WHEREAS, Stewart County has a responsibility to take all possible actions to ensure the health and safety of our staff and our citizens in the event of infectious disease pandemics; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was a pandemic and on March 12, 2020, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee declared a State of Emergency to deploy additional resources to combat the spread of the virus, and on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency over the coronavirus pandemic, and on March 16, 2020, I, Mayor Robin Brandon declared a County state of emergency related to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, empirical evidence from other communities and nations indicates that the spread of the disease is most effectively slowed by social distancing and reducing interactions among dense groups of people; and

WHEREAS, Governor Lee has issued Executive Orders #21 and #22 identifying essential and non-essential businesses and the closure of such non-essential businesses and, on the advice of 600 physicians across the State of Tennessee, Governor Lee has also urged “Safer at Home” mandates to stop the spread of the COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, despite the numerous actions taken in recent weeks to limit the spread of the COVID-19, in the last five (5) days, the number of cases in Tennessee has more than doubled, and there are now at least 72 Counties with cases, indicating that COVID-19 is spreading throughout all areas of the State and presents a serious risk to the health, safety, and welfare of all Stewart Countians, which requires further County action to contain the spread of COVID-19 and preserve the County and State’s healthcare resources; and

WHEREAS, after proclamation of a civil emergency, the Mayor, in the interest of public safety and welfare, may make all orders necessary for the protection of life and property, including but not limited to, the closure of certain establishments; and

WHEREAS, the goal of this administration is to continue to provide a high-performing government that will be flexible, and capable of meeting the challenges of this pandemic as they come; and

WHEREAS, because protecting personal liberty is deeply important, this Order is NOT a shelter in place mandate and instead strongly urges Stewart Countians to stay at home in Stewart County when at all possible for the protection of themselves and their community; and

WHEREAS, because with personal liberty comes great responsibility, all Stewart Countians must do their part by staying at home whenever possible for a limited period of time to avoid exposure to, and slow the spread of, this virus, which will limit the burden on health care resources and allow normal activities to resume sooner,
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Robin Brandon, Stewart County, Tennessee Mayor, by virtue of the executive and administrative authority vested in me by the people of Stewart County and the laws of the State of Tennessee, do hereby Declare a State of Emergency, and do hereby direct and order that the following policies be enacted immediately:

1.) **SAFER AT HOME IN STEWART COUNTY.** All individuals currently living within the County are strongly advised to stay at their place of residence or practice extreme social distancing as they enjoy our creeks, rivers, streams, and outdoor areas. To the extent individuals are using shared or outdoor spaces, they must, at all times, as reasonably possible, maintain social distancing of at least six feet apart from any other person when they are outside their residence. Because the COVID-19 virus lives the longest and is transferred easiest from hard plastic and metal surfaces, all County Playground equipment is considered off-limits until further notice. All persons are strongly advised to leave their residence **only** for Essential Activities, Essential Government Functions, or to operate Essential Businesses as defined by the Governor in Executive Order #22.

2.) All individuals should only travel for essential activities or participate in activities that follow social distancing guidelines.

3.) **MASS GATHERINGS PROHIBITED.** All public and private gatherings of more than ten people occurring outside a single household or living unit are prohibited, except for the limited purposes as expressly permitted by this Order. Nothing in this Order prohibits the gathering of members of a household or living unit.

4.) **NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES.** Both essential and non-essential businesses not specifically listed as closed by Executive Orders #6, #17, and #21 are required to practice social distancing and make reasonable efforts to stop groups of 10, or more. To the greatest extent feasible, those businesses shall maintain six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public, including, but not limited to, when any customers are standing in line.

5.) **ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES.** For purposes of this Order, the following are considered “Essential Activities”.
   a. To engage in activities or perform tasks essential to their health and safety, or to the health and safety of their family or household members (including, but not limited to, pets), such as, by way of example only and without limitation, obtaining medical supplies or medication, visiting a healthcare professional, or obtaining supplies they need to work from home.
   b. To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or household members, or to deliver those services or supplies to others.
   c. To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals comply with social distancing requirements as defined in this Order, such as, by way of example and without limitation, walking, hiking, biking, dog walking, running, bird watching, or fishing.
   d. To perform work providing essential products and services at an Essential Business or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Order, including **minimum basic operations**.
   e. To perform payroll and other critical administrative functions for any business, including businesses not defined as essential.
   f. To care for a family or pet in another household.
   g. Activities that can be executed with groups of less than 10 people while maintaining social distancing.

6.) **ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES.** For the purpose of this Order, “Essential Businesses” means:
   a. Healthcare Operations and Essential Infrastructure as defined in this Order; including hospitals, pharmacies, walk in care facilities, elder care, blood banks, research and laboratory services, dental, medical and wholesale distribution, home health care workers or aides for the elderly, nursing homes or residential healthcare facilities, optometrists, medical supplies and equipment manufacturers, and providers.
   b. Essential Retail including grocery and beverage stores, farm and produce stands, cooperatives, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants (only for take-out/delivery), catering, package stores, hardware and building material stores, cell phone and electronics, taxis,
private transportation, bicycle retail/repair, real estate agent services, home or building cleaning and maintenance, lawn care, locksmiths, legal services, alarm and security companies, businesses that provide services that are necessary to maintain the sanitation, safety, and essential operation of residences and businesses, office supply stores, businesses that provide goods and services exclusively delivered through curb-side pickup, drive-thru, shipment or delivery, or maintain social distancing requirements. This includes stores that sell groceries and other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.

c. Essential Infrastructure including utilities, fuel supply, public water, wastewater, telecommunications, data centers, airports, hotels and places of accommodation, transportation.

d. Manufacturing/Distribution.

e. Financial Institutions including banks, insurance, payroll, accounting, and services related to financial markets.

f. Veterinary and livestock services including farming.

g. Essential services including trash and recycling and processing and disposal related to this, mail and shipping services, laundromats, building and cleaning maintenance, childcare services, auto repair and servicing, warehouse/distribution and fulfillment, funeral homes, crematoriums and cemeteries, storage and animal shelters.

h. Skilled trades such as Electricians, Welders, HVAC, Plumbers, construction, property management, planning engineering design firms, and pest control.

i. Providers of basic necessities to economically disadvantaged populations including but not limited to homeless shelters, food banks, and human resource providers.

7.) The following businesses are closed – cafeterias, the dine in portion of restaurants, food courts, movie theaters, gyms, country clubs (excluding outdoor activities), concert venues, nightclubs, bars, indoor malls, hair salons, nail salons, barber shops, massage parlors, tanning salons, and tattoo parlors. All retail stores not identified as essential and not providing curbside, pickup, or delivery services, shall close.

8.) This Order does not prohibit an employee, contractor, vendor, or supplier of subject establishments from entering, exiting, using, or occupying that establishment in their professional capacity.

9.) All Funerals, Celebrations of Life, Cremation Services, and Memorial Services should only be attended by close family OR less than 10 people per venue in accordance with Governor Bill Lee’s Executive Order #17.

10.) The threat to businesses defying these Orders is not only that the Sheriff’s Department is authorized to enforce the Order and close those businesses not in compliance, but that their license to operate could be revoked by the State.

11.) Nothing in this Order shall be construed to limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way, the provision of health care or medical services to members of the public.

12.) Nothing in this Order shall be construed to limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way access to essential services for low-income residents, including but not limited to food banks.

13.) Nothing in this Order shall be construed to limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way the operations of newspapers, television, radio, and other media services.

14.) Nothing in this Order shall be construed to limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way the operations of law enforcement agencies.

15.) Nothing in this Order shall be construed to limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way the operations of manufacturing or critical infrastructure sectors as defined by Department of Homeland Security – Chemical, Critical Manufacturing, Dams, Defense Industrial Base, Emergency Services, Energy, Financial Services, Food and Agriculture, Government Facilities, Healthcare and Public Health, Information Technology, Transportation, Water and Wastewater, Childcare Programs and Services, Auto Repair, Warehouse Distribution and fulfillment, Animal Shelters, News media, Banks, Insurance, Payroll, Accounting Services, Services related to the Financial Markets, Food Banks, Skilled Trades such as Electricians, Welders, Plumbers, HVAC, construction firms and professionals, law enforcement, fire prevention and response, building code enforcement, security, emergency management and response,
building cleaners and janitors, disinfection, logistics, technology support, and essential government services.

16.) Nothing in this Order shall be construed to limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way the Operations of Child Care Facilities. They should continue to follow guidelines provided by the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

17.) All these changes take effect at 12:01 AM Wednesday, April 1st, 2020.

18.) This Order shall remain in effect until withdrawn or superseded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the County of Stewart to be affixed this 31st day of March 2020.

Robin Brandon, Stewart County Mayor