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Visit Hershey & Harrisburg Launches Business Toolkit Encouraging Collaborative Commitment to Health & Safety

Harrisburg, PA (June 25, 2020) -- Visit Hershey & Harrisburg (VHH) today launched a new tool for businesses to communicate their public health compliance efforts aimed toward keeping residents, visitors, and staff safe.

The Visit Hershey & Harrisburg SAFE TOGETHER PLEDGE offers a way for businesses to signal to their customers that they are dedicated to public health and safety, and it's also a call to our visitors to do their part as we work together to help to mitigate the spread of Covid-19.

"After months of staying apart to ease the effects of the pandemic on community health, we are now focusing on ways to encourage our tourism partners and visitors to stay safe while we're together," said VHH President & CEO Mary Smith. "This pledge was developed as a visual reminder that tourism-related business and guests alike all play a critical role in the overall health of our community," said Smith.

Any Dauphin County business is welcome and encouraged to make the SAFE TOGETHER PLEDGE. Businesses can go to www.visithersheyharrisburg.org/safe-together to find all the information they need to download, display and promote the Pledge.

VHH also worked with representatives across tourism sectors including lodging, attractions, retail, restaurants, venues and transportation to develop suggested guidelines to guide tourism businesses to reopen safely. These guidelines and industry-specific standards and protocols are in alignment with the PA Department of Health's guidelines. The resource is available on the VHH website as a reference point for businesses and for visitors who want to feel secure when they travel.

"Recent traveler sentiment surveys suggest more than 75% of travelers will research a destination's safety protocols related to infectious disease transmission," said Smith. "We want to make it clear to anyone who plans to visit the Hershey & Harrisburg Region that our tourism and hospitality managers and support staff are dedicated to not just meeting health and safety standards, but exceeding them," Smith said.

Tourism in Dauphin County traditionally accounts for *\$2.5 billion in local economic impact and supports nearly 20,000 jobs each year. Temporary business closures related to the Covid-19 pandemic have forced workforce reductions and prompted businesses to pivot to challenging and unfamiliar and operating structures. VHH believes the SAFE TOGETHER PLEDGE can be an important stepping stone on the road to economic recovery and the road to sustained community health.

**Economic Impact data via the PA Tourism Office's 2018 Tourism Economics Report for Dauphin County.*

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Visit Hershey & Harrisburg is the official non-profit partnership-based Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) leading economic growth through destination sales, consumer marketing, public relations, and tourism development in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. The organization, accredited by Destinations International since 2010, is committed to actively marketing the tourism assets in the Hershey & Harrisburg Region to business and leisure travelers both domestic and international. The bureau also leads regional sales efforts to attract meeting and event organizers, sporting event producers, and group tour leaders. For more info: VisitHersheyHarrisburg.org or 877-727-8573.