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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: MISSOURI'S COVID-19 RESPONSE EFFORTS

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MARCH 17, 2020

(https://governor.mo.gov/sites/gov/files/media/image/2020/03/covid-19_DED.jpg)

JEFFERSON CITY □ As concerns over the new coronavirus (COVID-19) continue to grow across the state and the nation, Governor Mike Parson and his administration are working each day to respond to the virus and protect the health and well-being of Missourians.

Expanding COVID-19 Testing

- The state is currently working with the University of Missouri to expand COVID-19 testing. This should increase testing capabilities by thousands across the state.
- Mercy Hospital recently set up a drive-thru testing site in Chesterfield, and University of Missouri Health Care is also working to implement drive-thru testing in Columbia.
- The Missouri State Public Health Lab will be receiving more tests from the CDC soon, pushing its capacity to 1,600 patient tests.
- Viracor, a private lab in Lee Summit, will have the ability to do over 1,000 tests per day.
- Quest Diagnostic and LabCorp are now testing.
- Washington University in St. Louis is also working to increase testing capacity.

Personal Protective Equipment

- The State Emergency Management Agency is working to procure additional personal protective equipment (PPE) for Missouri state and local response agencies, including law enforcement and the fire service.
- The Department of Public Safety and SEMA will continue to update local response partners as more information becomes available on PPE.

Emergency Declaration and State Regulations

- On March 13, 2020, Governor Parson signed Executive Order 20-02 declaring a state of emergency in Missouri.
- The Executive Order invoked the Missouri State Emergency Operations Plan and will allow more flexibility in utilizing and deploying state resources.
- By declaring a state of emergency, Missouri now has access to an additional $7.2 million for resources such as PPE.
- On March 13, the Missouri Department of Transportation announced an allowance for heavier-than-normal truckloads of supplies and equipment to travel on Missouri highways.
- On March 17, the Missouri Department of Transportation announced an increased weight allowance for trucks to support COVID-19 response and an IRP/IFTA emergency waiver.
- Missouri's State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is currently activated at Level 3, partial activation, to coordinate state response efforts.

Closures and Restrictions

- In accordance with CDC recommendations, Governor Parson has strongly urged the cancellation or suspension of public gatherings of 50 individuals or more.

- Governor Parson has also asked that facilities attracting large concentrations of senior citizens strongly consider restrictions and closures, in consultation with health authorities, to protect those most vulnerable to this virus.
- The Missouri Veterans Commission has restricted access to all visitors, volunteers, and vendors until further notice.
- The Missouri Department of Corrections has suspended visitors at state correctional facilities, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health has also restricted visitor access at state mental health facilities.
- Public tours and events in the State Capitol have been shut down to encourage social distancing.
- On March 17, Governor Parson announced that Missouri casinos will be closed through March 30 in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- As of 2:30 p.m. on March 17, a total of 432 Missouri public school districts/charter schools out of 555 have closed or will soon close.
- Additional restrictive measures will be forthcoming.

Coordination and Communication

- Governor Parson participates in a weekly conference call every Monday with Vice President Mike Pence and other governors around the country to receive federal updates and ask questions.
- Governor Parson also leads a call with emergency management personnel, county commissioners, county sheriffs, and the largest 40 city mayors across the state to provide updates – there are over 1,000 invites to this call.
- Governor Parson leads a similar call on Sunday evenings with elected leaders from around the state to discuss some of the primary issues they're hearing about in their communities relating to COVID-19.
- Governor Parson has traveled to several communities around the state to hold COVID-19 with local leadership, including St. Louis, Springfield, Kansas City, St. Joseph, Kirksville, Hannibal, and Columbia. This week, Governor Parson will also travel to Poplar Bluff, Hayti, Cape Girardeau, and Joplin.
- The state has also been in communication with the major utility providers in the state, and they have agreed to forgo disconnects in the event someone cannot pay due to hardship over COVID-19.

Informing the Public

- Each day, Governor Parson and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) post an update on social media including the number of positive COVID-19 cases reported in Missouri.
- DHSS has created a website that includes updates on COVID-19 in Missouri as well as other information and resources relating to the virus. All 16 state departments' websites provide a link to this website.
- All 16 state departments also have a consistent social media plan to help educate and update the public.
- A COVID-19 hotline is available through DHSS (877-435-8411) to take and answer questions 24/7.
- To further assist, the state is working on a chatbot that can answer frequently asked questions online and divert volume away from the call centers.

For more information, visit the CDC's website at **www.cdc.gov/coronavirus (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.cdc.gov_coronavirus&d=DwMFaQ&c=GSntNbUav5AC0JJIyPOufmfQT3u3zI7UKdoVzPd-7og&r=ep_vY_YZvQO4gTTTzhrHgwLWzZKFmXwbuV1ci7zYS-A&m=WkCK8AfBD5TSgXFl5IFF6YJcKnbgmKhLgDWk5nDS2jo&s=eANAG6rKwqPNGNCrWf34YKiN6uwugbwwrWBOvn9vosk&e=)** and the DHSS website at **www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus (https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/)**.

You may also call the DHSS hotline at 877-435-8411 for questions regarding COVID-19 in Missouri.

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