

COVID-19

Georgia Department of Economic Development: COVID-19 Updates and Information

Last updated April 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Read these guidelines: [Should My Business Remain Open?](#)

*****MISSION ALERT:** GDEcD is supporting Governor Kemp's call for Georgia **Manufacturers and Distributors to help with critical health care supply needs**. If your business can provide, produce, distribute, store – or quickly be repurposed to create – items included in the list of vital projects in the following form, we ask you to complete and submit it as soon as possible:

<http://www.georgia.org/covid19response>.***

Critical Health Care Supply Donations: If you would like to **donate small quantities** of critical health care supplies, we encourage you to share them directly within your community to help with local needs for organizations responding to COVID-19 such as: hospitals, nursing homes, first responders, community food banks, distribution centers, grocery stores, and other essential services. A source to find healthcare facilities that are in need of medical supplies is Health Connect South – to visit their website: [click here](#).

Governor Kemp's April 2 Executive Order:

On April 2, Governor Kemp signed an [executive order](#) requiring residents and visitors of the state of Georgia to "shelter in place," effective April 3 at 6 p.m. through April 13, 2020, in line with the state's public health emergency order, to ensure uniformity across the state. Gov. Kemp also signed an executive order on April 1, closing Georgia Public Schools through the end of the 2019 - 2020 school year.

Gov. Kemp's executive order supplants any local ordinances or orders related to COVID-19 that have been adopted since March 1, 2020, including all other shelter-in-place orders, so long as the Governor's executive order remains in effect.

Gov. Kemp's "Executive Order to Ensure a Safe and Healthy Georgia" includes federal guidance to determine "critical infrastructure" from the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), included on pages 7 - 19 of the state's "Statewide Shelter In Place Handout" [here](#).

Read these guidelines: [Should My Business Remain Open?](#)

Please read the above guidelines **in their entirety** to understand how your business is impacted by this order, as well as to help *you* make a **self-determination** as to whether your business is "critical infrastructure." Additional information is available in "Frequently Asked Questions" regarding the executive order [HERE](#).

If after carefully reading the guidelines, you are unclear as to whether your business meets the guidelines in Governor Kemp's executive order as defined by "critical infrastructure," please complete [this form](#). GDEcD is currently working to evaluate business requests only and will respond as quickly as possible. Wherever possible, GDEcD will endeavor to issue additional guidance concerning whether categories of businesses are considered "critical infrastructure," rather than responding to individual businesses.

For individuals, a letter is not needed from an employer or the government to prove that you fall into one of the exceptions for Essential Services, Necessary Travel, Critical Infrastructure, or Minimum Basic Operations.

Additional tips for retails, consumers:

On April 5, Gov. Kemp issued guidance with the American Transaction Processors Coalition, Georgia Retail Association, and Georgia Food Industry Association regarding the use of PIN numbers and other best practices at points of purchase to help fight the spread of COVID-19.

Consumer Tips:

- If a contactless payment option is available (e.g., Apple Pay, or tap and pay), use it.
- Clean your payment cards using soap, hand sanitizer, or alcohol after each use.
- Maintain control of your card, whenever possible, rather than handing it to the merchant.
- If asked for a signature, PIN, or other information at the payment terminal, use your own pen (for

- Follow manufacturer guidelines to protect and care for payment terminals.
- Use 60% or higher alcohol-based hand sanitizer, card reader cleaners, alcohol-based disinfectant wipes (NO BLEACH), or glass cleaner.
- Clean checkout and payment terminal area frequently (or after each transaction, if possible). Consider all checkout touch points (e.g., payment terminal including PIN pad, check lane counter and merchandise dividers, self-checkout lanes).
- When cleaning the terminal, do not clean the electrical connections and plugs.
- Never spray any product directly onto the terminal. Use a cloth or wipe that has been sprayed instead.

Governor Kemp's shelter in place order allows for the suspension of the use of PIN pads, PIN entry devices, electronic capture signature, and any other credit card receipt signature requirements if it is permitted by underlying credit card agency and company agreements. Retailers should ensure EBT card users can continue to access PIN pads to enter this information during transactions.

More about GDEcD's response:

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) is working closely with state, federal and global partners to confront the evolving COVID-19 pandemic.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development has temporarily closed its physical office locations in Atlanta while some have resumed normal operations around the globe, as dictated by local regulations. Telework has been implemented for some employees, including in the State of Georgia, and non-essential travel has been suspended, following Governor Kemp's orders and based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance.

As we proceed through an uncertain time, GDEcD remains dedicated to our vital mission of supporting economic development across the entire range of our services. To keep up with more of how we're carrying out our mission and efforts dedicated to COVID-19, visit our [digital newsroom](#).

In addition to leading the charge to identify critical health care supplies to support the state's COVID-19 response, at GDEcD, our:

- [Centers of Innovation](#) are in discussions with companies in each of its corresponding focus industries (aerospace, energy, information technology, logistics, and manufacturing) to identify

- **Georgia Council for the Arts** continues to provide grant funding, programs and access to resources to support the vitality and sustainability of the arts community statewide.
- **Global Commerce** division continues to advance projects by hosting “virtual visits” with companies from across the world.
- **International Relations** division is working across all divisions and in conjunction with our Georgia and Southeast-based Consular Corps to share information with consulates and their communities and support all of the State’s international partners and business.
- **International Trade** division is holding trade calls with Georgia businesses and our international representatives around the world to keep global business moving. For the division’s latest update, [click here](#).
- **Regional Project Managers** in our Global Commerce division are working with communities across the state to ensure GDEcD is providing the resources necessary to navigate the challenges and plan for future growth.
- **Rural Georgia Initiatives** division continues partnering with rural communities by connecting businesses and local governments with state and federal agencies for support. For the department’s latest update, [click here](#).
- **Tourism** division is actively working with travel partners to assess current needs and assist in recovery strategies.

We hope that the information included below will provide useful resources for Georgians seeking information from Georgia’s business community.

For the latest Georgia information on COVID-19:

- **Georgia Department of Public Health**: Twitter and Facebook: @GaDPH
- **Governor Brian P. Kemp**: Twitter and Facebook: @GovKemp

Health and Employee Wellness

If you believe that you are sick with COVID-19, follow these [instructions from the CDC](#).

If you have an employee who tests positive for COVID-19, contact the Georgia Department of Public Health at 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584).

For updates and tips on how to prepare for yourself and your family, call the Georgia Coronavirus Hotline at 1-844-442-2681.



resources as the arts community and nonprofits face the effects of COVID-19. The page includes news and updates on affected GCA Grants and other resources. Please note, nonprofit organizations are [eligible to apply](#) for SBA Economic Impact Disaster Loans.

Automotive

Motor carriers operating in Georgia are subject to updated regulations related to Governor Kemp's March 14 [Public Health State of Emergency Declaration](#). For details specific to the motor carrier industry, which are in effect until April 15, [click here](#).

Film

In addition to Deputy Commissioner Lee Thomas' [blog post](#) on COVID-19's impacts on the film and television industry in Georgia, additional resources for screen and entertainment industry professionals affected by COVID-19 can be found [online here](#).

International Consular Services

While most Consular offices in Atlanta are closed to the public during COVID-19, they are using their social media platforms to communicate. Many Consular services are being handled in person only for those guests with urgent needs and by appointment only. For a comprehensive list of updates compiled by Global Atlanta, click [here](#).

Small Business and Nonprofits

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's small business team is committed to providing our partners with the resources and guidance they need to navigate COVID-19's impacts. For more about how GDEcD is working to combat the effects of COVID-19, [click here](#).

The *Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act* was signed into law on March 27 to help business owners meet immediate needs in response to COVID-19. Once fully implemented, additional resources for small businesses, nonprofit organizations and employers will be made available. The U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship has published a guide to help navigate assistance options made accessible through the *CARES Act*. For the full guide, [click here](#).

Through the University of Georgia's 17 Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), in

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These state partners are hosting a series of web-based information sessions tailored to each region of the state, and new webinars are scheduled for April 14-15. For the full schedule of webinars, click [here](#).

U.S. Small Business Administration updates:

On March 18, Georgia received an official statewide disaster declaration from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). This declaration will provide assistance in the form of **SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)** to small businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19 in all 159 counties in Georgia to help with financial obligations and operating expenses. Georgia businesses are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, and ahead of the December 18 deadline. To get started, [click here](#).

Current SBA disaster loans are deferred until Dec. 31, 2020.

Borrowers with a current SBA 504 or 7(a) business loan can contact their lender to request deferrals up to six months.

For individual questions on disaster loans, call 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339), email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or use the [website](#).

On April 5, the Department of the Treasury and Small Business Administration issued guidance for the Paycheck Protection Program.

The Paycheck Protection Program prioritizes millions of Americans employed by small businesses by authorizing up to \$349 billion toward job retention and certain other expenses. Small businesses and eligible nonprofit organizations, Veterans organizations, and Tribal businesses described in the Small Business Act, as well as individuals who are self-employed or are independent contractors, are eligible if they also meet program size standards.

- [For a top-line overview of the program CLICK HERE](#)
- [If you're a lender, more information can be found HERE](#)
- [If you're a borrower, more information can be found HERE](#)
- [Final Borrower Application Form](#) *NEW*
- [Lender Electronic Data Form](#) *NEW*
- [Paycheck Protection Program – Interim Final Rule](#) *NEW*

UGA Small Business Development Centers:

The Small Business Development Center network through the University of Georgia remains prepared to aid small businesses across the state. For the latest news on the center's efforts to address COVID-19, visit their blog [here](#).

Tourism

Explore Georgia, the tourism division within the Georgia Department of Economic Development, has activated its [Explore Georgia Travel Alert Page](#) on the Explore Georgia website to provide visitors with travel-related information, event cancelations and more. The site will be updated as the situation develops further.

Travelers using the **Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Airport** can find updates and a FAQ on the [airport website](#).

[Georgia Visitor Information Centers](#) (VICs) were closed on March 13, until further notice. Restroom facilities remain open daily at nine of the 11 VICs, and the Georgia Department of Transportation has performed a deep clean of all VIC restroom facilities and will continue with scheduled cleanings, maintaining all health and hygiene standards.

Trade

The nationally recognized International Trade division of GDEcD continues to arm Georgia companies with the resources they need now, troubleshoot unforeseen complications resulting from COVID-19, and provide a tailored approach for the evolving global landscape. To learn more about how the division is working to help Georgia during this time, [click here](#).

If you are a Georgia exporter whose operations have been impacted by COVID-19, the Export-Import Bank of the United States is offering relief provisions including waivers, deadline extensions, streamlined processing and flexibility to help U.S. businesses experiencing disruptions. For additional information, [click here](#).

State Agency and Economic Development Resources

[Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency](#): Information regarding the

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information about the Georgia Department of Community Affairs related to COVID-19, [click here](#).

Georgia Department of Education: Information regarding COVID-19 impact on K-12 education in Georgia.

Georgia Department of Labor: Information regarding unemployment claims related to COVID-19 and finding employment. For questions regarding filing unemployment benefits, complete the department's hotline email form [here](#).

Georgia Department of Law: Information regarding legal and consumer protection information related COVID-19, such as price gouging and scams.

Georgia Department of Insurance: Information on measures aimed at assisting individuals and business impacted by COVID-19 related to the insurance industry.

Georgia Department of Revenue: Information regarding measures aimed at assisting individuals and businesses impacted by COVID-10 related to taxes and revenue.

Georgia Ports Authority: Information on operations and response to COVID-19.

University System of Georgia: Information on the system's response to COVID-19.

CONTACT US

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