



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: ASAP

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CITY OF DOUGLAS MAKES OPERATIONAL CHANGES DUE TO COVID-19

As our community, and especially the United States are in a unique time in our history confronting and combating the Covid-19 virus (aka CoronaVirus). The City of Douglas remains committed to providing citizens and customers continued safe and reliable services. Due to the "fear" of and eventually transmittal of the virus, the City of Douglas has changed its normal operation procedures to react quickly.

City Hall

- **Effective Monday, March 23, 2020**, the lobby at City Hall will be open with limited customers. Only (3) three customers will be allowed in the lobby at one given time.
- The City Commission asks that citizens limit public gatherings to a maximum of 10 people. It is encouraged for churches and organizations find alternative ways to hold services or meetings.
- All citizens are asked to abide by the curfew ordinance.
- The City Commission meeting scheduled for April 13, 2020, 7pm, at City Hall has been suspended.

Douglas Utilities

- **Effective Monday, March 23, 2020**, the lobby at City Hall will be open with limited customers. Only (3) three customers will be allowed in the lobby at one given time.
- Customers will be able to make utility payments by drive thru, phone, drop box, and online. Customers can also make your utility payment or bill inquiry online by visiting <http://www.cityofdouglas.com/84/Make-a-Utility-Payment> . Customers can also dial 1-912-384-3302 or 3-1-1 to speak with a representative from 8:00am-5:00pm Monday-Friday, or if they choose to can email questions or concerns to customercare@cityofdouglas.com . All after hours, weekends, and holiday calls, dial 912-384-3302 or 3-1-1 to reach our afterhours dispatch service.
- Douglas Utilities is urging customers to be aware of scammers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Customers should beware of phone calls demanding payment via

telephone. If customers receive a suspicious phone call demanding payment to avoid disconnection, it should be reported to Douglas Utilities by dialing 912-384-3302 or 3-1-1.

- Utility cut-offs have been suspended April 1, 2020 – April 30, 2020.

Douglas Police Department

- All persons involved in private property vehicle collisions and roadway collisions that do not result in injury or significant property damage will be directed by Coffee County Dispatch Center Dispatchers to exchange the appropriate information and given a case number of the call for insurance purposes. Douglas Police Department will continue response to collisions with injuries and significant property damage. If you are involved in a private property vehicle collision or roadway collision that does not result in injury or significant property damage and are given direction by a dispatcher to exchange the appropriate information and given a case number, you may come by the police department and pick up an SR 13 (Personal Report of Accident) form. You will have to complete the form for insurance purposes.
- Victim-only calls will be reported by phone to officers who will be assigned to "Alternative Response" at the Douglas Police Department. Calls for service that do not have a crime scene, do not involve physical injury or require EMT's/Medical Treatment, and the offender/suspect is no longer on the scene will be reported via phone. Other calls such as breaking and entering to automobiles, criminal damage to property in damages less than \$500.00 will also be reported over the phone. Other calls may also be directed by department supervisors to officers working "Alternative Response" as evaluated. The Douglas Police Department will continue to respond to calls involving injury, significant property damage, and in-progress calls where the offender/suspect is, or is believed to be, still on scene.
- Officers of the Douglas Police Department may be wearing medical style masks. If an officer is wearing a mask, please do not make assumptions that officers are interacting with persons who are ill. We are taking every precaution to remain well so that we can continue to protect and serve.
- The Douglas Police Department will be closing the lobby. If you need an accident report or police report please call 912-384-2222 or email mchavez@cityofdouglas.com (Manager of the Records Unit) requesting a copy and she can email you the needed report.
- The Douglas Police Department Investigator duties may be modified so that they may supplement uniform patrol and may assist with Alternative Response procedures as the needs arise. Investigators will be available for case follow-up and contact by phone.
- Douglas Police Department Officers will continue to patrol neighborhoods, business, and streets of our city.

Fire Dept

- Group trainings and meetings are suspended. Employees will report to work and remain in their assigned stations unless dispatched to an emergency call.
- Food will be purchased, prepared, and eaten at the station. If there is a need to pick up food, one person will take a vehicle to pick it up.
- Fire Inspector will report to station one and work from his office with no public visits. There will be no fire inspections of businesses.
- Continue to maintain a clean and healthy environment at the stations with regular cleanings and disinfecting procedures.
- Employees will be encouraged to isolate themselves from the general public (as much as possible) even on their off time to help maintain a full level of staffing at the Fire Dept.
- Emergency calls will be answered and we will respond to with as much precaution as possible.
- All Fire Department offices in Douglas will be closed to the general public. Anyone requesting a fire report or conducting other business will be required to call the Douglas Fire Dept. at 912-384-4815 and the report will be emailed or faxed to meet the request.

Municipal Court

- All court-required appearances and unpaid tickets with the past court date of March 17, 2020 and the upcoming court date of April 7, 2020 will be continued to later court dates. Notices will be mailed to the address on file which should be the address listed on the driver's license.
- Lobby will be closed until further notice
- Citizens are encouraged to mail payments:
Douglas Municipal Court
225 Bryan St. W
Douglas, Ga. 31533
- At this time, the Court will resume its regular court operations on April 14, 2020 as scheduled. The Court will be available to hear any bench warrant cases, jail cases and/or probation revocation cases during the above noted suspension times as needed.
- If there are any questions concerning a ticket issued, then please contact the Municipal Court at 912-260-3614.

Parks & Recreation Department

- All Parks are closed until further notice.
- All rental facilities are closed.
- All Recreation Department activities have been suspended.

Community Development

- Airport terminal is closed to the public.
- Airport staff will continue to service planes during normal business hours. Pilots will be given access to lounge area only.
- City offices located at the Ashley Slater House will be closed to the public.

- Code Enforcement is suspending warnings and citations.
- Animal control is not picking up strays and not setting out animal traps unless it is a vicious dog situation.
- Occupational Tax certificates for new businesses will be screened and processed case by case.

Coffee County Farmer's Market

- Offering only fresh produce for sale for citizens to purchase food

Citizens are encouraged to follow the guidelines set forth by President Trump (https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf), the Centers for Disease Control (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>), and Georgia Public Health Officials (<https://dph.georgia.gov/>). Coffee Regional Medical Center, is updates their Facebook page, (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/CoffeeRegional/>), daily with information concerning the area. Please take necessary precautions to stay safe and healthy.