

Message from South Piedmont Community College President Dr. Maria Pharr

As I look back over the past few months, I am grateful for and humbled by the patience, commitment, and understanding everyone has shown as we adjusted our operations and interactions to continue our services in safer ways.

The South Piedmont family is a caring and close-knit community. We are a growing college, but we remain mindful of and dedicated to maintaining the supportive and meaningful connections we have with our students, our community, and each other. We will continue to find ways to adapt and persevere in our evolving world and stay focused on delivering the highest quality education and service to all of our constituents as they pass through our doors in both directions. And as we begin our upcoming fall semester, we will implement program options and operational guidelines that provide not only a safer environment, but also a novel, personalized, and integrated approach to learning. We are introducing flexible learning models in many of our courses which provide students with the flexibility to choose virtual, face-to-face, or a mix of both methods throughout the term. We also are offering an Associate in Arts program that can be completed in a year. Please look on our website to learn more about these exciting opportunities.

For more specific general information regarding our upcoming fall semester, please note the following:

- Courses that were originally scheduled for online delivery will remain unchanged.
- Seated courses will now transition to online while still maintaining planned course times with synchronous (real-time, online), instructor-led class sessions. This will allow for an easy transition if we are able to convert back to face-to-face instruction.
- Certain courses in health and nursing, public safety, natural sciences, applied sciences and technologies, and career and college readiness may have face-to-face components.

- Courses that meet in person will have limited capacity resulting in smaller groups of students.
- Courses that contain "open labs" will be scheduled by appointment.
- Courses with face-to-face components will follow strict cleaning and disinfecting protocols, will require students to wear masks, and will implement social distancing.

As it becomes safe and appropriate, we will shift more instruction to a face-to-face format. While our fall classes are mainly online, our campus locations are open for full services; however, we still encourage the use of virtual services when possible. This applies to advising, counseling, academic support, libraries, student activities, and other appropriate services.

South Piedmont's Reopening Plan is being developed in the wider context of North Carolina's guidance from our Governor and our health officials. We will continue to update the plan as the situation warrants and provide critical updates as conditions evolve.

We have been a leader across the state by adapting quickly and effectively to our ever-changing conditions, and we continue to lead the way through innovative and contemporary ways of delivering high-quality education. Thank you for your continued efforts to help South Piedmont be the beacon of hope and the foundation for progress in our community.

Dr. Maria Pharr, President



Dr. Maria Pharr

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Additional COVID-19 Funds Disbursed to 97 Counties for Public Health and Essential Services

Anson County received \$647,744

On Thursday, July 30 Governor Roy Cooper announced that an additional \$150 million in federal funds provided for COVID-19 relief to counties had been disbursed. These funds are from the state-administered Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) that was passed by Congress. The funds represent the second half of \$300 million appropriated by statute to county governments. Counties are required to offer a minimum of 25% of their total allocation of the funds to municipalities.

Anson County received \$647,744 in CRF funds.

"During this pandemic people across North Carolina rely on their local governments for essential health and safety help close to home. Local governments need stability and funding to cover the costs of Covid-19 response and we are working quickly to get these resources where they are needed," said Governor Cooper.

Though the federal government did not require that the state share any of the \$3.56 billion in the CRF to North Carolina local governments, Governor Cooper's COVID-19 budget proposal recommended \$300 million be allocated to counties and municipalities. HB 1023/S.L. 2020-80, Section 3.3(2), appropriated the additional \$150 million to county governments. The full distribution of funds is listed here by county. Counties and municipalities have been given instructions about how the funds may be used.

"The North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office appreciates everything local government leaders are doing to submit county plans and utilize these funds to respond to the COVID-19 crisis with testing, personal protection equipment, medical supplies, and much more," said Stephanie McGarrah, Director of NC PRO.

The CRF funds may be used for:

- Medical needs including the COVID-19 related expenses of public hospitals and clinics, including testing;
- Public health needs, such as personal protective equipment and other medical supplies, as well as the cost of cleaning public areas and facilities such as nursing homes;
- Payroll expenses for public safety or health-care employees dedicated to responding to the COVID-19 emergency; and
- Expenses to protect public health, including teleworking, distance learning, food delivery, paid leave for public employees, expenses for maintaining prisons, and protecting the homeless population.

Under state law, 97 counties received a base amount of \$250,000, with more distributed by population. Three large counties - Guilford, Mecklenburg, and Wake - received funds directly from the federal government. This quick disbursement of funds was coordinated by the state Office of State Budget and Management and the North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office (NC PRO).

NC PRO coordinates and oversees funds made available through federal and state COVID-19 recovery legislation, including the CRF. The office offers technical assistance for entities that receive funds and ensures proper reporting and accounting. The office will also work on the state's economic recovery and strategic plan as North Carolina rebuilds from this pandemic.

For questions about how CRF funds may be used or to view Coronavirus Relief Funds County Plans, go to the NCPRO website (www.nc.gov/agencies/ncpro) for more information.

Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

More North Carolinians are experiencing the benefits of the transportation system in the Tar Heel State because of the Americans with Disabilities Act, state officials said on the 30th anniversary of the landmark law.

"NCDOT recognizes stories from grandmothers about how curb ramps and accessible sidewalks provide needed daily inclusion, stories from parents of how the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles provides access to test-taking for their teenager with a learning disability and stories from community members about how NCDOT provides sign language interpreters at public meetings," said Mark Whisenant, ADA and Title VI program manager for the Office of Civil Rights for the N.C. Department of Transportation. "We celebrate the many ways in which the ADA has transformed American society and enabled a generation of Americans with disabilities to thrive."

Whisenant said the Office of Civil Rights is proud to play a critical role in ensuring the ADA enables people with disabilities to have the same opportunities as everyone else and to live independently and be self-sufficient.

North Carolina's population includes over 1.3 million people (13.9%) with a disability. Many of these people use facilities and services built and maintained by the NCDOT and local entities, including sidewalks, public transportation and highway rest areas. NCDOT, through ongoing programs, strives to expand transportation-related accessibility in the state.

Thirty years ago, through the ADA, our nation committed itself to eliminating discrimination against people with disabilities.

The NCDOT ADA Program has worked tirelessly over the years to ensure people with disabilities are able to access all programs and services we provide.

Though our country has come a long way towards achieving equal opportunity for people with disabilities, our work is not yet done, Whisenant said.

"We are committed to making the promise of fully accessible transportation services so that North Carolinians with disabilities are able to achieve their dreams and reach their full potential," he said.

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