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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 18, 2020

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Middleborough Officials Share Phase 1 of State's New Reopening Guidelines

Phase 1 Reopenings will Occur May 18, May 25

MIDDLEBOROUGH -- Town Manager Robert Nunes and Health Officer Robert Buker

wish to share information about Gov. Charlie Baker's [four-phase approach](#) for reopening the state and the mandatory guidelines for businesses allowed to reopen over the next week.

On Monday, May 18, Gov. Baker announced the first stage of the state's reopening plan. The plan will allow some industries to reopen immediately and others on Monday, May 25. All industries allowed to reopen will need to adhere to severe restrictions.

Gov. Baker ordered the closure of all non-essential businesses March 23 in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19. [Essential businesses](#), such as grocery stores and pharmacies, have remained open since that announcement and will continue to remain open during each phase.

Industries eligible to reopen on May 18 and the industry-specific restrictions that they must follow are:

- [Construction sites](#)
- [Manufacturing sites](#)
- [Places of worship](#), where occupancy will be limited to 40% of the building's maximum permitted capacity.

Industries eligible to reopen on May 25 and the industry-specific restrictions that they must follow are:

- [Office spaces](#), where occupancy will be limited to 25% of the maximum occupancy level or of the organization's typical occupancy as of March 1, 2020. This excludes Boston offices, which will reopen with the same restrictions on Monday, June 1.
- [Laboratories](#)
- [Hair salons and barber shops](#)
- [Car washes](#)
- [Pet groomers](#)
- Retail businesses for remote fulfillment and curbside pickup only.
- [Outdoor recreational activities and businesses](#), such as beaches, parks, campgrounds, outdoor gardens, drive-in movie theaters and zoos.

More information and additional guidance can be found [here](#).

Public health officials will continue to monitor the numbers of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the state daily; a certain threshold for the decreased number of cases must be maintained during each phase. Should there be an increase in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, state officials will order the return to the prior phase.

If there are no significant increases in the number of COVID-19 cases in the state over the course of at least three weeks, state officials will tentatively move on to Phase 2. Information about which businesses will be able to reopen and the restrictions they must follow will be shared when it becomes available.

General, mandatory safety standards that all businesses must adhere to include:

- Requiring employees, vendors and patrons to practice social distancing (maintaining six feet between each other), establishing protocols to allow for social distancing among employees and providing signage to promote the practice.
- Requiring face coverings or masks for all employees, and providing physical partitions taller than a standing worker where physical distancing is challenging if necessary (i.e. cashiers).
- Providing hand washing opportunities and supplies throughout the workplace to ensure that employees are able to frequently do so.
- Regularly disinfected high touch areas, such as workstations, equipment, screens, doorknobs and restrooms throughout the workplace.
- Providing training for employees on social distancing and hygiene.
- Requiring that any employee who displays [symptoms](#) related to COVID-19 stay home from work.
- Establishing a plan for employees who contract COVID-19, including cleaning and disinfecting protocols, and a return-to-work plan.

More information about the mandatory safety standards can be found [here](#).

Additional restrictions may be implemented for specific businesses, types of businesses or municipalities in order to prevent local outbreaks from spreading. This information will be shared when it becomes available.

Residents are now asked to stay at home unless going to an open business or facility. Those who are 65 or older, or have been identified as high risk individuals should they contract the virus are asked to stay home unless absolutely necessary. Restrictions on

gatherings of more than 10 people remain in effect.

Should residents leave their homes for any reason, they are asked to take the following steps to help prevent the transmission of respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19:

- Wear a face mask or cloth face covering when social distancing is hard to maintain.
- Practice social distancing at all times by remaining 6 feet away from others when you must leave your home for trips to open businesses or facilities.
- Wash your hands, and clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces, such as doorknobs and countertops.
- Stay home if you're sick and avoid close contact with others.

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A message from the Town of Middleborough

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