



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

May 11, 2020

NOTICE

Reopening of Kentucky/Mississippi/North Carolina/Puerto Rico

The reopening of the economies and various other aspects of the States and Territory listed below has begun. The guiding principles behind the reopening include protecting public health, maintaining health care readiness, capability of reliable and accessible testing and the importance of prioritizing public-private collaboration. For comprehensive information regarding each state's plan for reopening, please visit the links provided.

Kentucky: On April 29 Governor Andy Beshear laid out his first phase of a plan for re-opening several portions of Kentucky's economy. In order to re-open, various businesses must follow public health guidelines set forth by industries and the state in its "Healthy at Work" initiative. Under phase one of the plan, manufacturing companies can re-open their doors on May 11, and horse racing can occur without fans. On May 20, places of worship can hold in-person services, and retail shops can welcome back customers. And on May 25, 10-person or less social gatherings can occur, and barbershops can re-open doors.

On May 7 Governor Beshear announced Phase 2 of his plan for reopening Kentucky's economy, which includes restaurants, would begin in late May. Under the plan, restaurants can reopen their doors to in-person traffic on May 22 at 33% capacity indoors and unlimited seating outdoors, so long as they follow social distancing guidelines. Beshear also announced that movie theaters, fitness centers, campgrounds, childcare centers and certain youth sports will be able to reopen under public health guidelines in June. The State's reopening guidance is available at: [Kentucky Reopening Order](#)

Mississippi: Gov. Tate Reeves announced May 8 that salons, barbershops and gyms will be allowed to resume operations on May 11. He also extended his "Safer At Home" order, which allows for some restrictions to be lifted, for another two

weeks. Reeves allowed restaurants and parks to reopen May 7. Among other changes: up to 20 people will be allowed to gather for outdoor activities, but gatherings are still limited to 10 people or less for indoor activities. Reeves on April 24 issued an executive order for Mississippians that he calls "Safer-at-Home," which allowed most retail stores to open with certain guidelines, but kept other businesses closed. It allowed clothing, gift and other retail locations to open, but owners and managers must take precautions such as sending home sick employees, wearing masks in common areas, using proper sanitation procedures, providing hand sanitizer for customers and limiting the number of customers at any given time.

Reeves said the businesses that will not be allowed to open are ones that generally involve close, interpersonal contact, such as movie theaters, museums, casinos, entertainment venues and gyms. The States reopening guidance is available at:

[Mississippi Reopening Order.](#)

North Carolina: Starting on May 8, North Carolina began lifting certain restrictions as the state transitions to Phase 1 of a three-phase plan. Gov. Roy Cooper previously said Phase 1 is expected to last two to three weeks, or until at least May 22. If data trends look promising, the state would move into Phase 2, which includes the lifting of the stay-at-home order and a limited reopening of other businesses and churches with reduced capacity.

Under Phase 1, people will be allowed to leave their homes for commercial activity and to go to any business that is open. The order removes the distinction between essential and nonessential businesses. Retail businesses can open at 50% capacity and will be required to see that customers are at least 6 feet apart, the release says. Businesses also will be required to screen workers for COVID-19 symptoms, perform frequent cleanings and provide hand sanitizer when available. But many businesses will remain closed.

Restaurants may not open for seated customers and may operate only in the capacity of takeout, drive-thru and delivery. Bars, gyms and personal care

businesses, such as barber shops and hair salons, also will remain closed. Likewise, entertainment venues will stay closed. The State's reopening guidance is available at: [North Carolina Reopening Guidance](#)

Puerto Rico: A medical task force appointed by Governor Wanda Vázquez Garced submitted recommendations on April 25, suggesting that Puerto Rico abide by strict social distancing and hygienic measures for 18 to 24 months, absent of a vaccine or proven treatment for the virus. The task force recommends a gradual reopening in four stages, broken down by the infection rate per industry. In the first tier, scheduled to start on May 11, are construction, mining, computing, agriculture and manufacturing. Rather than provide specific target dates for the stages, it recommended enacting each by monitoring the rate of transmission on the island.

On May 1, Vázquez Garced extended a lockdown order through May 25. It allows residents to leave their homes only from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. for essential activities. After 7 p.m., a daily curfew goes into effect until the following morning. The latest extension allows residents to walk, jog, run, ride bicycles and exercise, while observing social distancing measures from 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Puerto Rico's reopening guidance is available at: [Puerto Rico Reopening Plan](#)

Questions or Issues:

Inquiries concerning the impacts of COVID-19 and the associated responsive effort on the operation of foreign missions in the United States should be transmitted by electronic mail to OFM-EmergencyMgt@state.gov.

Resources:

Compilation of circular diplomatic notes and notices released by OFM concerning COVID-19: <https://www.state.gov/circular-notes-and-notices-covid-19/>

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