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Gov. orders flags to half-staff for a week of mourning as state reaches grim COVID-19 milestone

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SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Friday ordered state flags to half-staff for a week of mourning in recognition of the state of New Mexico recording 1,000 COVID-19 fatalities.

The state Department of Health on Friday reported 13 additional COVID-19 fatalities, the most deaths reported in the state in a single day of the pandemic, bringing the state's total to 1,007.

The state reported its first COVID-19 fatality March 25.

The state of New Mexico on Friday reported 334 individuals are currently hospitalized in the state with COVID-19, the eighth consecutive day the state set a new record for total COVID-19 hospitalizations.

According to the Department of Health's latest epidemiology report on COVID-19 hospitalizations, more than 17 percent of all COVID-19 patients in New Mexico who have been hospitalized did not survive.

Per the governor's order, which can be found **here**, state flags will be lowered from Monday, Nov. 2, to sundown Friday, Nov. 6.

The governor issued the following statement:

"One thousand New Mexican lives lost is an unfathomable tragedy. For many months now, the daily drumbeat of a few more deaths, a few more deaths has served to diminish the acute feeling of loss. But it is tragic and real for me, every single day, because it is tragic and real for the New Mexican families with an empty seat at the table, a hole in their hearts that will never be filled. I pray for these families every single day. I ask you to please join me in praying for them – and acting to prevent any more needless loss.

"We cannot allow ourselves to become numb. These are not numbers, they are not merely datapoints. They are mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, neighbors, educators, first responders, nurses, doctors, business-owners, entrepreneurs. Every one of these 1,000 New Mexicans was loved by someone. Every one of these 1,000 lost New Mexicans leaves a hole in a family, a community, our state. I grieve with them. New Mexico grieves with them.

"We can and will rebuild our mainstreets. We can and will restore our economy. We can and will recover the jobs and livelihoods that have been lost in the economic turmoil unleashed by the virus. But we cannot replace these souls, these lives, these loved ones. We cannot replace you. And the risk our state, our hospitals and our communities face has never, ever been greater than it is right now.

"I plead with New Mexicans: Take this virus seriously. Don't wait for the illness and death it delivers to arrive on your doorstep, within your family, to take the precautions we know work. Recommit to the mindset we all had in March and April and May: No errand is worth your life, no visit with friends and family is worth their lives. Please, fight through the impulse to surrender to the virus, to fatigue, to whatever it might be. Please, honor the 1,000 lives we have already lost in our state, honor their grieving loved ones by recommitting to common-sense, life-saving public health practices. Stay home. Wear your mask when you must go out. Wash and sanitize your hands. You will save a life. You will have done your part to protect our state."

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