

Governor Parson Signs Executive Order 20-19 Extending State of Emergency in Missouri

Issues Statewide Public Health Warning Due to Extreme Risks of COVID-19

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) – As COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to rise in Missouri and across the Midwest, Governor Mike Parson today signed Executive Order 20-19 extending the state of emergency in Missouri through March 31, 2021.

This will allow continued flexibility in deploying critical resources around the state as well as the continued utilization of the Missouri National Guard and easing of regulatory burdens to further assist Missouri's COVID-19 response efforts.

"Missouri and the Midwest region remain central to the extreme COVID-19 outbreak our country is currently experiencing," **Governor Parson said**. "If we do not slow the spread of the virus, our health care system will quickly become overwhelmed. This creates a major risk not only for COVID-19 patients but anyone requiring health care support, from emergency situations such as car accidents to the treatment of serious health conditions such as cancer."

"Missouri is at a turning point, and if we are going to change the outcome, we must change our behavior," **Governor Parson** continued.

With the onset of flu season and the winter months, respiratory illnesses will begin to spread more rapidly, and COVID-19 is following the same pattern. Due to these extreme risks, Governor Parson has issued a statewide public health warning outlining expectations for all individuals living and working in the state, including guidance for personal behavior, businesses, and travel.

The health warning also includes community level guidance and action plans based on three risk categories – extreme risk, critical risk, and serious risk. The Governor's Office will be communicating with mayors, county commissioners, and local leaders across the state to explain and help implement the appropriate guidance in their communities.

Wearing a mask, social distancing, and proper hand hygiene remain the three major COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

Other key guidance includes the following:

- Limit interactions with others to less than 15 minutes
- Limit regular group interactions to a small group (10 or less) of family members
- Minimize travel outside of Missouri
- Consider occupancy limits reflective of social distancing

It should be noted that given the minimal transmission of COVID-19 taking place in schools, especially those that have implemented mask mandates, the social gathering recommendations outlined in the health warning are NOT intended to limit in-person learning.

"This is a critical time for our state. Everyone is affected. Every community is at risk, and until a vaccine is widely available to the public, the best weapon we have against COVID-19 is prevention," Governor Parson said. "This means that we all have to step up and do the right thing."

"Our actions do make an impact. The actions we take today will determine where we are weeks from now," **Governor Parson continued**. "The bottom line is that COVID-19 is still here, it is serious, and we need every Missourian to take responsibility and do their part. The safety of our state and our citizens depend on it."

To view the full public health warning, the document is also available on the Department of Health and Senior Services website, the Governor's Office website, and the Show Me Strong Recovery website.

- 11-19-2020 Public Health Advisory.pdf