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REVISED ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH REGARDING OPERATION OF INDOOR ICE RINKS AND INDOOR ICE SKATING AND HOCKEY FACILITIES

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.

As of October 29, 2020, the Department has reported 151,741 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 9,727 deaths among confirmed cases in the Commonwealth. There have been at least 30 clusters of COVID-19 associated with organized ice hockey activities in the Commonwealth. Each of these clusters has two or more confirmed or probable COVID-19 cases, totaling 108 confirmed cases and more than 225 exposed contacts. There is at least one hockey-associated case of COVID-19 in at least 66 cities and towns in the Commonwealth.

Clusters of infections associated with hockey and skating facilities have also been reported in other states. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") published a report that, following a June 16, 2020 recreational ice hockey game in Tampa Bay, Florida, 15 attendees experienced symptoms of COVID-19 and 13 persons tested positive.[1] In New Hampshire the Governor has suspended the operation of hockey and skating facilities for two weeks, following an outbreak of 158 cases among 23 different hockey teams.

Accordingly, the Order of the Commissioner of Public Health Regarding Operation of Indoor Ice Rinks and Indoor Ice Skating and Hockey Facilities, dated October 27, 2020, is hereby rescinded, and pursuant to the authority granted by G.L. c. 17, § 2A and with the approval of the Governor and the Public Health Council, and in order to assure the maintenance of the public health during the continuing public health emergency, I issue the following Revised Order:

Indoor ice rinks, and indoor ice skating and hockey facilities may not host games, practices, or any other on-ice hockey or skating activities. To the extent that such facilities are used for

[1] Atrubin D, Wiese M, Bohinc B. An Outbreak of COVID-19 Associated with a Recreational Hockey Game — Florida, June 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020; 69:1492–1493., available at http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6941a4.

purposes other than hockey and skating activities, they may continue to be open to the public for those permitted, off-ice activities. This Revised Order does not apply to activities of professional or collegiate interscholastic hockey and skating programs or to activities at the Skating Club of Boston facility in Norwood by those Massachusetts residents who are registered with the U.S. Figure Skating Association to participate in the U.S. Figure Skating Championship Series. Only those groups may conduct on-ice activities.

This Revised Order shall remain in effect until 12:01 a.m. on November 7, 2020, unless duly extended or rescinded by me, or the State of Emergency is terminated by the Governor, whichever shall happen first.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

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Margret R. Cooke
Acting Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

October 29, 2020