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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 30, 2020

### **Temporary Operational Change of Schedule**

Washington, N.C. – In order to protect the health and safety of our job seekers, our communities, and our staff, the Rivers East Workforce Development Board has made the difficult decision to temporarily close the NCWorks Career Centers to the general public for in-person services, effective Monday, March 23, 2020.

The temporary closures impact all five Centers in our Region (Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin, and Pitt counties). While the Centers are closed to the public, staff are still working to ensure employers have access to needed talent pipelines and job seekers have access to employers and jobs.

Due to the nature of the services we provide, Career Center staff are considered “essential” and will continue to provide services to job seekers and employers by phone and virtually after the Stay-At-Home-Order goes into effect on Monday, March 30, 2020 at 5 pm. Contact information for each Center is below:

Beaufort County: 252-940-0900 or [ncworks.0520@nccommerce.com](mailto:ncworks.0520@nccommerce.com)  
Bertie County: 252-794-0799 or [ncworks.0521@nccommerce.com](mailto:ncworks.0521@nccommerce.com)  
Hertford County: 252-862-1257 or [ncworks.1400@nccommerce.com](mailto:ncworks.1400@nccommerce.com)  
Martin County: 252-792-7816 or [ncworks.9400@nccommerce.com](mailto:ncworks.9400@nccommerce.com)  
Pitt County: 252-355-9067 or [ncworks.4100@nccommerce.com](mailto:ncworks.4100@nccommerce.com)

Centers are continuing to post services and jobs on their respective Facebook pages.

Beaufort: @BoCoNCWorks  
Bertie: @BertieCoNCWorks  
Hertford: @HertfordCoNCWorks  
Martin: @MartinCoNCWorks  
Pitt: @PittCoNCWorks

Individuals that have found themselves out of work or working reduced hours, due to COVID-19 or any other reason, may be eligible for unemployment benefits.

Unemployment is not processed through the local NCWorks Career Centers. Individuals will need to file with the Division of Employment Security. Their website is [www.des.nc.gov](http://www.des.nc.gov) and their customer call line is 1-888-737-0259 (Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm). Due to the current pandemic, individuals should expect extended wait times when calling or trying to access the website.

Jennie Bowen, Workforce Development Director, stated, “This was not an easy decision when you have employers in the hospitality industry having to reduce hours or temporarily close to protect public health, and those employees need our services to help them navigate their next steps. At the same time, employers in the retail industry, such as our grocery stores and other retailers, are adding employees to keep up with demand, so they also need us to help supply a steady pool of candidates. You try to balance those needs with the need to protect our staff and our communities. As with other agencies, we encourage everyone to practice social-distancing and follow CDC and NCDHHS guidelines.”

The board’s office is located at 1502 N. Market St., Suite A in Washington. For more information, call (252) 974-1815.

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