



*James Hark  
Mayor*

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

First, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the business owners, essential workers, healthcare providers, emergency responders and citizens for their efforts to navigate these past weeks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

After careful deliberation with not only state and federal officials but also local stakeholders, elected officials and leaders I am offering the following statement regarding how Hannibal will proceed in the upcoming weeks.

First, I support the Governor's Phase I plan and guidelines for the re-opening of business. I feel it is important not only to the economic stability of the State but also equally important to the citizens' ability to assume some normalcy and enjoyment of life.

Secondly, I recognize the Phase I plan is a soft opening; it is not a return to business as usual that we were accustomed to just some 90 days ago. There are many conditions and restrictions which businesses are challenged to face in order to reopen all while maintaining a safe environment for their employees and customers. The responsibility lies entirely upon the business owners to ensure they meet the established guidelines and I am confident the businesses in our community have the appreciation for their customers to meet those guidelines and protect those who support their business.

We want all our businesses to come back strong. We also expect them to be responsible in protecting the safety of their employees and customers.

I still maintain that the most effective way to prevent the spread of any virus is to limit contact; not engage in unnecessary travel; and avoid large groups. With that said, I am not restricting nor mandating any regulations beyond what has been provided by the Governor.

I must stress to you however, it is incumbent upon every individual to take appropriate precautions to minimize their own risk. Citizens should still wear protective personal items, such as masks; and practice good hygiene habits as well as social distancing while in public. For those who are uncomfortable going out in public, there are still resources and services to accommodate you as well. I am in hopes that the knowledge we have gained and practices we have adopted will minimize the potential for unnecessary risk and exposure.

For a list of the Governors Phase I Plan, you may visit

<https://showmestrong.mo.gov/>

website as well as the City of Hannibal website, [www.hannibal-mo.gov](http://www.hannibal-mo.gov) and Facebook page. Additional resource documents are available at the Hannibal Chamber of Commerce website, [www.hannibalchamber.org](http://www.hannibalchamber.org) ; and Hannibal Regional Economic Development website, [www.hredc.com](http://www.hredc.com)

Once again, thank you to all who have worked so diligently to mitigate the virus and its impact on Hannibal. Let us continue to take care of each other as we move forward together; Hannibal Proud.