COVID-19 Bulletin #2 - March 18, 2020

Wednesday, March 18, 2020 | 05:00pm

Today, Governor Bill Lee provided an update on Tennessee's efforts around COVID-19 relief.

Gov. Lee's daily press conferences can be viewed live each day this week through Thursday at 3 p.m. CT here . Gov. Lee has also established a website specific to COVID-19 updates which can be found here .

Updates & Reminders

State Employee Workforce

Currently,15,000 state employees are working from home through the state's Alternative Workplace Solutions (AWS) program.

- The Department of Human Resources is rapidly acquiring resources to place another 8,400 employees on AWS which will bring the total to more than approximately 23,400 employees.
- 37% of Tennessee's state employee workforce performs functions that cannot transition to AWS, and we continue to double down on efforts to keep these employees safe at work in the wake of COVID-19.

FY21 Budget Amendment

Today, the Lee Administration presented an amended budget proposal to the General Assembly which can be viewed here . The amended budget comfortably covers the essentials while making appropriate reductions and investing in reserve funds.

- The budget amendment has changed to address a lower growth rate of 2.5% for the current year (Includes an additional $350 million in the Rainy-Day fund to ensure Tennessee remains prepared and continues to fully fund obligations such as the BEP, growth in TennCare and other liabilities.)
- A new $150 million fund for health and safety issues resulting from COVID-19 has also been established.

Grocery & Food Supply Chain

- Gov. Lee spoke with the Grocers Association today and confirmed the strength of the supply chain.
- Tennesseans should grocery shop as they normally would before the COVID-19 pandemic and should avoid stockpiling or hoarding.
- While the food supply chain is strong, Tennessee grocers are in need of additional employees, and those seeking

employment are encouraged to apply.

Administration Actions for Targeted Relief

Small Business Support

- Submitted request for Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance to the U.S. Small Business Administration.
- Once the declaration is made, all Tennessee small businesses and nonprofit organizations that have suffered economic injury as a result of COVID-19 will be eligible to apply for disaster loan assistance of up to $2 million per applicant.
- Small businesses who are ready to explore these efforts should visit www.SBA.gov . Additional information can be found here .

Medical Supplies Capacity

- The Tennessee Department of Health is working in conjunction with the Tennessee Department of Military and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) to aggressively pursue every available avenue for medical supplies and personal protective equipment.
- Today, the Lee Administration authorized the order of an additional 570 ventilators to support Tennessee hospitals that may need additional capacity.
- We will also continue to work with FEMA to pursue supply kits that the federal government is making available.
- Tennesseans can also help to provide a critical supply need by donating blood. Red Cross blood donation locations can be found here .

Current Department of Health Testing Results (as of 2 p.m. 3/17)

Testing Location	Total COVID-19 Tests Completed	Number Negative	Number Positive
TN State Public Health Laboratory	369	345	24
All other commercial and private laboratories	--	--	74
Total positives in TN			98

For more information on COVID-19 in Tennessee, please visit the Tennessee Department of Health's website here .