ORDINANCE 2020-08

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL,
STATE, AND LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY DUE TO COVID-19
(NOVEL CORONAVIRUS DISEASE); CLOSING BEACHES
WITHIN WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR
CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN
EFFECTIVE DATE; AND PROVIDING AN END DATE.

WHEREAS, Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory
illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission and other potential
methods, and presents symptoms similar to those of influenza;

WHEREAS, in December of 2019, a new and substantial outbreak of COVID-19 emerged
in Wuhan, China, and has since spread rapidly throughout the world, including the United States,
and more specifically Walton County and other Counties in the State of Florida;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared
COVID-19 a pandemic;

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued guidelines
to prevent the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, a National State of Emergency was declared by the President of the United
States on March 13, 2020;

WHEREAS, a State of Emergency for the State of Florida was declared by the Governor
by Executive Order 20-51 (March 1, 2020), 20-51 (March 9, 2020), and 20-68 (March 17, 2020),
authorizing in accordance with Section 252.38, Florida Statutes, each political subdivision within
the State to “waive the procedures and formalities otherwise required of the political subdivision
by law pertaining to… [the] (p)erformance of public work and taking whatever prudent action to
ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community;

WHEREAS, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners declared a Local State
of Emergency on March 16, 2020;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 125.66(3), Florida Statutes, the Board of County
Commissioners may declare an emergency exists and that immediate enactment of an Emergency
Ordinance is necessary;

WHEREAS, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners declares that an
emergency exists due to the overwhelming crowds on the beaches of Walton County, that such
crowding is likely to lead to the spread of COVID-19, and that immediate enactment of an
Emergency Ordinance temporarily closing the beaches in Walton County is necessary to prevent
the spread of COVID-19;
WHEREAS, the Walton County Board of County commissioners expressly declares that the temporary closure of beaches due to the public health emergency arising from the COVID-19 pandemic shall not be construed as an abandonment of the public’s right to use the dry sand areas of the beaches.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of County Commissioners of Walton County, Florida, as follows:

1. All beaches within Walton County, Florida, are temporarily CLOSED to the public.

2. It shall be unlawful for members of the public to access the beaches within Walton County.

3. Beach shall have the same definition as contained in Chapter 22, Walton County Waterways and Beach Activities Ordinance. Words not defined in this Ordinance shall be given their common and ordinary meaning.

4. A violation of this Ordinance shall constitute a criminal offense and shall be punishable as provided in Section 252.50, Florida Statutes.

5. If any portion of this Ordinance is determined by any Court to be invalid, the invalid portion shall be stricken, and such striking shall not affect the validity of the remainder of this Ordinance. If any Court determines that this Ordinance, or any portion hereof, cannot be legally applied to any individual(s), group(s), entity(ies), property(ies), or circumstance(s), such determination shall not affect the applicability hereof to any other individual, group, entity, property, or circumstance.

6. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately and shall be in effect for thirty (30) days, unless extended by the Walton County Board of County Commissioners.

PASSED AND DULLY ADOPTED in emergency session by the Walton County Board of County Commissioners, this 19th day of March, 2020.

Attest:

[Signature]
Alex Alford, Clerk of Court and County Comptroller

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

[Signature]
W.N. "Bill" Chapman, Chair