



Hyde County, NC

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Donnie Shumate  
Public Information Officer  
dshumate@hydecountync.gov  
(252) 542-0083

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Hyde County Commissioners Vote to Lift Ocracoke Visitor Evacuation Order on December 2**

The Ocracoke Deputy Control Group met Wednesday, November 20, 2019, and have changed their original recommendation to the Hyde County Board of Commissioners to lift the evacuation order on November 22, 2019, or immediately following the reopening of NC 12. Due to the damage caused by the nor'easter, repair work to NC 12 is expected to take at least an additional two weeks to complete. With this uncertainty, the control group felt that the benchmark of having NC 12 completed before allowing re-entry should be taken out of the decision making process. The control group has therefore recommended to the board of commissioners that the evacuation order for visitors be lifted on December 2, 2019, regardless of any other setbacks.

The Hyde County Board of Commissioners discussed the Ocracoke Deputy Control Group's recommendation at the continuation of their recessed special meeting Wednesday night. Based on the control group's recommendation, the commissioners voted 4-1, with Commissioner Topping voting against, to lift the Ocracoke visitor evacuation on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 5:00 am.

After the evacuation order is lifted, visitors will be immediately allowed to access Ocracoke. Ferry operations will return to the paid reservation system normally in place. Reconstruction and debris removal will continue to take place for the foreseeable future. Please be aware of any obstacles while on the island. In addition, visitors should be advised there are limited lodging accommodations, food service, gas availability and other services normally available to the visiting public.

Given the unfortunate delay in the repairs to Highway 12, because of the recent coastal storm, the normal medical transportation route to definitive care remains unavailable. Patients can expect delays and extended transport times until Highway 12 is repaired. The County of Hyde is diligently working with our State and Federal partners to mitigate these issues but the solutions available at this juncture will not completely eliminate the barriers to definitive care.

Please plan your visits accordingly.

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