STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1522

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 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, Executive Order 1492, as amended and extended by Executive Orders 1496, 1500, 1505, 1508, 1511, 1514, 1516, 1518, 1519 and 1520 has been extended and remains in full force and effect until 8:00 a.m. on Monday, September 14, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Mississippi must protect lives while restoring livelihoods, both of which can be achieved with the expert advice of medical professionals and business leaders; and

WHEREAS, continuing to follow a measured and strategic plan to allow all businesses and non-profits, as well as all Mississippi schools to continue to operate within the State of Mississippi is essential to the health, safety and well-being of Mississippi residents; and

WHEREAS, the key to reducing the community transmission of COVID-19 and to keep all businesses and schools open is for all Mississippians to consistently wear a face covering while in public spaces, to practice social distancing from persons not in the same household and to maintain good hand hygiene; and

WHEREAS, in consultation with the State Health Officer, it is necessary to further extend the Safe Return order as previously amended.

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, as amended and extended by Executive Orders 1496, 1500, 1505, 1508, 1511, 1514, 1516, 1518, 1519 and 1520 is further extended and shall remain in full force and effect until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, except as follows:

a. Paragraph I(f)(iv) of Executive Order 1492 is amended and superseded as follows:

iv. Retail businesses shall adopt reasonable, good-faith measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to limiting the number of customers in their stores at one time to no greater than 75% of the store's maximum capacity in order to ensure compliance with social distancing protocols, and frequent cleaning of high-contact surfaces (such as retail counters, door handles, and credit card machines). Retail businesses are encouraged to make hand sanitizer available to customers at points of entry and exit.

b. Paragraph I(c) and (d) of Executive Order 1492 is amended and superseded as follows:

c. Group Gatherings (Social Distancing IS NOT Possible): Public and private social gatherings and recreational activities shall be limited to groups of no more than 10 people in a single indoor space or groups of no more than 50 people in an outdoor space where individuals not in the same household are in close proximity (less than 6 feet) to each other. This limitation does not apply to religious entities, voting precincts, students in classrooms or gatherings governed by other capacity limitations.

d. Group Gatherings (Social Distancing IS Possible): Except as otherwise provided, public and private social gatherings and recreational activities shall be limited to groups of no more than 20 people in a single indoor space or groups of no more than 100 people in an outdoor space where individuals are able to maintain a minimum of 6 feet separation between individuals not in the same household. This limitation does not apply to religious entities, voting precincts, students in classrooms or gatherings governed by other capacity limitations.

c. Paragraph I(a)(x), (xi) and (xx)(1) of Executive Order 1478, incorporated by reference at Paragraph I(f)(vi) of Executive Order 1492 is amended and superseded as follows:

x. The number of customers in the restaurant or bar shall be no greater than 75% of seating capacity.

xi. Floor plans shall be updated to ensure at least six feet of separation between each party/group whether dining indoor or outdoor. Party sizes shall be limited to a maximum of ten customers per table.

xx. Buffet Services:

1. Self-service buffets and food stations are prohibited. Self-service drink stations are permitted.

d. Paragraph I(b)(ii) and (xi) of Executive Order 1480, incorporated by reference at Paragraph I(f)(xi) of Executive Order 1492 is amended and superseded as follows:

ii. Gyms may be open to the public 24 hours a day.

xi. The number of customers in the gym shall be limited to no greater than 75% of the gym's maximum capacity.

e. 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 operate 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 between individuals not in the same household.

ii. For seated dinners only, reception halls and conference centers shall limit the number of guests to no greater than 75% 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 10 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.

iv. These limitations apply to events and receptions held in outdoor event tents.

II. This Executive Order shall be effective 8:00 a.m. on Monday, September 14, 2020, and shall remain in full force and effect until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 30, 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 13th day of September, 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-fifth.

TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR

MICHAEL WATSON
SECRETARY OF STATE