



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
April 2, 2020

RUTHERFORD COUNTY ISSUES A SUSPENSION OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS

A new Short-Term Rental Suspension Proclamation has been issued by Rutherford County, which directs all residential vacation rental properties in the unincorporated areas of Rutherford County to stop accepting new reservations and to require the rescheduling or canceling of all existing reservations made for a period beginning April 5, 2020 through May 15, 2020.

This Order was issued in response to the significant and increasing number of out-of-county visitors to the County. Originally, the County issued a Short-Term Rental Suspension Request on March 27th, which was voluntary. County leadership believes that Short-Term Rentals pose an increased risk and danger for the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Rutherford County due to the best medical evidence available that confirms that human travel promotes the spread of the virus and that the presence of visitors in the county has the potential to exacerbate the strain on the limited healthcare, emergency/public safety resources and facilities available within the county. Chairman Bryan King of the Rutherford County Board of Commissioners stated, *"This action is to help reduce the risks to our community. Our Citizens are abiding by the COVID-19 State Mandate to 'stay home' in order to recover from this Pandemic threatening Rutherford County. Individuals that are choosing not to 'stay home' as recommended by the CDC and Health professionals to travel to Rutherford County are risking the health and safety of our citizens."* The intent is not to harm the short-term rental property owners or the companies who manage these properties, but it seems clear that the March 27th Short-Term Rental Suspension Request was not sufficient to protect the citizens of Rutherford County from the possibility of community spread of the coronavirus due to contact with visitors to the county.

Any violation of any provision of this Order constitutes an imminent threat to public health and will be enforced by law enforcement as a Class 2 misdemeanor in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. §14-288.20A. The Rutherford County Board of Commissioners will continue to assess the quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this proclamation, or issue additional proclamations, related to COVID-19. With the recent passing of the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act legislation passed by the US Congress as part of a federal economic relief package to respond to coronavirus, individuals, families and businesses impacted by this new proclamation are encouraged to visit <https://des.nc.gov/need-help/covid-19-information> to inquire about programs available for your short-term rental business.

If you have any further questions, you may contact the Public Information Officer at covid19@rutherfordcountync.gov. To receive daily local COVID alerts, please text your zip code to 888777.

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County Commissioners

Bryan A. King, *Chairman*
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Eddie Holland
Greg Lovelace
Michael Benfield

Steven W. Garrison, *County Manager*
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