

## Tennessee Tourism Launches New Campaign to Inspire Traveling Safely Statewide Amid Coronavirus

*Travel & Tourism are Vital to Restoring Tennessee's Economy*



*Photos & digital media kit can be found [here](#), videos can be found below.*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** - The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) launched a multi-phase campaign today with a mission to raise awareness about traveling safely amid COVID-19 as travel picks up in communities across the state. The COVID-19 virus is the largest crisis to hit the travel, leisure and hospitality industries in history, shutting down almost all travel activities and threatening the security of businesses and employees the industry supports. Research shows travelers are getting out into their own communities, reconnecting with family and friends, taking road trips close to home and exploring outdoor scenic beauty where they can safely socially distance.

The department, along with its agency of record, VMLY&R, created a series of videos featuring Tennessee-produced songs like [“Tired of Being Alone” by Al Green](#), [“My Tennessee Mountain Home” by Dolly Parton](#) and [“I Can’t Wait” by Memphis band Star & Micey](#). Each video showcases outdoor scenic beauty, “outdoor venues” with music provided by the sounds of nature, road trips, and the diverse music, history and culture in Tennessee.

“As we’ve seen now more than ever, tourism and hospitality are vital to Tennessee’s economic recovery and helps create jobs and fuel revenues,” said Commissioner Mark Ezell, Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. “I’ve seen the devastation of this pandemic firsthand. We are ready. Our businesses and attractions are ready. I encourage travelers to safely explore, support local businesses and attractions, create family memories, discover outdoor scenic beauty, take road trips, explore rural destinations and hidden gems that make Tennessee a world-renowned destination.”

A [special webpage on tnvacation.com](#) features traveler safety information and health guidance, trip planning resources, travel updates (including attraction and restaurant re-openings), how to support local businesses, interactive and virtual experiences, a Tennessee playlist and safe trip ideas like:

- [Spend Time Outdoors in Tennessee](#)
- [Tennessee State Parks You Should Experience](#)
- [Explore and Enjoy Tennessee's Abundant Waterways](#)
- [Kid-Friendly Hiking Trails in Tennessee](#)

This campaign is critical because travel in Tennessee has been suffering since the Coronavirus pandemic broke out globally. Research indicates:

- The Tennessee Department of Revenue saw **sales tax revenues for the leisure and hospitality industry decline nearly 36% in April 2020**; including hotel and lodging, amusement services, bars and restaurants.
- The Tennessee Department of Labor saw **filings for record unemployment claims, including leisure and hospitality employees. Between March 1 and May 30, 128,465 employees filed for unemployment. This represents 37% of all leisure and hospitality employees statewide.**
- **Travel Spending in Tennessee declined 87% in the first four weeks of April** according to U.S. Travel.
- U.S. Travel Association predicts **the travel economy in Tennessee could see a 35%-45% decline** in 2020 from 2019. Total travel expenditures in Tennessee could fall from \$23.27 billion in 2019 to between \$12.8 billion and \$15.127 billion.
- The Coronavirus pandemic is the largest crisis to hit the travel, leisure and hospitality industries in history. In the U.S., an analysis by Oxford Economics predicts a **\$519 billion decline in travel spending in the U.S. in 2020 will result in a total economic loss of \$1.2 trillion, more than 9 times the impact of 9/11 on travel sector revenue.**
- New analysis reveals while **the economy is in the midst of a recession, the travel industry is in a depression.** Overall travel industry unemployment is 51%—twice the unemployment of the worst year of the Great Depression. [View the full fact sheet.](#)

Tourism is the state's second largest industry, which historically broke visitation records domestically and internationally and exceeded economic impact numbers year over year. For the full report on "The Economic Impact of Travel in Tennessee" in 2018 click [here](#).

## **PHOTOS**

[Digital Media Kit](#)

## **VIDEOS & BROLL**

Tired of Being Alone? We Miss You: <https://youtu.be/SIYuUiLay1o>

Can't Wait: [https://youtu.be/6x5\\_VNCidIU](https://youtu.be/6x5_VNCidIU)

Home: <https://youtu.be/wfQ53VXe6PQ>

Outdoor Venue: <https://youtu.be/ZWDQVuOFKks>

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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### **About the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development**

Tennessee is the home of the blues, bluegrass, country, gospel, soul, rockabilly and rock 'n' roll—delivering an unparalleled experience of beauty, history and family adventure, infused with music that creates a vacation that is “The Soundtrack of America. Made in Tennessee.” In 2018, Tennessee’s tourism industry generated \$22.02 billion in economic impact, more than \$1.81 billion in state and local tax revenue and more than 189,757 tourism-related jobs. Explore more at [tnvacation.com](http://tnvacation.com) and join other Tennessee travelers by following “tnvacation” on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and YouTube or “Tennessee” on Snapchat.

