



# An Advisory To Licensees . . . . . from the NC Board of Funeral Service

*As the Coronavirus continues to spread across the United States, it has direct and immediate impact on North Carolina. With regard to the practice of funeral service, the NC Board of Funeral Service will send you regular updates on the crisis as more information is announced at both the state and federal levels.*

*As an important first step, please visit the Board website at [www.ncbfs.org](http://www.ncbfs.org) for links to current, critical sources of information regarding the virus and its impact on our state and profession.*

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION & UPDATES FOR LICENSEES

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### *In Loving Memory*



Martha Groves Harris  
1938-2020

With sincere sympathy, the NC Board of Funeral Services extends heartfelt condolences to Paul Harris, former Board President [2002] and long-time Executive Director [2004-12], in remembering his mother, Martha Groves Harris, who passed away on Tuesday, April 21, 2020. Mrs. Harris graduated from the UNC School of Nursing, Class of 1960, and was a proud **UNC TARHEEL**.

She is survived by her daughter, Jennifer Harris Bazari and husband, Jiab of Clayton; sons, Paul Harris and wife, Theresa, of Durham; Andrew Harris and wife, Nancy, of Clayton; sisters, Susan Groves Bicking of Wenonah, NJ and Judy Groves West of Wenonah, NJ; grandchildren, Duncan Harris, Pearce Harris and Sarah Bazari. The family honored Mrs. Harris' life with a private service in her memory.

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## GOVERNOR COOPER EXTENDS STAY-AT-HOME RESTRICTIONS THROUGH MAY 8

In a briefing earlier today, Governor Cooper announced the extension of the current stay-at-home provisions through May 8<sup>th</sup> as the coronavirus epidemic continues to affect North Carolina with increases in the number of positive cases and deaths. The Governor's announcement continues the provisions in Executive Order 121 which imposed a statewide stay-at-home order and closed all non-essential business. The order identified funeral homes, cemeteries and crematories as essential business and are thus able to remain open and continue services to the public.

As a reminder, if your firm is subject to the Executive Order, funerals may include no more than 50 individuals at one time and in one place subject to guidelines on social distancing. All other public and private gatherings may not include more than 10 individuals in the same place at the same time. Some of you are subject to more stringent local stay-at-home orders that your county or municipality may have imposed. As noted in the Executive Order, more stringent provisions will apply in such cases rather than the Order's requirements.

In Wake County, the Board of County Commissioners limited funerals to no more than 25 individuals at the same time and in the same place. As with the Executive Order, funeral homes along with crematories and cemeteries are deemed essential businesses and may continue to provide services to the public.

In his briefing, Governor Cooper stated that North Carolina would relax the current restrictions in a three-phase process shown below so long as certain benchmarks have been met. A reduction in restrictions would occur with each phase. To move from one phase to the next, there must be a 14-day decrease in the percentage of positive tests and the number of coronavirus-like cases identified by surveillance methods. There must also be a decrease or sustained-leveling of the number of lab-confirmed cases and hospitalizations.

In Phase 1:

- Modify the Stay At Home order to allow travel not currently defined as essential allowing people to leave home for commercial activity at any business that is allowed to be open, such as clothing stores, sporting goods stores, book shops, houseware stores and other retailers.
- Ensure that any open stores implement appropriate employee and consumer social distancing, enhanced hygiene and cleaning protocols, symptom screening of employees, accommodations for vulnerable workers, and provide education to employees and workers to combat misinformation
- Continue to limit gatherings to no more than 10 people
- Reopen parks that have been closed subject to the same gathering limitation. Outdoor exercise will continue to be encouraged.
- Continue to recommend face coverings in public spaces when 6 feet of distancing isn't possible
- Encourage employers to continue teleworking policies
- Continue rigorous restrictions on nursing homes and other congregant care settings
- Local emergency orders with more restrictive measures may remain in place.

Phase 2:        At least 2-3 weeks after Phase 1

- Lift Stay At Home order with strong encouragement for vulnerable populations to continue staying at home to stay safe
- Allow limited opening of restaurants, bars, fitness centers, personal care services, and other businesses that can follow safety protocols including the potential need to reduce capacity
- Allow gathering at places such as houses of worship and entertainment venues at reduced capacity
- Increase in number of people allowed at gatherings
- Open public playgrounds
- Continue rigorous restrictions on nursing homes and other congregant care settings

Phase 3:        At least 4-6 weeks after Phase 2

- Lessen restrictions for vulnerable populations with encouragement to continue practicing physical distancing and minimizing exposure to settings where distancing isn't possible
- Allow increased capacity at restaurants, bars, other businesses, houses of worships, and entertainment venues
- Further increase the number of people allowed at gatherings
- Continue rigorous restrictions on nursing homes and other congregant care settings

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***Please Remember . . .*** If you encounter a shortage of Personal Protective Equipment, call your local Emergency Management Office for information on replenishing supplies.