



TENNESSEE BUSINESSES SEEK COVID-19 LIABILITY PROTECTION

Chamber of Commerce & Industry Leads Effort to Petition Governor's Office

In response to a growing national trend, a coalition of businesses, trade associations, higher education, insurance, and healthcare sectors throughout Tennessee initiated the first steps in addressing liability concerns related to the public health crisis. The collective effort led primarily by the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry petitions the Governor's Office to enact reasonable safeguards that protect associations and organizations from lawsuits stemming from COVID-19.

Industry leaders in the letter assert that despite well-intentioned efforts like Gov. Bill Lee's "Tennessee Pledge," businesses and other employers cannot reasonably be expected to control the behaviors of others and therefore should be immune from frivolous claims that do not allege willful, reckless, or intentional misconduct. The letter does not suggest blanket protections but rather "liability shelters" that provide courts with direction to clearly distinguish valid claims from meritless claims in addition to conserving time and resources in the court system.

The group consisting of nearly 30 members thus far includes representatives from the Tennessee Hospital Association, the Tennessee Medical Association, the Tennessee Funeral Directions Association as well as several area chambers of commerce and insurance associations. The full letter is included with this update.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY GROUP ISSUES ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Recreation, Offices, Lodging Among Businesses Set to Reopen May 8

On Wednesday, Gov. Lee's Economic Recovery Group released additional guidance to allow recreation, offices, lodging, construction, manufacturing, and certain "small group no contact" business such as bowling alleys, arcades, and mini golf to reopen today. The businesses must continue to adhere to Tennessee Pledge guidelines related to capacity limits, spacing requirements, and frequent sanitization. Larger venues and activities where social distancing is not feasible remain closed.

The recent guidance continues to apply only to 89 of the state's 95 counties which are operated by a state health department. Shelby, Madison, Davidson, Hamilton, Knox and Sullivan created plans in consultation with the State and local health departments to address the individual needs of their communities.

The full list of non-contact recreation guidelines can be found [here](#).

RESOURCES FOR REOPENING TENNESSEE

As both Gov. Lee and local officials continue to issue different reopening standards, we know the messages can become confusing as public health and locally elected officials continue to find the balance between opening businesses and public safety. Here is a list of reopening guidelines for the four major cities and the state.

- [General Guidance for 89 Counties](#)
- [Roadmap to Reopening Nashville](#)
- [Memphis Back-to-Business Framework](#)
- [Chattanooga COVID Updates](#)
- [Knoxville Phased Reopening Plan](#)