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## **COVID-19 Operations Update**

*Operational closures expanded and extended through April 30; instituting scaled pay reductions for management*

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (March 25, 2020) – In order to further limit health risks associated with the COVID-19 virus, Colonial Williamsburg will expand operational closures starting March 27 to include most of its hotel properties. All new and existing closures, including the Historic Area and the Art Museums, will be extended through April 30.

As has been the case since the foundation announced its initial shutdown in mid-March, regular hourly staff in the Historic Area and Art Museums, operations and related areas who are unable to work due to the closure will continue on emergency administrative leave and will receive full pay and benefits. Other foundation staff will telework to the extent possible, including content producers who are accelerating development of online museum content to supplement the foundation’s educational mission to share America’s enduring story. Employees who must work onsite will follow foundation policies that meet or exceed all safety protocols and guidelines for guarding against spread or infection.

Due to the closing of the hotels and related food and beverage outlets, most Hospitality staff will be placed on emergency administrative leave with full pay and benefits through April 11, and then furloughed for the balance of the closure period. This benefit has also been extended to cover most casual staff, defined as part-time employees without benefits who work less than 1,000 hours per year. Colonial Williamsburg will maintain health insurance coverage and certain other benefits for covered employees, and waive April rent for all furloughed employees renting Colonial Williamsburg housing.

In addition, all employees making \$50,000 or more per year, including senior management, will immediately take cuts in pay, with higher compensated managers taking the greatest cuts.

“These are difficult decisions, but based on input from leaders across our organization, our regional partners and the healthcare community, we are convinced this is the most responsible course of action,” said Cliff Fleet, president and CEO of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. “Our priorities are safeguarding the health of our staff, guests and the community, and helping the community and our employees through this very challenging time, while also protecting Colonial Williamsburg as a cultural institution.”

Expanded closures will affect the Williamsburg Inn, the Griffin Hotel and the Woodlands Hotel & Suites. The Williamsburg Lodge, Autograph Collection will remain open, in part, to assist the City and public health officials with emergency needs. Additionally, the foundation has offered the Governor’s Inn as a potential emergency housing and care facility.

“Greater Williamsburg is extremely fortunate to have a partner like Colonial Williamsburg, which has offered facilities for use to solve community issues during the COVID-19 public health emergency. These facilities may prove to be essential in meeting the needs of the health care community and the City as we combat the effects of COVID-19 regionally,” said Williamsburg City Manager Andrew Trivette.

Fleet said, “We are working closely with many across the region as the Foundation stands ready to help. After we have successfully moved through this challenging time together, we look forward to enthusiastically welcoming our neighbors and guests back to Colonial Williamsburg.”

To serve audiences – in particular families with children – during the closure, Colonial Williamsburg has established a special “Explore from Home” section on the foundation’s new website, [colonialwilliamsburg.org](http://colonialwilliamsburg.org). This section serves as a one-stop-shop for free virtual content ranging from educational programming and resources to how-to craft videos and coloring activities inspired by the foundation’s collections.

Continuing closures include:

- Historic Area interpretive sites and programs
- The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg
- 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 has also cancelled its annual Garden Symposium, originally scheduled for April 17-19, and postponed indefinitely other foundation-sponsored events including Mr. Jefferson’s Palace Garden Party, originally scheduled for May 1. The foundation has also postponed the Community Celebration for the expanded and renovated Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg, originally scheduled for May 9 and 10, to a future date.

A limited number of Colonial Houses remain open as does the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club, open-air tennis facilities, The Cupboard grab-and-go food and beverage shop and the retail shop at Williamsburg Lodge. Colonial Williamsburg’s team is closely monitoring public health conditions and direction from public health and government officials and will respond immediately if additional government issued restrictions arise.

Colonial Williamsburg’s Merchants Square remains open with individual shops and restaurants operating at their discretion and based on state directives. To help support these merchants during this difficult time, Colonial Williamsburg is waiving their rent payments for the month of April.

Resumption of operations is dependent upon reduced health risk and further guidance from government and public health officials. 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](http://colonialwilliamsburg.org/update) and by following [Colonial Williamsburg](https://www.facebook.com/ColonialWilliamsburg) on Facebook.

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

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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.*