

Businesses' Requests to be Considered as Essential Services

Association County Commissioners of Georgia

Cable/Internet Providers

AT&T

As cities and counties consider measures more restrictive than the State regarding Coronavirus response, an exception for "Critical Infrastructure Workers" or employees working on "Essential Infrastructure" should be considered. These workers are already defined by The U.S.

Department of Homeland Security, Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency, *Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response* dated March 19, 2020: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>.

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Engineers/Contractors

Engineers

(see homebuilders)

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General Contractors

(see homebuilders)

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Homebuilders

Excluding homebuilders from essential services will have a devastating effect on the real estate industry – at the worst possible time. With cease work orders or no certificate of occupancy, banks can't close the loans and Realtors can't close the deal, which means the builders and their subcontractors can't get paid for the months of work (and thousands of dollars) they've put into the project.

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Georgia Urban Ag Council

The Georgia Urban Ag Council represents the landscape, turf and horticulture industry in Georgia. The cities the council has engaged with have been very receptive and inclusive of these operations as Essential Businesses. Hopefully Atlanta and all 159 counties will also give this information their consideration - [here is a list of states and any action taken on landscape business activities](#). The council's services are critical to the environmental and physical living conditions necessary in our communities.

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Financial Services

Banks and Credit Unions

As counties are developing ordinances, it's important to keep in mind that city and county ordinances vary on the definition of essential services. To provide clarification, [here](#) is a link to two documents from the U.S. Departments of Treasury and Homeland Security regarding financial services.

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Title Max

TitleMax provides consumers with credit and liquidity as well as access to lending services consumers otherwise may not have. The latest FDIC Economic Inclusion Survey shows that nearly 1 in 3 Georgians are unbanked or underbanked.² This data illustrates the need for a variety of financial institutions to help meet the credit needs of Georgia residents who may lack access to traditional banks and credit unions during this pandemic. Financial institutions are needed more than ever in light of COVID-19 and TitleMax clearly meets federal law and federal guidance definitions of a financial institution and requests that counties treat these financial institutions as essential businesses that should remain open.

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Food/Beverage Providers

Georgia Beverage Association

Suppliers and delivery personnel are working overtime to keep up with demand in grocery and convenience stores. Drivers are working around the clock to keep up with demand. Unfortunately, this could become more of the new "normal" if the drivers get sick

and can't work. To that end, the Georgia Beverage Association needs your help. The current noise ordinances and curfews are proving to be a detriment to their ability to deliver. There need to be flexibility to get much needed food products, gasoline and other supplies to grocery and convenience stores.

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Georgia Food Bank Network

While there may be restrictions on movement of people and traffic as everyone makes decisions on how best to contain COVID-19, the food bank network in Georgia should be considered an essential service. The food bank network is a first responder in disasters with more USDA food on the way via recent emergency legislation signed by President Trump this week.

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Grocers

The patchwork of city and county ordinances is very time consuming with the number of municipalities they are monitoring and working with. Grocers are working together with GFIA to come up with ideas that can be shared with the municipalities on how they can achieve their safety goals and still allow grocers to serve the customer.

Poultry Industry

During the COVID-19 response, The US Department of Homeland Security defines critical infrastructure industries to include healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply. Workers in these industries should continue to report to work because they are vital to the food and health supply chain – while following CDC guidance to stay away if they are sick.

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Walmart

Some cities and counties have begun implementing rules that make it near impossible to serve the customers, regardless of the size retailers/grocers. As a result, customers are lined up inside the store and are allowed entrance once another exits. The patchwork of ordinances around the state have been a huge challenge to grocers and retailers alike.

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Industrial

Forestry

As more counties are starting to promulgate shelter in place orders, please consider the federal guidance that recommends certain critical infrastructure remain operational during such shelter in place orders. Among other industries listed, such as energy and healthcare, is also the forest industry as we have a critical role to play in supplying Georgians with essential items such as toilet paper, other tissue products, diapers, lumber, etc. that are in high demand during these difficult times.

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Georgia Ports Authority

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Railroads

When local governments consider issuing a curfew in response to COVID-19, railroads should be included in the list of essential service providers. In the interests of the welfare of residents and businesses in areas affected by such conditions and of maintaining essential supply chains, it is critical to assure continued rail operations – as safe conditions allow.

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Sanitation

Georgia Chemistry Council

The GMA model ordinance exempts critical infrastructure as defined by the Department of Homeland Security. If ACCG considers similar action, the Department of Homeland Security guidance on [Critical Infrastructure and COVID-19](#) should be taken into account. This industry is considered under this guidance and is working very hard to combat the virus as our members produce many disinfectants, cleaning agents, and biocides while also keeping our employees safe.

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Pest Control

According to the U.S. Government, pest control / exterminators provide an essential service critical to the infrastructure, safety, health, and sanitation of the United States. As such, exterminators have been designated as Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers by the Department of Homeland Security. Specifically, on March 19, 2020 the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) released guidance to help state and local jurisdictions and the private sector identify and manage their essential workforce while responding to COVID-19. [Homeland Security National Letter](#) (Exterminators listed on page 9 under Public Works Sector)

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Utilities

Atlanta Gas Light/Southern Company

Atlanta Gas Light is continuing to meet its obligations as a utility in performing essential safety, compliance and customer work while operating under the guidance around social distancing to protect our employees and the public. The company respectfully request counties support in ensuring utility operations are considered “essential services” that are exempt from any proposed limits on business activity during the crisis.

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Georgia EMCs

The top priority of Georgia EMCs is keeping generation sites running and fully staffed. Their goal is to ensure that power plant operators have mobility to come and go from sites if rules are restrictive. The federal government has recommended all power plants be treated as critical infrastructure and workers be exempt from business restrictions.

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Other

Animal Care

Animal shelters, boarding facilities, kennels and/or veterinary clinics for the sheltering and care of “companion animals” should be considered essential services.

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Best Friends Animal Society

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Georgia Automobile Dealers Association

The federal government has updated its guidance to local governments to assist in determining what businesses are essential to support critical infrastructure. Included in the updated list are “workers critical to rental and leasing of vehicles. We ask your assistance in communicating to your member counties that sales operations of franchised new car and truck dealerships can and should be considered essential business during this period of public health emergency.

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