The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

KARYN E. POLITO
Lieutenant Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000
www.mass.gov/dph

ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH EXEMPTING HOSPITALS FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF M.G.L. c.111, §231

On March 10, 2020, Governor Charles D. Baker declared a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth to respond to the spread of COVID-19. The Public Health Council has approved and authorized me to take such actions, incur such liabilities, and establish such rules, requirements, and procedures which are necessary to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in order to protect the health and welfare of the people of the Commonwealth, consistent with the Governor's declaration.

Accordingly, having received that authorization from the Council, and with the approval of the Governor, I issue the following Order:

In order to provide care to all patients and to facilitate best practices for addressing the COVID-19 public health emergency, all hospitals licensed or operated by the Department of Public Health, shall be exempted from the acuity-assessed staffing and nurse-to-patient ratio requirements of G.L. c. 111, s. 231. All facilities must ensure that staffing levels remain adequate to meet the patients' needs, and staff is trained and competent to meet the needs of their patients.

Facilities subject to this order must continue to comply with all applicable statutes, regulations, and guidance not inconsistent with this Order.

This Order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until the State of Emergency is terminated by the Governor, or until rescinded by me, whichever shall happen first.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Monica Bharel, MD, MPH
Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

March 24, 2020