

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 23, 2020

**Governor Whitmer Signs “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Executive Order**

*Governor directs all non-critical businesses to temporarily close, all Michiganders to stay home or six feet away from others during COVID-19 crisis*

**LANSING, Mich.** -- Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Executive Order (EO 2020-21), directing all Michigan businesses and operations to temporarily suspend in-person operations that are not necessary to sustain or protect life. The order also directs Michiganders to stay in their homes unless they’re a part of that critical infrastructure workforce, engaged in an outdoor activity, or performing tasks necessary to the health and safety of themselves or their family, like going to the hospital or grocery store.

Effective at 12:01 am on March 24, 2020, for at least the next three weeks, individuals may only leave their home or place of residence under very limited circumstances, and they must adhere to social distancing measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention when they do so, including remaining at least six feet from people from outside the individual’s household to the extent feasible under the circumstances.

“In just 13 days, we’ve gone from 0 to over 1,000 COVID-19 cases,” said **Governor Whitmer**. “This is an unprecedented crisis that requires all of us working together to protect our families and our communities. The most effective way we can slow down the virus is to stay home. I know this will be hard, but it will be temporary. If we all come together, get serious, and do our part by staying home, we can stay safe and save lives.”

“Taking aggressive action to protect our communities is the most important thing we can do to mitigate further spread of COVID-19,” said Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Chief Deputy for Health and Chief Medical Executive **Dr. Joneigh Khaldun**. “If we do this now, we can make sure our hospitals and healthcare workers are prepared to take care of the sickest people. It is crucial that people do the right thing by staying home and staying safe.”

Executive Order 2020-21 prohibits all businesses and operations from requiring workers to leave their homes, unless those workers are necessary to sustain or protect life or to conduct minimum basic operations. Businesses and operations are to designate the workers that meet those criteria, and must adopt social distancing practices and other mitigation measures to protect workers and patrons in the performance of that necessary in-person work.

Workers that are necessary to sustain or protect life include those in health care and public health, law enforcement and public safety, grocery store workers, and more. For a full list of these critical infrastructure workers, click the link to Executive Order 2020-21 at the bottom of this page.

Additionally, under Executive Order 2020-21, all public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring among persons outside a single household are temporarily prohibited. People may leave the house to perform for limited, necessary purposes, and may engage in outdoor activities like walking, hiking, running, cycling, or any other recreational activity, consistent with remaining at least six feet from people from outside a person's household and with other restrictions imposed by prior executive orders.

Michigan is currently in the top five states in the nation in number of confirmed COVID-19 cases. Several governors across the country have taken similar steps to protect their communities from the spread of COVID-19, including governors Mike DeWine (R-OH), Andrew Cuomo (D-NY), J.B. Pritzker (D-IL), Tom Wolf (D-PA), Gavin Newsom (D-CA), John Bel Edwards (D-LA), Phil Murphy (D-NJ), and Ned Lamont (D-CT).

Patients with confirmed infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The best prevention for viruses, such as influenza, the common cold or COVID-19 is:

- If you think you have symptoms of COVID-19, call your health care provider. If you do not have a health care provider, call the nearest hospital.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home, and avoid contact with others.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others when in a public setting.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at **[Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus)** and **[CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus)**.

For those who have questions about the state's actions to mitigate the spread of coronavirus, please call the COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-535-6136 between 8AM - 5PM daily.

Michiganders can apply for unemployment benefits if they have left work or taken a leave of absence because of self-isolation or self-quarantine in response to elevated risk from COVID-19 due to being immunocompromised, displaying the symptoms of COVID-19, having contact in the last 14 days with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the need to care for someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or a family care responsibility as a result of a government directive. Those temporarily laid off from work should apply for unemployment benefits online at [www.michigan.gov/UIA](https://www.michigan.gov/UIA) or 1-866-500-0017.

Governor Whitmer is working to ensure that children who rely on the food provided by schools will have the resources they need. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has developed an online map for families to find meals. Families can access the map at: <https://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/schoolnutrition/>.

On March 19, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) approved the governor's request for a statewide Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) declaration, opening the opportunity to small businesses to access low-interest loans from the SBA. The application for disaster loan assistance is available at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>. For businesses looking for more information on how to apply for an SBA EIDL loan or whether it is something they should consider, visit [michiganbusiness.org/covid19](http://michiganbusiness.org/covid19).

To view executive order 2020-21, click the link below:

- [EO 2020-21 Stay Home, Stay Safe.pdf](#)

*This press release will be translated and made available in Arabic and Spanish at [www.michigan.gov/whitmer](http://www.michigan.gov/whitmer).*

###

Gary Jones  
Community Affairs - Flint  
[Office of Governor Gretchen Whitmer](#)  
Cell: (517) 282-3193  
[JonesG9@michigan.gov](mailto:JonesG9@michigan.gov)