



Georgetown County Government

NEWS RELEASE – COVID-19 #7

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Georgetown County plans limited reopening of government offices on May 18

GEORGETOWN COUNTY, S.C. – Georgetown County government facilities have been shuttered to the public for nearly two months in the wake of COVID-19. While staff has continued to work and provide services, most have done so from home or inside locked office buildings manned by skeleton crews.

This week, county officials are turning their sights to reopening.

“It’s going to be a gradual process for us,” said County Administrator Angela Christian. “We’re heading toward this with small steps, not big leaps. But I believe it is time for us to start moving in a forward direction. It looks like COVID-19 is going to be with us for a while, so we need to start figuring out what our new normal is going to look like and how we’re going to get there.”

Christian has been working with Georgetown County Emergency Manager Brandon Ellis to map out a plan for reopening and develop guidelines to help directors and elected officials prepare their departments. The plan was presented to staff last week and includes a goal of having staff return to their regular work sites on Monday, May 18. For the most part, this first phase of reopening will consist of getting staff safely back into a routine onsite. However, very limited public access to facilities is also being phased in. Members of the public will still primarily be asked to handle as much business with the county as possible through virtual means.

“We’re by no means ready to just throw open the doors and resume all regular programs,” Christian said. “We need to get our staff back in first and get them working toward a new normal. We’ve been forced to make a lot of changes, and some of those are likely to become new standard operating procedures going forward.”

In the weeks leading up to the limited reopening, directors and elected officials will be working on their department-specific plans for gradual reopening. In a letter to staff on Thursday, Christian assured employees that their safety and that of the residents who rely on their service are of paramount importance. A key component of planning will be employee and public safety, and figuring out how to make work spaces as clean and safe as possible.

The county will release further details about its plans for limited reopening as they become available.

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