

COBB COUNTY, GA  
FILED IN OFFICE

2021 DEC 22 P 3:46

## DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY IN COBB COUNTY

COBB COUNTY  
CLERK'S OFFICE

**WHEREAS**, the President of the United States declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a National Public Health Emergency on Friday March 13, 2020; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of the State of Georgia also declared a State Public Health Emergency in Georgia in March 2020; and,

**WHEREAS**, the former Chairman of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners declared a Local Emergency on March 24, 2020, which was extended through April 24, 2020, in order to combat the original virus (SARS-CoV-2); and,

**WHEREAS**, the current Chairwoman of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners declared a subsequent Local Emergency on August 19, 2021, which was extended through November 16, 2021, in order to combat the Delta variant; and,

**WHEREAS**, since the virus appeared in Cobb County in 2020, there have been 115,957 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the County, and 1,453 deaths; and,

**WHEREAS**, the implementation of COVID-19 vaccines has reduced the number of positive COVID-19 cases across the country, and in Cobb County, over the past year; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC has reported a new and noticeable spike in the number of reported COVID-19 cases across the country, and,

**WHEREAS**, Cobb Douglas Public Health (CDPH) reports a similar surge of COVID-19 cases, and high community spread, within Cobb County; and,

**WHEREAS**, CDPH reports that, of the samples being tested in Georgia, 95% are now the Omicron variant; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC advises that the Omicron variant will likely spread more easily than the original SARS-CoV-2 virus, but that how easily Omicron spreads compared to the Delta variant remains unknown; and,

**WHEREAS**, CDPH reports that Cobb County's 7-day average (as of December 21, 2021), was 386 cases/100,000, which is three and a half times higher than the 100/100,000 threshold signifying "high community transmission"; and,

**WHEREAS**, Cobb County has a COVID positivity rate of 10.3% and rising, with a positivity rate over 5% being considered "too high"; and,

**WHEREAS**, CDPH reports that Cobb County's number of new cases on December 21, 2021, was 583, which constitutes the County's highest single-day total since October 7, 2021, and demonstrates a much steeper curve than in previous surges; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is difficult to ascertain the true number of cases currently existing throughout the County due to significant lags in testing; and,

**WHEREAS**, the testing results available indicate a rapid rise in the amount of community spread, which is of great concern to public health officials; and,

**WHEREAS**, at this time of year, family and friends tend to gather to celebrate the holidays, which may include individuals who are ineligible to be vaccinated (e.g., children under age 5); and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC reports that current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant; and,

**WHEREAS**, public health officials advise that the best way to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spread, and to keep family and friends safer, is for all eligible persons to be vaccinated and, if already vaccinated, to obtain a booster shot; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Official Code of Cobb County, Georgia, grants the chairperson of the board of commissioners authority to declare an emergency for the unincorporated area of the county in the event of an actual or threatened emergency, which may result in the large-scale loss of life, injury, property damages or destruction, or in the major disruption of routine community affairs, business or governmental operations in the county and which is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant extraordinary assistance by federal, state and local departments and agencies to supplement the efforts of available public and private resources, Cobb County Code, Sec. 34-2; and,

**WHEREAS**, following a declaration of emergency and during the continuance of such state of emergency, the Official Code of Cobb County, Georgia, authorizes the chairperson to implement local emergency measures to protect life and property or to bring the emergency situation under control, including but not limited to effectuating Sec. 34-7 of the County Code, Cobb County Code, Sec. 34-2; and,

**WHEREAS**, medical professionals and public health officials have cautioned that if COVID-19 continues to spread in Cobb County and the rest of Georgia at the rate it has been spreading in recent days, the healthcare system could face a strain on critical resources; and,

**WHEREAS**, in the judgment of the Chairwoman, with advice from CDPH and Cobb Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), public health emergency conditions have re-emerged in unincorporated Cobb County requiring renewed corrective actions for the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Cobb County; and,

**WHEREAS**, the most critical tools for combating the Omicron variant in areas of substantial or high transmission, like Cobb County, are (1) to increase COVID-19 vaccination coverage, including booster shots for the vaccinated; (2) wear a mask in public indoor places if unvaccinated; and (3) avoid crowds and gatherings if you are sick; and,

**WHEREAS**, on December 22, 2021, Cobb's County Manager, Dr. Jackie McMorris, re-implemented a mask mandate (regardless of vaccination status) and social distancing protocols for county employees and members of the public entering county-owned and/or operated indoor facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the County's District Health Director, Dr. Janet Memark, has advised the Chairwoman that she agrees that this Declaration of Emergency is necessary to protect the health and well-being of the citizens of Cobb County; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in the Chairwoman by local and state law;

**IT IS HEREBY DECLARED** that the local state of emergency exists in Cobb County and shall terminate on January 21, 2022 at 11:59 p.m., unless renewed by the Chairwoman;

**WHEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:**

1.

In accordance with the recommendations of the CDC and CDBH, and for the health and safety of those who are unable to be vaccinated at this time (e.g., children under the age of 5) who are particularly susceptible to the Omicron variant, all Cobb County residents are strongly encouraged to get fully vaccinated and obtain a booster shot as soon as possible. To assist in this critical need, all CDPH facilities are providing COVID tests, vaccinations, and booster shots free of charge. CDPH is also committed to dispatching an "outreach team" to any location where 20 or more persons are interested in, or willing to, be vaccinated/boosted. CDPH is also committed to providing in-home vaccinations and boosters for home-bound persons.

2.

For the health and safety of those who are unable to be vaccinated at this time (e.g., children under the age of 5) who are particularly susceptible to the Omicron variant, Cobb residents are strongly encouraged to continue following CDC guidance as to appropriate mask wearing and other methods for safely enjoying holiday gatherings.

3.

Pursuant to Section 34-2 of the Cobb County Code, this Declaration of Emergency hereby automatically activates the County's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and authorizes the deployment of personnel and use of any forces to which the plan applies and for use or distribution

of any supplies, equipment, materials, and facilities assembled, stockpiled or arranged to be made available pursuant to the Georgia Emergency Management Act or any other laws applicable to emergencies or disasters.

4.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, County boards, authorities, committees, and similar bodies are permitted to conduct meetings by teleconference so long as said meetings are conducted in compliance with the Act. *See* O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.*

5.

This Declaration of Emergency in Cobb County is not intended to and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable in law or equity by any party against Cobb County, its officials, employees, or agents. County employees will continue to be provided separate detailed written guidance vaccine and mask recommendations or requirements.

ENTERED at 3:28 p.m. on December 22, 2021.

COBB COUNTY, GEORGIA

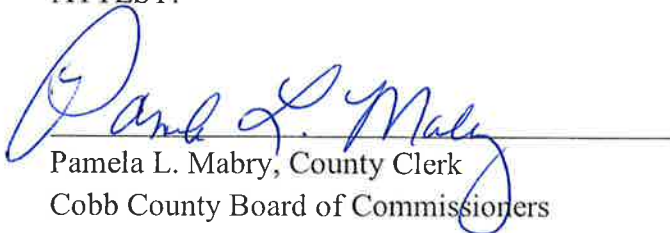
(COUNTY SEAL)



Lisa N. Cupid, Chairwoman  
Cobb County Board of Commissioners



ATTEST:



Pamela L. Mabry, County Clerk  
Cobb County Board of Commissioners