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Secretary of State
Tre Hargett

STATE OF TENNESSEE

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BY THE GOVERNOR

No. 70

AN ORDER TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AND PRESERVE HEALTH CARE CAPACITY BY LIMITING GATHERINGS AND SPECTATOR EVENTS AND URGING WORKING FROM HOME

WHEREAS, Tennessee has recently experienced record numbers of new COVID-19 cases and COVID-19 hospitalizations, and limiting large social gatherings and spectator sports and athletic events will reduce the potential for events that lead to substantial spread and further diminish our health care capacity, while also allowing our economy to remain open and Tennesseans employed; and

WHEREAS, each Tennessean has a personal responsibility to protect themselves and others by following health guidelines to slow the spread of this virus, and therefore, all venues, employers, businesses, and organizations are strongly encouraged and expected to operate in accordance with, and to fulfill the spirit of, applicable operational guidance issued by the Governor's Economic Recovery Group (i.e., the Tennessee Pledge), which are available at the following web address and may be periodically updated: https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19/economic-recovery.html; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the other powers granted by law, Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 58-2-107, provides, among other things, that during a state of emergency, the Governor is authorized to suspend laws and rules if necessary to cope with an emergency, utilize all available state and local resources needed to combat an emergency, and take measures concerning the conduct of civilians; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to this authority and the general emergency management powers of the Governor under law, such measures, including the measures contained herein, are necessary to facilitate the response to the ongoing effects of COVID-19.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Tennessee Constitution and other applicable law, do

hereby declare a continuing state of emergency and major disaster in order to facilitate the response to COVID-19 and accordingly order the following:

1. Tennesseans should work from home where possible. Given the current spread of COVID-19 throughout the State and the resulting strain on health care resources, persons are encouraged to work remotely or via telework from home, where possible, and all employers and businesses are strongly urged to take steps to the greatest extent practicable to equip, encourage, allow, or require employees to work remotely or via telework from home.

2. Social distancing and social gatherings.

   a. Social distancing remains imperative. CDC guidance states that "COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person to person, including between people who are physically near each other (within about 6 feet)." Therefore, every person is strongly urged to maintain at least six (6) feet of separation from persons outside their household to the greatest extent practicable.

   b. Social gathering limitations. To ensure appropriate social distancing for the purposes of social gatherings, persons in the State of Tennessee should to the greatest extent practicable maintain at least six (6) feet of separation from persons outside their household, and shall not in any event be in a group of ten (10) or more persons in an indoor public place for the purposes of social gatherings, activities, or events; provided, that this limitation does not necessarily prohibit ten (10) or more total persons from gathering in a single place or venue for an activity or event if they are in separate, otherwise permissible smaller groups that substantially maintain six (6) feet or more of separation from other persons or separate groups.

   c. Places of worship, weddings, and funerals. Worship services, weddings, funerals, and events related thereto are not social gatherings under Paragraph 2.b. Nevertheless, places of worship are strongly encouraged to continue to utilize virtual or online services and gatherings and strongly encouraged to follow the Guidance for Gathering Together in Houses of Worship issued by the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives regarding in-person services that can be conducted safely. Likewise, persons at weddings and funerals are strongly encouraged to follow the Health Guidelines and maintain appropriate social distancing as provided for herein to the greatest extent practicable, although it is further strongly encouraged that any large public celebration component of weddings and funerals be postponed or attended only by close family members.

3. Spectator sports and athletic activities. Local education agencies and schools shall, notwithstanding any orders or provisions to the contrary, have the authority to

permit, but are not required to permit, school sponsored sporting events and activities, provided that all such activities, including practices and games or competition, must be conducted in a manner consistent with COVID-19-related guidance and rules adopted by the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association. Non-school-sponsored athletics, including practices, games, and competition, must be conducted in a manner consistent with guidance from either the Tennessee Economic Recovery Group (i.e., Tennessee Pledge) or Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association.

With respect to school-sponsored and other youth athletics, schools, organizers, and facilities shall not permit spectators to attend practices, games, or competition; provided, that game, school, and facility administrators, athletics officials, coaching and team personnel, parents, guardians, or other immediate household members of athletes practicing or competing at the venue on that date, media and athletic scouting personnel attending the event in their professional capacity, and first responders may be present within the facility, but must to the greatest extent practicable comply with applicable health protocols, including maintaining at least six (6) feet of separation from persons outside their household. Schools, facilities, organizers, and governing bodies may further limit physical capacity as deemed necessary to protect public health.

Collegiate and professional sporting events and activities are subject to the rules, protocols, or guidelines of their respective institutions and governing bodies.

4. Suspension of laws that would limit application of this Order. Any law, order, rule, or regulation that would otherwise limit the enforceability of this Order is hereby suspended, pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 58-2-107.

5. Severability. If any provision of this Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this Order which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to that end the provisions of this Order are declared to be severable.

6. Term and effective date. This Order shall be effective and enforceable as of 11:59 p.m., Central Standard Time, on December 20, 2020, and shall remain in effect until 11:59 p.m., Central Standard Time, on January 19, 2021.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have subscribed my signature and caused the Great Seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed this 20th day of December, 2020.

Bill Lee

GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER 70 - ATTESTATION

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ATTEST:

SECRETARY OF STATE

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