



**March 19, 2020**

**MAYOR'S UPDATE RE: COVID-19**

Baptist Memorial Hospital - North Mississippi and the MS Department of Health announced the first positive case of COVID-19 in Lafayette County this morning as the number of cases in Mississippi rose to xx. While today is the first time that we can confirm that we have a positive coronavirus case, we have been preparing for this moment for many weeks.

The safety and well-being of every Lafayette County citizen must remain our top priority and we all share the responsibility to prevent further spread of this virus and exercise responsible choices which include social distancing. My fear for our community is that many still believe "this is no big deal." Dr. Jason Waller and Dr. Jeff Dennis are two of our physicians on the frontline and I've asked them to share their thoughts on the severity of this in our community.

\*\*\*\*Parts of transcript missing\*\*\*\*

We WILL return to normal...your level of social distancing will determine how long this will take. Drastic measures now will mean the difference between a 2- 4 week crisis and an 8-10 week crisis. We are a strong community. We have proven it time and time again.

Please follow the suggestions of our medical professionals on the frontline and distance yourselves. Our future depends on it. We are stronger together.

In a time of deep uncertainty, fear and circumstances that are changing literally every hour, we understand that every member of our community is affected by this pandemic. Things I prayed we would not have to implement even 12 hours ago have changed completely.