF GROVETOWN, GEORGIA TO PROVIDE FOR REGULATIONS WITHIN THE CITY OF GROVETOWN, GEORGIA DURING THE PUBLIC EMERGENCY OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS DISEASE GLOBAL PANDEMIC; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, in the judgment of the governing authority, there exist emergency circumstances located in the entire city limits of Grovetown requiring extraordinary and immediate corrective actions for the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Grovetown;

WHEREAS, the world has experienced a deep humanitarian crisis due to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, as of March 11, 2020, COVID-19 is officially a global pandemic according to the World Health Organization (WHO);

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency in response to the outbreak of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, Governor Brian Kemp has declared a public health emergency in the State of Georgia as of March 14, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, O.C.G.A. § 38-3-27 through O.C.G.A. § 38-3-28 and § 38-3-54 through § 38-3-56 authorize the governing authority to provide emergency management within the City of Grovetown;

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-6, during an emergency, O.C.G.A. § 38-3-1 through § 38-3-64 are to be liberally construed to effectuate their purposes;

WHEREAS, the duly elected governing authority of the City of Grovetown, Georgia is authorized under Article 9, Section 2, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the State of Georgia to adopt reasonable ordinances to protect and improve the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City of Grovetown, Georgia;

WHEREAS, the duly elected governing authority of the City of Grovetown, Georgia is the Mayor and City Council thereof;

WHEREAS, Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) Section 36-35-3 provides cities the power to adopt clearly reasonable ordinances, resolutions or regulations relating to the cities' property and affairs;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2.24 of the City Charter, the governing authority desires to adopt an emergency ordinance to protect the life, health and safety of persons and property during the declared statewide public health emergency;

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued guidance on the emerging and rapidly evolving situation of COVID-19, including how to protect oneself from becoming sick, recommending use of social distancing in order to prevent the continued spread of the virus globally;

WHEREAS, the CDC expects that additional cases of COVID-19 will be identified in the coming days, including more cases in the United States, and that person-to-person spread is likely to occur;

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the CDC advised that during the next fifteen (15) days, all events in the United States of ten (10) or more people should be cancelled or held virtually;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the guidance of the CDC, the City of Los Angeles, California, the City of Seattle, Washington, the City of Atlanta, Georgia, Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, the Consolidated Government of Augusta, Georgia and the states of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut have imposed temporary restrictions on the operations of businesses to stop large numbers of people from gathering and staying in close proximity;

WHEREAS, the current number of COVID-19 cases in Georgia is 620 with 25 deaths and those numbers are increasing daily;

WHEREAS, medical professionals have advised that if COVID-19 continues to spread in Columbia County and the rest of Georgia, including the CSRA, at a rate comparable to that rate of spread in other affected areas, it may greatly strain the resources and capabilities of county and municipal governments, including public health agencies, that provide essential services for containing and mitigating the spread of contagious diseases, such as COVID-19, and the situation may become too large in scope to be handled in its entirety by the normal county and municipal operating services in some parts of this State, and this situation may spread to other parts of this State;

WHEREAS, it has been evidenced that people in Columbia County continue to congregate in large numbers in enclosed spaces where social distancing cannot be effectuated;

WHEREAS, to prevent or minimize injury to people resulting from this pandemic, the Mayor and City Council find that certain actions are required, including but not limited to, the social distancing measures set forth herein.


THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GROVETOWN HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

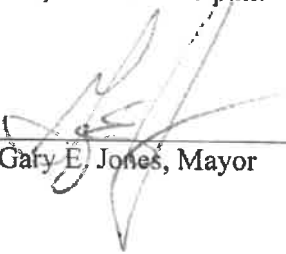
- (a) That there exists an actual or threatened occurrence of a disaster or emergency, which may result in the large-scale loss of life, injury, property damage or destruction or in the major

disruption of routine community affairs, business or governmental operations in the City of Grovetown.

- (b) That, all public or private Community Gatherings of more than ten (10) people anywhere within the city limits of Grovetown, Georgia are prohibited for the duration of this Ordinance. A “Community Gathering” is defined as any indoor or outdoor event or convening, subject to the exceptions below, that brings together or is likely to bring together ten (10) or more persons at the same time in a single room or other single confined or enclosed space, such as an auditorium, stadium (indoor or outdoor), tent arena or event center, music venue, meeting hall, conference center, large cafeteria, or any other confined indoor or outdoor space. A Community Gathering does not include the following or similar uses, so long as persons attending the Community Gathering are generally not within six (6) feet of each other for extended periods: (1) spaces where persons may be in transit or waiting for transit such as airports, bus stations, or terminals; (2) office or manufacturing space, child-care facilities, residential buildings or any type of temporary sheltering or housing; (3) grocery stores, convenience stores/gasoline filling stations or pharmacies; and (4) hospitals or medical facilities.
- (c) Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, the following business-use categories will be regulated as follows: (1) restaurants open to the public shall close except to provide take-out, drive-through, or curbside service to include alcoholic beverages in sealed containers which they are otherwise licensed to dispense; (2) all business locations with on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverage licenses which are not also restaurants shall be closed for business; (3) all establishments providing body care services which require close physical contact between the provider and client such as barbering, hair design, cosmetology, esthetics, massage therapy (except for medically licensed physical therapy), tattooing, or nail care shall be closed for business; (4) all indoor recreation facilities, to include gyms, health studios, indoor amusement facilities, bowling alleys, pool halls and theatres shall be closed for business; and (5) all other retail sales establishments (not including grocery stores, convenience stores/gasoline filling stations or pharmacies addressed above) will be permitted to remain open subject to the following restrictions: businesses having less than 30,000 square feet of retail space shall have no more than ten (10) customers on their premises at any one time, and businesses with more than 30,000 square feet of retail space shall have no more than fifty (50) customers on their premises at any one time; and customers shall generally not be within six (6) feet of each other for extended periods.
- (d) Cafeterias in hospitals, nursing homes, or similar facilities shall not be subject to these restrictions and may continue normal operations.
- (e) This Ordinance shall become effective beginning on March 24, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. and shall remain in effect until April 5, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. unless extended by further action of the Mayor and City Council and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the City of Grovetown, Georgia, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

Read, passed and adopted this 23rd day of March, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

Attested by: 
Roxanne Brown
City Clerk


Gary E. Jones, Mayor

One reading: March 23, 2020