

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF GEORGETOWN)

EMERGENCY ORDINANCE 20-16

WHEREAS, Georgetown County Council is empowered by section 4-9-130 of the South Carolina Code of Laws and Section 2-487 of the Georgetown County Code of Ordinances to adopt emergency ordinances, enacted by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members of council present, and effective immediately upon enactment without regard to any reading, public hearing, publication requirements, or public notice requirements, to meet public emergencies affecting life, health, safety or the property of the people; and

WHEREAS, due to the recognition that COVID-19 poses a significant public health threat for infectious disease spread to County citizens, Council enacted emergency Ordinance 20-14 on March 16, 2020 declaring a localized State of Emergency for Georgetown County; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, Council enacted emergency Ordinance 20-15, providing for Council meetings to be held by electronic means; and

WHEREAS, the County has taken these steps and others, following the lead of the President of the United States, the Governor of the State of South Carolina, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and other health agencies and authorities, to “flatten the curve” and spread of COVID-19 in Georgetown County; and

WHEREAS, despite those actions and after considering the CDC’s guidelines for “community mitigation strategies” coupled with the immediate increase in tourist visitors from other states with higher infection rates than South Carolina, Georgetown County Council believes the ability of the virus to spread rapidly warrants further steps be taken to promote the public health and welfare of our citizens, including suspending the rental and use of short-term rentals, hotels, and other overnight accommodations; and

WHEREAS, it is hereby determined that a public emergency affecting life, health, and safety continues to exist, and therefore, it is appropriate and necessary to enact this emergency ordinance.

NOW THEREFORE, be it hereby ordained and ordered in this emergency meeting of Georgetown County Council the following:

1. PROHIBITION. All accommodations businesses in the unincorporated area of Georgetown County, including hotels, motels, condo hotels, rental properties, inclusive of private management companies and HOA’s, Airbnb, VRBO style lodging, public and private campgrounds and other overnight accommodations for 29 DAYS OR LESS, shall not accept new reservations for any period of time from Saturday March 28, 2020 through April 30, 2020 (such time limit is subject to further modification).

Existing reservations made for a period beginning Saturday, March 28, 2020 through April 30, 2020 will be rescheduled or canceled. Visitors currently checked in PRIOR TO MARCH 28, 2020 may remain until the end of their existing reservations, but such reservations shall not be extended.

2. EXEMPT. Those units consistently occupied by the same occupant since March 1, 2020 are exempt, but rental occupancy in the same unit may not be increased by others, including friends or family members.

Also exempted are short-term rentals extended to Government, Hospital, Health Agency, Law Enforcement, Military and other Critical Personnel actively responding to the COVID-19 emergency.

Any violation of this Emergency Ordinance shall be punishable as provided in Section 1-6, General Penalty, Georgetown County Code of Ordinances, being \$200 or 30 days imprisonment, such penalty shall be cumulative for each day of violation.

3. TERMINATION/EXPIRATION. This Ordinance will remain in effect until April 30, 2020 unless sooner terminated by Resolution of Georgetown County Council.

4. SEVERABILITY. If any Section, Subsection, or part of this Ordinance shall be deemed or found to conflict with a provision of South Carolina law, or other pre-emptive legal principle, then that Section, Sub-section or part of this Ordinance shall be deemed ineffective, but the remaining parts of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

5. CONFLICT WITH PRECEDING ORDINANCES. If a Section, Sub-section or provision of this Ordinance shall conflict with the provisions of a Section, Sub-section or part of a preceding Ordinance of Georgetown County, unless expressly so providing, then the preceding Section, Sub-section or part shall be deemed repealed and no longer in effect.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately.

DONE AS AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE and approved at a meeting duly assembled by no less than an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of Georgetown County Council attending this 27th day of March, 2020.



John Thomas, Chairman
Georgetown County Council

ATTEST


Theresa E. Floyd
Clerk to Council