

ORDINANCE NO. 2020_____

**AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE
JENNINGS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Whereas, Jennings County, Indiana along with many other Indiana counties and all 50 states, have experienced confirmed cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and;

Whereas, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness and death and is easily transmitted from person to person, and;

Whereas, on January 31, 2020 the United States Department of Public Health and Human Services Secretary declared a public emergency for the COVID-19, and;

Whereas, on March 6, 2020 Governor Eric J. Holcomb issued his Declaration of Public Health Emergency for the State of Indiana for COVID-19 as Executive Order 20-02 and further Executive Order 20-04 on March 16, 2020, and;

Whereas, the Board of Commissioners of Jennings County, pursuant to IC 36-8-2-4 and 5, has the authority to regulate conduct that might endanger public health, safety or welfare and to impose restrictions to prevent the transmission of diseases;

Whereas, due to the potential severity of COVID-19 and the need to take urgent action, the following is effective as of March 23, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

NOW, THEREFORE, The Board of Commissioners of Jennings County, do hereby:

1. Declare that a public health emergency exists in Jennings County due to COVID-19.
2. Order that Jennings County implement some travel restrictions, permitting only essential travel, such as to and from work, travel related to medical care, travel for food, groceries, medication, essential household goods, and hygiene products, and other essential services.
3. For a period of two (2) weeks, only critical essential businesses shall remain open. All other, non-essential, businesses shall remain closed, **including all Jennings County government offices not specifically listed below as "essential."**
4. Critical essential businesses to remain open, include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Essential Jennings County government offices, including the following:
 - i. Jennings County Health Department
 - ii. Jennings County Sheriff's Department
 - iii. Jennings County 911
 - iv. Jennings County EMS
 - v. Jennings County EMA
 - vi. Jennings County Highway Department
 - vii. Jennings County Courts, including Clerk and Security, allowing only for operations as ordered by the Indiana Supreme Court in its March 19, 2020 Order on Jennings' County Petitioner for AR 17 Emergency Relief. See Order attached.
 - viii. All fire departments
 - ix. Any other office, agency, or business providing relief services and efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - b. Grocery stores;
 - c. Funeral homes;
 - d. All health care service providers, including doctor offices, hospitals, pharmacies, and therapy establishments;
 - e. Banks, lending institutions and all other related businesses;
 - f. Gas Stations and auto repair businesses;

- g. Convenience stores;
- h. "Dollar" stores;
- i. Day Care facilities;
- j. Restaurants and bars-carry-out, delivery and drive-up only;
- k. Utility and Trash Services;
- l. Airport;
- m. Postal services/Fed Ex and UPS;
- n. Veterinarian clinics;
- o. Home Improvement/hardware;
- p. Hotels/motels;
- q. Laundromats;
- r. Public and Private transportation,
- s. Agricultural operations: pet stores;
- t. Legal services;
- u. Social Service agencies;
- v. Industry either directly or indirectly providing goods or services to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. There should be no public gatherings of more than ten (10) people and all Jennings County residents are to attempt at all possible times to maintain a social distance of six (6) feet or more from others. The 10-person restriction does not apply to work places so long as the social distancing guidelines are followed and internal safeguards are put into place with regard to cleaning, i.e. disinfecting and sanitizing, and social distancing.

6. This is an ongoing and evolving public health crisis. Refusal to comply may result in suspension of permits as well as fines by Order of the Jennings County Health Department and the Jennings County Health Officer under IC 16-20-1-19 and IC 16-20-1-21.

7. The Board of Commissioners acknowledge the hardship and sacrifice that is being imposed on the businesses and citizens of Jennings County by these closures. These restrictions will be revisited as the COVID-19 circumstances change, and are subject to revision as deemed appropriate for the health and well-being of Jennings County citizens.

READ AND ADOPTED THIS 22nd DAY OF MARCH, 2020.

JENNINS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

Matt Sporleder, President

Bob Willhite, Commissioner

Dave Lane, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Tessisa Salsman, Auditor

Supporting Statement of Commissioner Matt Sporleder:

I want to thank the Jennings County Health Department and other community leaders for their incredible cooperation and working together during these unprecedented times. The commissioners fully understand the burden that this has placed on many citizens in our community. The risk of doing nothing is too great. Therefore, we are erring on the side of protecting the health and well-being of all of our citizens. We ask that all citizens do their part to help us get on the other side of this pandemic. I have witnessed our community rise to the challenge in the face of adversity on many occasions and I believe this time will be no different. Please take time to look after those in need, check on your neighbors and be kind to everyone you encounter.

Supporting Statement of Jennings County Public Health Officer Dr. Gregory Heumann:

Due to the evolving situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jennings County Health Department is convinced it is absolutely necessary to take more extensive measures to control this outbreak. A major part of this decision is about not only protecting our citizens but also about limiting the burden on the local healthcare system so that it is not overwhelmed and can continue to serve our entire community. We appreciate everyone's cooperation and sacrifice to keep Jennings County safe.

Supporting Statement of City of North Vernon Mayor Mike Ochs:

Due to the heightened situation regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, and the potential severity of the health risk to our citizens, The City of North Vernon joins the Jennings County Board of Commissioners in advocating for strong and necessary precautions. We believe these precautions are most appropriate for the protection of our citizens and for the purpose of aggressively mitigating the spread of this deadly virus. We pledge to continue our cooperative effort against this pandemic with not only Jennings County but with the State and Federal governments as well, and to keep a unified front against this outbreak. We continue to urge all residents to join us and to adhere to these restrictions to help keep North Vernon and Jennings County as safe and healthy as possible.

Supporting Statement of Town of Vernon Mayor Dan Wright:

Due to the heightened situation regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, and the potential severity of the health risk to our citizens, The Town of Vernon joins the Jennings County Board of Commissioners in advocating for strong and necessary precautions. We believe these precautions are most appropriate for the protection of our citizens and for the purpose of aggressively mitigating the spread of this deadly virus. We pledge to continue our cooperative effort against this pandemic with not only Jennings County but with the State and Federal governments as well, and to keep a unified front against this outbreak. We continue to urge all residents to join us and to adhere to these restrictions to help keep Vernon and Jennings County as safe and healthy as possible.