

Georgia Elks Association



To: All GEA Lodges

From: Bill Lewis, Disaster Relief Chairman

Subject: Covid-19 Follow up Information

Due to the current circumstances relative to Covid-19 (Coronavirus), Lodges throughout the state are trying/making decisions about keeping lodges open during this Nationally declared emergency. The Georgia Elks Association is offering the following information for the lodges across the state to use in making their decision on this extremely volatile public health issue:

- In the last few days in Georgia the number of confirmed cases has jumped from 47 to 99. Of course this may be due to more tests being conducted as more testing sites and materials are being made available. Please do not get complacent just because your area does not currently have any reported cases at this time. This is likely to change as more people are being tested (not just the target populations) and more testing supplies and facilities are made available and the results are posted.
- It is recommended by the GEA that all Bingo and general public access to lodges be stopped immediately. This protects your employees and volunteer workers from potential exposure to Covid-19. This also follows CDC recommended guidelines to protect workers and the general public from exposure during public gatherings.
- Keep in mind, even with your own members, we do not know what they have been doing, where they have gone, what they have been touching, who they have come in contact with, etc. Therefore, ceasing additional activities (lodge meetings, committee meetings, bar and restaurant activities, shutting the lodge completely down) are considerations for each lodge to seriously contemplate for a minimum of two weeks or until the crisis has subsided. Unfortunately, all calendar events should be reconsidered for the next several weeks as this situation changes from day to day. These are difficult

business judgments that each lodge must consider. Please note, Situation Awareness, is Critical. If you do not already have a plan, establish one now on how to proceed and include information on how to resume when the crisis has ended.

- Per PNP Mike Smith, during these extraordinary times, the Grand Lodges is relaxing lodge meeting requirements directed by our statutes (no penalties). This includes initiations and officer installations scheduled this month. Since this is the last month of our lodge year, give consideration to do individual oath readings to your qualified candidates in place of a ceremonial gathering.
- PNP Mike Smith asks if a lodge chooses to close or not hold their meetings, send an email to your District Deputy and copy the District Vice President and Disaster Relief District Representative. The DD will then notify our State Sponsor PNP Mike Smith and Special Deputy Stan Jones.
- For your information, Covington Lodge #1806 has ceased all lodge activities until March 29, 2020; National and Regional Hoop Shoots have been canceled, Aidmore functions have been postponed including the Golf Fore Kids tournament, some lodges require gloves to handle monetary transactions, more have already canceled public involved events.
- Please keep your District Disaster Relief Representative posted on your plans/changes/deletions on Covid-19, now and as we move forward.
- The Disaster Relief Committee will keep you posted on lodge decisions and information as it is received and as often as possible by email and/or website notifications.
- For important information consult the following organizations: Center for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), Emergency Management Agency (GEMA), Local Emergency Management Agencies, and ServSafe (National Restaurant Association), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are a few significant organizations that offer important information. All lodges are encouraged to follow these guidelines very closely.

Thank you for any attention you can give to the above information. Keep your lodges, Elk members/families and communities as safe as possible during this pandemic.