



# Town of Hilton Head Island TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

## An Update from Town Manager Steve Riley 4/10/2020

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders,

My warm wishes to each you this Passover and Easter season. As we head into the weekend, please be safe and keep practicing social distancing. This is a tough time for many Islanders, especially those who are out of work and for all of us who are stuck at home. I know it's a tough time for businesses and families that have lost loved ones. But I ask that you pause a moment and remember our strength as a community.

- Support each other.
- Support a charity.
- Focus on your well-being.
- Be positive.
- Have faith.
- Be Strong.
- Find happiness at home. We're launching a "Happy At Home" Campaign. Watch for more details!

Like you, I'd like to get back to my normal before COVID-19 and see my newly born grandchildren and visit with them and their parents, sit in a restaurant to enjoy lunch and shake hands with people throughout the community. I look forward to that time and am doing what I need to so I can have these experiences.

**Here's where I hope you can find some joy over the next few days:**

### **Heroes Among Us**

Our community is filled with wonderful people doing many wonderful things to help others and brighten their day. They are our Community Heroes who go above and beyond every day to do good deeds, demonstrate generosity and good will, and simply make our lives better. Whoever they are and whatever their good deeds, we want to know. Please go to [culturehhi.org](http://culturehhi.org) and submit your nomination for community heroes. We'll share their wonderful stories with you.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Call our Fire & Life Safety Educator at 843-247-4577 if you want a team from our Fire Rescue Division to drive by with fire truck and ambulance to sing happy birthday to your child. We'll need two days' notice to schedule. Follow us on social media so you can see the celebrations.

### **Culturehhi**

If you want to know what virtual experiences are happening across the Island, visit [culturehhi.org](http://culturehhi.org) or follow culturehhi on Facebook. Here you will find the latest updates on



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virtual concerts and other cool and fun activities you can view or do from the comfort of your own home.

## **Support Your Favorite Charity**

As always, please support a charity today. Charities need your contributions to continue providing assistance to their clients. There are many persons in our hospitality industry and other segments who are suddenly without work and may be turning to local agencies for help. Give – if you can- so they have the resources to help those in need. Thank you.

## **Support Your Favorite Restaurant**

My heart goes out to the many, many individuals whose jobs have been impacted by the coronavirus. One way you can help – at least in the hospitality industry – is by ordering takeout from some of your favorite to restaurants so they can stay open. We have been doing this every day that we can.

## **Here are the latest updates on COVID-19 response in our community:**

### **Coronavirus Cases**

As of today, 186 positive cases of the coronavirus have been reported for Beaufort County, according to the latest data from the [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control](#). The number of cases has climbed to 3,065 across the state. You can check out the number of cases in Hilton Head Island zip codes by visiting the coronavirus hub page on our website at [hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

### **Mayors Make Joint Plea for You to Stay Home**

Throughout the crisis, our local mayors have come together to collaborate on messages and reaching out to our state legislators. Most recently, they joined together and produced a video encouraging residents across the Lowcountry to stay home, acknowledge our first responders and keep social distancing. [You can check it out here!](#)

### **Short-Term Rentals**

Our Town Council members re-evaluated their recent passage of an emergency ordinance that impacted short term rentals in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Today, the council repealed that ordinance. They adopted the [emergency order \(2020-19\)](#) Governor Henry McMaster signed last week prohibiting owners of short-term rentals and other lodging accommodations from making or accepting new reservations from people traveling from areas the CDC has identified as places where COVID-19 transmission is widespread, including the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.



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## **Cancelling Reservations? Here's What You Need to Know**

The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs is receiving a large number of calls from consumers who have cancelled hotel reservations and property rentals due to travel restrictions or the declared State of Emergency. So have we at the Town. The complaints deal with businesses that are keeping deposits, not issuing refunds, or charging a cancellation fee. Consumers are not automatically entitled to a refund or credit if they decide to cancel their reservations. There is no state law requiring businesses to provide full refunds when a State of Emergency has been declared. Consumers seeking refunds should review the terms and conditions of their rental or reservation agreement, talk to your credit card provider about options, or file a complaint with consumer affairs, which can assist you with voluntary mediation services. Visit [www.consumer.sc.gov](http://www.consumer.sc.gov) and click on "How Do I..."