



The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
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COVID-19 Operations Update

All closures extended through May 31; additional hospitality closures; furloughs expanded and extended through closure period

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (April 21, 2020) – Colonial Williamsburg is extending existing operational closures through May 31 to limit health risks associated with COVID-19, and will close the Williamsburg Lodge’s hotel operations effective May 1.

The expanded closure will not impact employees in the Historic Area, the Art Museums, Operations and related areas who are still actively working, whether remotely or on-site with appropriate social distancing. Regular hourly staff in these areas who are unable to work due to the closure will continue to receive full pay and benefits through May while on emergency administrative leave. Scaled pay reductions will remain in place for salaried employees.

There will be limited additional furloughs in hospitality. Most hourly Lodge employees currently working will receive full pay and benefits through May 9, then will join Hospitality staff and part-time employees furloughed earlier this month for the balance of the closure. Colonial Williamsburg will maintain health insurance coverage and other benefits for covered furloughed employees and is waiving May rent for furloughed employees renting Colonial Williamsburg housing, as was done in April.

“We are looking forward to reopening the Historic Area, Art Museums, hotels and restaurants, and are actively preparing by developing plans which include enhanced health and safety protocols. Our overriding objective is to protect the health of our employees, visitors, and members of the community, so the timing will be guided by government and public health officials,” said Cliff Fleet, president and CEO of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

“In the meantime, we will continue to expand the delivery of our online programs and accelerate work to improve the appearance of the Historic Area and Merchants Square,” Fleet said. “We also will continue to support community needs by providing thousands of meals per week as well as emergency housing for those impacted by this very difficult situation. It is humbling to work with so many people and organizations helping those in need.”

Foundation staff are teleworking to the extent possible, including digital content producers who are expanding the foundation’s online presence, which has grown to generate more than 9 million new impressions across Colonial Williamsburg’s online channels since the foundation suspended public programming in mid-March. Preservation, Operations and Historic Trades teams are taking advantage of the closure to accelerate maintenance and beautification efforts in the Historic Area and Merchants Square, while Operations, Human Resources and other staff are developing protocols to help protect employees and guests when Colonial Williamsburg reopens. Employees who must work onsite are following foundation policies that meet or exceed all safety protocols and guidelines for guarding against spread or infection.

A limited number of Colonial Houses remain open as does the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club, open-air tennis facilities and The Cupboard grab-and-go food and beverage shop. The Williamsburg Lodge's Sweet Tea & Barley will continue curbside pickup, offering a limited menu and daily specials. The Lodge kitchen also continues as a hub for the foundation's food donation initiative, which has been extended through May to provide approximately 2,000 meals per week to the food insecure living in Greater Williamsburg. Additionally, and in partnership with the City of Williamsburg, the Governor's Inn continues as a community emergency housing resource.

Colonial Williamsburg's Merchants Square shops and restaurants continue operating at their discretion and based on state directives.

New and continuing closures include:

- Historic Area interpretive sites and programs
- The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg
- Williamsburg Inn
- Williamsburg Lodge and retail shop
- The Griffin Hotel
- The Woodlands Hotel & Suites
- Most restaurants and most other food and beverage locations
- The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg
- The Colonial Williamsburg Regional Visitor Center
- The John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library
- The Custis Square archaeological site
- Bassett Hall

Colonial Williamsburg is closely monitoring public health conditions and direction from public health and government officials and will respond immediately if additional government-issued restrictions arise. Resumption of operations is dependent upon reduced health risk. Colonial Williamsburg continues to work closely with government agencies, healthcare and private-sector organizations, William & Mary and others, and has aligned plans and responses with those of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Virginia Department of Health and other agencies.

Current information on Colonial Williamsburg operations is available online at colonialwilliamsburg.org/update and by following [Colonial Williamsburg](#) on Facebook.

Additional information on COVID-19, including additional preventative measures is available from the Virginia Department of Health at vdh.virginia.gov and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at cdc.gov.

COVID-19 Response Timeline

- Jan.-Feb. Colonial Williamsburg Department of Environmental Health and Safety issues all-staff messages to report that the foundation is monitoring public health guidance regarding COVID-19, to share guidance for normal measures to limit transmission risk, and to provide resources for additional information.
- March 2: Colonial Williamsburg participates in regional COVID-19 planning session convened by the City of Williamsburg to fully coordinate emergency response with local, regional, state and federal partners.
- March 10: “Hands on” aspects of site interpretation and programming, in which guests and employees touch common objects and surfaces, are suspended.
- March 13: Frontline staff are instructed to observe social distancing including courteous refusal of normal physical contact with guests.

Telework instituted for eligible employees.
- March 14: To support social distancing, selected interpretive programs are cancelled indefinitely, and Historic Site access is modified to limit group size and proximity.
- March 16: Closure of most public sites until March 30:
 - Area interpretive sites and programs
 - The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg
 - Taverns and other Historic Area food and beverage locations
 - The Colonial Williamsburg Regional Visitor Center
 - The John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library
 - Bassett Hall
 - The Custis Square archaeological site
 - The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg
Continued pay and benefits for regular hourly staff unable to work due to the suspension of public programming.

Colonial Williamsburg launches the “Explore from Home” page on the foundation’s new website, colonialwilliamsburg.org. The page provides free virtual content ranging from educational programming and resources to how-to craft videos and coloring activities inspired by the foundation’s collections.
- March 17: President and CEO Cliff Fleet notifies commercial tenants in Colonial Williamsburg’s Merchants Square that April rent and fees for marketing and common area maintenance are waived.

Colonial Williamsburg begins closure of table-service dining locations in compliance with the state order prohibiting gatherings of 10 or more people.

March 23: Colonial Williamsburg Shuttle bus service reduce daily operating hours from 9 a.m.-10 p.m. to 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

March 25: Colonial Williamsburg announces:

- Expanded operational closures starting March 27 to include hotel properties except a portion of the Williamsburg Lodge and some Colonial Houses
- Extension of all operational closures through April 30
- Continued pay and benefits for regular hourly staff unable to work due to the suspension of public programming
- Most Hospitality and casual staff placed on emergency administrative leave with full pay and benefits through April 11, and then furloughed for the balance of the closure period
- Scaled pay reductions for salaried employees
- Waiver of April rent for furloughed employees who rent Foundation residences
- Governor's Inn repurposed as an emergency housing and care facility to support the community.
- Postponement of Mr. Jefferson's Palace Garden Party, originally scheduled for May 1 and the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg Community Celebration, originally scheduled for May 9-10.

April 21: Colonial Williamsburg announces:

- Williamsburg Lodge's hotel operations closing May 1. Most Williamsburg Lodge Hospitality employees will receive full pay and benefits through May 9, then join other Hospitality and casual staff furloughed on April 11 for the balance of the closure period.
- All new and current closures extended through May 31.
- Waiver of May rent for furloughed employees who rent foundation residences.

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The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia's 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences highlight the relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 600 restored or reconstructed original buildings, renowned museums of decorative arts and folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers, lodging, including the Forbes 5-star Williamsburg Inn, culinary options from historic taverns to casual or elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 45 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones and his son Rees Jones, a full-service spa and fitness center, pools, retail stores and gardens. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.