STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1496

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Mississippi and Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(b)(17), I issued a Proclamation declaring that a State of Emergency exists in the State of Mississippi as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19 beginning on January 27, 2020, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic, and on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a nationwide state of emergency due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 and the effects of its extreme risk of person-to-person transmission throughout the United States and Mississippi significantly impacts the life and health of our people, as well as the economy of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2020, the Mississippi State Department of Health announced new and expanded measures to increase testing and data analysis to identify regions and localities that are at higher risk for transmission of COVID-19 and to provide more location-specific restrictions and limitation of movement and social interaction to combat the virus in those regions and localities; and

WHEREAS, on April 1, 2020, in order to minimize the risk of possible further transmission of COVID-19 and related measures, I issued Executive Order No. 1466 instituting a statewide Shelter in Place effective at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 3, 2020, and remaining in full force and effect until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, April 20, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1473 extending the statewide Shelter in Place, with certain additional exceptions, until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, April 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the guidance provided by the White House for beginning the process of reopening the economy while minimizing the risk of a resurgence of COVID-19, as of April 24, 2020, the incidences of infection in Mississippi had stabilized; there was decreased utilization of hospital resources; a robust testing system was in place capable of promptly detecting any increase in the rate of infection; the healthcare system was capable of treating persons with the COVID-19 and had the capacity to promptly react to any increase in incidences; and the State had in place a plan to rapidly scale up healthcare capacity in the event of an increase in the rate of infection, accordingly, I issued Executive Order 1477 establishing the statewide Safer at Home order allowing certain businesses to open and operate under certain conditions, until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 11, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on May 8, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1480 extending the Safer at Home order as amended allowing certain additional businesses to open and operate under certain conditions, until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 25, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on May 22, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1488 further extending the Safer at Home order until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on May 28, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1492 establishing the statewide Safe Return order to restart the economy, open all businesses and non-profits operating within the State of Mississippi, and permit the resumption of community activities subject to limitations to minimize person to person interactions and associated risk of transmission of COVID-19 effective 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 1, 2020, and remaining in full force and effect until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 15, 2020; and

WHEREAS, continuing to follow a measured and strategic plan to allow all businesses and non-profits to continue to operate within the State of Mississippi is essential to the health, safety and well-being of Mississippi residents, and in consultation with the State Health Officer, it is necessary to continue the Safe Return order with certain amendments as set forth herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tate Reeves, Governor of the State of Mississippi, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Mississippi, do hereby order and direct as follows:

I. The statewide Safe Return instituted in Executive Order 1492 is extended and shall remain in full force and effect until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 29, 2020, except as follows:

a. Paragraph I(f)(vi) and (vii) of Executive Order 1492 and Paragraph I of Executive Order 1486 are amended to remove the limitation that restaurants that serve alcohol and bars shall close to the public no later than 10:00 p.m. Such restaurants and bars shall continue to be subject to the additional limitations in Paragraph I(a) and its subparts of Executive Order 1478, including limiting the number of customers to 50% of maximum capacity.

b. Paragraph I(f)(xi) of Executive Order 1492, incorporating Paragraph I(b) and its subparts of Executive Order 1480 is amended to allow fitness centers and gyms to increase the number of customers in the gym to no greater than 50% of the gym's maximum occupancy. Gyms shall continue to be subject to the additional limitations in Paragraph I(b) and its subparts of Executive Order 1480.

c. Paragraph I(j) of Executive Order 1492 is amended and superseded as follows:
j. Reception Halls and Conference Centers: Reception halls and conference centers shall be permitted to remain open subject to the following limitations:
   i. Except as otherwise provided herein, the number of guests in the reception hall or conference center shall be no greater than 25% of the maximum seating capacity, with strict social distancing.
   ii. For seated dinners only, reception halls and conference centers shall limit the number of guests to no greater than 50% of maximum seating capacity. Tables shall be arranged to ensure a minimum of 6 feet of separation between tables. Seating at each table shall be limited to a maximum of 6 guests with strict social distancing.
   iii. Food services are subject to the limitations placed on restaurants pursuant to Paragraph I(a) and its subparts of Executive Order 1478.

d. Paragraph I of Executive Order 1492 is amended to add subparagraph (m) as follows:
m. Outdoor and Indoor Arenas: Outdoor and indoor arenas (collectively, "arenas") shall be permitted to remain open subject to the following limitations:
   i. The number of guests in the arena shall be no greater than 25% of the maximum seating capacity.
   ii. Arenas shall be subject to the limitations on business operations in Paragraph I(f)(ii), (iii), and (v) of Executive Order 1492.
   iii. Arenas shall adopt reasonable, good-faith measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to ensuring compliance with social distancing protocols, frequent cleaning of high-contact surfaces, and making hand sanitizer available to guests at all points of entry and exit, as well as throughout the arena.
   iv. Concession stands shall remain closed. Restaurants and other seated food service areas located in the arena shall be subject to the limitations on restaurants in Paragraph I(a) and its subparts of Executive Order 1478.

II. This Executive Order shall be effective at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 15, 2020, and shall remain in full force and effect until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 29, 2020, unless it is modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, on the 10TH day of June, in the year of our Lord, two thousand and twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-fourth.

TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR

MICHAEL WATSON
SECRETARY OF STATE