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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wadesboro.

Anson Crisis Ministry is Open, Distributing Free Food

Television has reported closures in Charlotte area, leading to confusion about Anson Crisis Ministry

The Anson Crisis Ministry, a food bank serving Anson County citizens, is operating with their regular hours. It is located at 117 North Rutherford Street in uptown Wadesboro.

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Hidden Secrets, the thrift store located across the street at 108 North Rutherford Street, is closed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anson Crisis Ministry is ready to serve the people of Anson County, so they welcome you to come by. The telephone number is 704-694-2445.

Game Land Users: Be Aware of Your Surroundings, Wear Blaze Orange

As turkey season ramps up, the N.C Wildlife Resources Commission urges all game land users to be aware of their surroundings. The statewide wild turkey season occurs from April 11 through May 9, preceded by a youth-only turkey season from April 4 through April 10.

Around 2,000,000 acres of public and private lands in North Carolina are managed by the Commission for public hunting, trapping, fishing and other outdoor activities. The Commission urges anyone who is using the game lands for an outdoor activity beyond turkey hunting to wear an article of clothing featuring blaze orange, which will alert any hunters to their presence.

Due to the spread of the coronavirus, the Commission also encourages the public to practice social distancing by maintaining at least six feet between yourself and others. For more information regarding coronavirus-related closings, event cancellations and postponements, visit ncwildlife.org/covid19.

For regulations and restrictions on turkey hunting, including information on youth season, refer to the 2019-2020 Inland Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest at www.ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Regulations.

Anson County Has Seven Reported Cases of COVID-19 as of April 7

On Tuesday, April 7 the Anson County Health Department reported that Anson County has seven reported cases of COVID-19. One of the cases is from community spread, meaning, it is not known where the virus originated, and the individual had no risk factors.

There was good news; three of the 7 cases have been discharged, which means that Anson County only has four active cases.

Discharge means the individual has maintained the following guidelines: At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

Free Internet Access Offered

These internet providers are offering free access to the internet during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Xfinity WiFi - Free For Everyone** Xfinity WiFi hotspots across the country will be available to anyone who needs them for free – including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. corporate.comcast.com/covid-19. For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit www.xfinity.com/wifi. Once at a hotspot, consumers should select the “xfinitywifi” network name in the list of available hotspots and then launch a browser. [AT&T about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html](http://AT&T.about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html). Consistent with FCC Chairman Pai’s “Keep Americans Connected Pledge” announced today and concerns raised by members of Congress, which we share, AT&T is proud to support our customers by pledging that, for the next 60 days (as of March 13, 2020), we will keep our public WiFi hotspots open for any American who needs them.
- T-Mobile** www.t-mobile.com/brand/ongoing-updates-covid-19#customers. T-Mobile and Metro by T-Mobile customers on our current plans with limited data will automatically have unlimited Smartphone data for the next 60 days (excluding roaming). No action required.
- Spectrum Offer** corporate.charter.com/newsroom. Charter will offer free Spectrum broadband and Wi-Fi access for 60 days to households with K-12 and/or college students who do not already have a Spectrum broadband subscription and at any service level up to 100 Mbps. To enroll call 1-844-488-8395. Installation fees will be waived for new student households.

Helpful Information During COVID-19

- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) - Helpful Handouts for self-care and secondary trauma that may be caused by COVID-19 www.ncdhhs.gov
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) –resources regarding stress, stigma, trauma triggers and those with behavioral health challenges during COVID-19 www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) - National Disaster Helpline 1-800-985-5990 or text ‘TalkWithUs’ to 66746 (includes natural and man-made disasters)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 or Crisis Text Line text ‘help’ to 741741
- NC Governor’s Update governor.nc.gov
- www.unctv.org/watch/live-stream/eoc
- NC Department of Health and Human Services www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus
- NC Local Health Departments www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/county-health-departments
- NC Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organizations for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Disorders: www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/lme-mco-directory
- NC Emergency Management www.readync.org
- www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Governor Order to Prohibit Utility Disconnections in the Wake of COVID-19

On Tuesday, March 31 Governor Roy Cooper announced another step to help families by prohibiting utilities from disconnecting people who are unable to pay during this pandemic. Today’s Order applies to electric, gas, water and wastewater services for the next 60 days.

The Order directs utilities to give residential customers at least six months to pay outstanding bills and prohibits them from collecting fees, penalties or interest for late payment.

Telecommunication companies that provide phone, cable and internet services are strongly urged to follow these same rules.

“This action is particularly important since tomorrow is the first of the month, and I know that’s a date many families fear when they can’t make ends meet,” said Governor Cooper. “These protections will help families stay in their homes and keep vital services like electricity, water, and communications going as we Stay at Home.”

Additionally, the Order encourages banks not to charge customers for overdraft fees, late fees and other penalties. Landlords are strongly encouraged in the Order to follow the spirit of Chief Justice Cheri Beasley’s Order and delay any evictions that are already entered in the court system.

Governor Cooper was joined by Attorney General Josh Stein to announce the order and he thanked companies that have already voluntarily announced policies to prevent shutoffs, including Duke Energy, Dominion Energy, AT&T, and local electric co-ops, among many others. This Order follows the Governor’s Stay At Home order, which is in effect until April 29.

The Council of State concurred with the Order.

Here are Frequently Asked Questions for Executive Order No. 124 March 31, 2020

This Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQ”) document provides guidance for the implementation of Executive Order No. 124 (“Order”). On Tuesday, March 31, 2020 Governor Roy Cooper issued an Executive Order that assists North Carolinians by prohibiting utility shut-offs and late fees, urging utility reconnection; providing guidance on eviction restrictions; and urging financial institutions, including banks and mortgage lenders, to implement relief measures for individuals and businesses who are experiencing financial hardships due to COVID-19. This provides relief to North Carolinians harmed financially by COVID-19 and helps to slow the spread of COVID-19 by preventing homelessness and ensuring that people have access to essential utilities. Below are frequently asked questions and their answers. In addition, check with your local government to determine whether additional restrictions exist in your area to limit the spread of COVID-19.

This information is subject to change in light of new CDC guidance and additional Executive Orders or local government declarations.

When does this Order go into effect, and when does it expire? This Executive Order is effective on March 31, 2020. It will remain in effect for sixty days or until adjusted by a superseding Executive Order. An Executive Order rescinding the State of Emergency in North Carolina will rescind this Executive Order.

ASSISTING NC UTILITY CUSTOMERS

What protections does this EO provide to residential utility customers? The Executive Order provides reasonable protections to residential utility customers in light of the COVID-19 emergency.

The Order addresses the following:

- Prohibits utilities from shutting off people’s electricity, natural gas, and water service for nonpayment.
- Prohibits utilities from billing or collecting any fees, penalties, or interest for late or untimely payment.
- Directs utilities to give residential customers at least six months to pay outstanding bills without owing interest fees.
- Reminds customers they are responsible for paying bills for utility services received.
- Requires utilities to inform residential customers of important provisions in the Executive Order.

Why are these utility-customer protections needed?

Because of the Stay at Home Order, many North Carolina residents are at home and need access to electricity, water, and natural gas service. These services will help ensure that residents will be able to wash hands regularly and follow other best practices for safety and hygiene. This Executive Order also will facilitate access to education, telemedicine, and teleworking, activities that benefit public health and a strong economy.

What utilities are covered by this Executive Order?

This Order covers utilities that provide electricity, natural gas, water, or wastewater services, as well as those that provide a combination of these services to residential customers.

So my utility service provider cannot shut off my electricity, natural gas, or water service?

Correct. Your utility cannot shut off your residential service while the Executive Order is effective. But you are still responsible for paying your bills.

Does this mean I don’t have to pay my electricity, natural gas, or water bills? No. All customers are still responsible for paying their utility bills.

Can I have more time to pay off my bills? Utilities will offer extended repayment plans that allow residential customers at least six months to pay unpaid bills without owing interest charges. This six-month period will apply to outstanding bill payments accumulated during the effective period of this Executive Order plus 120 days.

Can utility providers charge me late fees? As of March 31, 2020, no utility may bill or collect any fee, charge, penalty, or interest for a late or otherwise untimely payment.

To which types of utility customers does the Executive Order apply? This Executive Order applies to residential customers.

How does this Executive Order impact actions by the North Carolina Utilities Commission on utilities shutoffs? If there are differences between the Governor’s Order and an order issued by the North Carolina Utilities Commission, you should follow this order. Provisions of any order by the Commission apply if they are consistent with the Governor’s Order.

How will the requirements on utilities be enforced? The North Carolina Utilities Commission will assist utilities with implementing the Executive Order and provide a weekly implementation report to the Governor. The Commission and the Attorney General are authorized to enforce the Executive Order through their existing legal authorities.

GUIDANCE ON CABLE, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AND RELATED SERVICES

Does the Executive Order address providers of telephone, cellular, cable, and Internet service?

The Executive Order urges providers of telecommunications, mobile telecommunications, cable, Internet, and wireless Internet service to follow the guidelines described above for electricity, natural gas, and water utilities. In addition, telecommunications service providers are urged to lift data caps where they have not done so already.

GUIDANCE ON EVICTION PROCEEDINGS

When does this Order go into effect, and when does it expire? The guidance related to eviction proceedings should be considered effective immediately and should continue to be a consideration until April 17, or any later date that is subsequently ordered.

How does this impact the Chief Justice’s action on eviction?

The guidance in Governor Cooper’s Executive Order supports the Chief Justice’s action on eviction. Through this Order, the Governor encourages clerks of superior court and sheriffs to follow the spirit of Chief Justice Beasley’s order. The Governor, along with the Attorney General, encourages clerks of superior court to delay issuing any evictions, and encourages sheriffs to delay execution of eviction orders (“Writs of Possession of Real Property”) that have already been issued.

For additional information visit www.nccourts.gov/covid-19-coronavirus-updates.

Does this mean the Sheriff can’t remove me from my home even if eviction orders have been issued?

Through this Executive Order, the Governor and Attorney General are encouraging sheriffs to delay executing eviction orders (“Writs of Possession of Real Property”). Sheriffs, however, still have the discretion not to follow this guidance and continue processing eviction orders that have already been issued.

How does this impact mortgage foreclosures?

Through the guidance in this Executive Order, the Governor and Attorney General encourage lenders to work with property owners to provide loan payment flexibility to avoid mortgage foreclosures.

Does this mean that tenants don’t have to pay rent?

The Governor’s Order neither relieves a tenant from the obligation to pay rent nor restrict the landlord’s ability to recover rent that is due, including any late fees or penalties.

I am a tenant and cannot pay my rent. What do I need to do?

We strongly encourage you to notify your landlord as soon as possible and discuss a plan for repayment. Renters may also call 2-1-1 to learn about potential rental assistance resources.

Will my bank still charge overdraft or other fees?

Financial institutions will still have discretion to apply fees. The Executive Order does, however, encourage financial institutions to assist customers who can demonstrate financial hardship caused by COVID-19.

Will I still have to make mortgage payments if I’m experiencing financial hardship caused by COVID-19?

This Order does not relieve customers from making any loan payments that are due. This Executive Order encourages financial institutions to consider financial hardship that customers may be experiencing due to COVID-19, but these institutions are not required to waive fees or make other accommodations.

NC COVID-19 Modeling Shows Social Distancing Necessary

To Slow the Spread and Preserve Hospital Capacity to Save Lives

A collection of North Carolina experts today released a composite modeling forecast looking at how COVID-19 could affect North Carolina in the coming months. The models, constructed by experts from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University, RTI International, and others reinforced the need for limiting personal contact to slow the spread of COVID-19 and ensure that health care is there for people who need it.

“We have life-changing decisions before us and North Carolina is fortunate to have world-class experts who can help our state as we continue battling the coronavirus,” said Governor Roy Cooper. “Modeling is one tool that helps us prepare for this fight and it shows we will save lives if we stay home and keep our social distance right now.”

“The modeling affirms that the actions we take now will determine how this virus will impact North Carolina in the weeks and months to come,” said NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen, MD. “We need to continue to do everything in our power so that fewer people get sick at the same time, while also surging the capacity of our health care system so those that do need hospital care will have it. Please stay home now to save lives.”

The modeling team’s full brief is available at www.ncdps.gov.

Today’s composite model found that social distancing policies with effectiveness similar to those currently in place in North Carolina will help lower the likelihood of the healthcare system becoming overloaded with a spike of many COVID-19 patients all at the same time. However, ending all social distancing at the end of April leads to a “greater than 50 percent probability that acute care and ICU bed capacity will be outstripped... as soon as Memorial Day.”

According to the model, hospital surge to create more available bed space could provide some help, but not enough to help hospitals meet demand if all social distancing efforts were ended.

If all social distancing were to stop at the end of April, the model estimates that roughly 750,000 North Carolinians could be infected by June 1. On the other hand, if some form of effective social distancing remains in place after April, that number is lowered by half a million to an estimated 250,000 people. That’s because social distancing lowers the number of people that one person will infect.

The group of experts are continuing to run models using information from other states and countries and intends to release further data as it becomes available.