



## Gathering Guidelines

Our Chamber is committed to protecting the health and safety of our members and community, during the current COVID-19 pandemic and always. The following guidelines detail how the Chamber will conduct (or not) in-person happenings in the months to come.

### Breakfasts, Luncheons & Programs with Meals

Chamber hosted programs combined with meals will resume as in-person events as of **Aug 1, 2020**.

*\*Note: Date may change according to virus updates. We will not host in-person events if the State or County reverts the phased guidelines back to Phase 1 or limits gatherings to any number less than 25 people.*

1. Attendance at these programs will be limited to a number that allows for proper indoor/outdoor social distancing at the event location.
  - a. This attendance number may vary by location of the event, but we estimate in-person attendance to be between 30-60 guests for most events.
  - b. Attendees will be directed and assigned to specific seats and tables.
  - c. On-site registrations will not be permitted.
2. Meals will be provided based on a preset or limited menu, location dependent, and served in accordance with health guidelines. There will be no buffets or serve yourself options.
3. These events will have a registration fee, with a reduced price offered for virtual attendance. Passport Holders or prepaid registrations will be honored. (See note about passes below.)
4. Virtual attendance will be available through pre-registration, as possible, but will only include streaming of the speaker(s) and main program.
5. Masks will need to be worn by all, in accordance with VA Governor's mandates at the time of the event.
6. We ask that no one shakes hands or shares hugs. Though not required, gloves are optional.
7. Please, do not attend an event if you feel unwell, are a higher-risk individual, have recently travelled to a known hotspot of coronavirus cases, or are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
8. By attending, you accept the risk that any interaction with the general public poses an elevated possibility of being exposed to COVID-19, and we cannot guarantee that you will not be exposed during an event.
9. The Chamber staff will:
  - a. Have a Sanitation Station onsite with available masks and hand sanitizer for use by all guests before, during and after events
  - b. Have CDC signage about pandemic health and safety posted at the check-in table
  - c. Work with locations to ensure the event space, tables, chairs and necessary utensils are cleaned and disinfected before and after programs, as well as socially distanced
  - d. Work with locations and attendees to limit the need for attendees to touch common surfaces such as doorknobs or pens at check-in
  - e. Wear masks when on-site and follow social distancing guidelines

## **Business After Hours Events**

Due to the social nature of these events, our Chamber will not be holding in-person BAH events in the foreseeable future. Health guidance tells us that the coronavirus is most commonly spread when people are in close proximity, talking with each other, in enclosed areas and for extended periods of time. We also acknowledge the increased risk to our event hosts of having a large number of visitors at their businesses and the extra effort it will require for them to comply with state/national guidelines. Hosts from 2020 will be offered first pick of 2021 dates.

## **Ribbon Cuttings**

1. Ribbon cuttings and Grand Openings must be reserved at least 14 days in advance.
2. Standard fees remain: No fee for members, \$75 fee for non-members.
3. In-person celebrations must adapt to the VA Governor's reopening phase at the time of the event. This can mean limiting attendance public in accordance with guidelines.
  - a. We will still share the news of Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings through our digital/email platforms; these messages will need to include guidance about public participation and safety from the host/opening business.
4. It is recommended that ribbon cuttings occur outside, as outdoor events are safer from a health perspective.
5. Masks will need to be worn by all, in accordance with VA Governor's mandates at the time of the event.
6. Social distancing guidelines must be observed. The chamber expects hosts/opening businesses to observe health and safety guidelines in accordance with their industry and the VA Governor's requirements.
7. Traditional large group photos (crowded around/behind a ribbon) may be a challenge, but we will work with you at the event to either take multiple photos, adjust the spacing of people and extend the area 'behind' the ribbon.
8. By attending, you accept the risk that any interaction with the general public poses an elevated possibility of being exposed to COVID-19, and we cannot guarantee that you will not be exposed during an event. Please note acknowledgement of this risk on your submitted Ribbon Cutting Reservation Form.
9. The Chamber will:
  - a. Clean and disinfect the ceremonial scissors and ribbon stations before and after ribbon cuttings
  - b. Have a hand sanitizing station for use before and after ceremonies
  - c. Wear masks when on-site and follow social distancing guidelines

## **An Update on 2020 Event Passports, Renewal BAH Passes & Complimentary Passes**

The Chamber is *extending the use of all Passports and Passes given in or purchased for 2020 until May 2021*. Additionally, the Chamber is expanding the ability of any pass to be used for or towards any paid program or event we offer during the rest of this year. This means the value of a pass can count as full payment of or credit towards any registration until the value is spent. For example, a BAH Pass given with a membership renewal is valued at \$20 and could be applied up to that amount for a Breakfast or other paid program. (Please note, this does not extend to Chamber Foundation events such as the Golf Tournament or A Salute to Our Heroes.) We request no more than 1 pass be used for any single event. We hope this aids in your returning to programs when possible and as you feel safe to do so.