

May 1, 2020

Dear Saints of God,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd! The Scripture readings for this coming Sunday remind us of the faithfulness of our Good Shepherd, who remains us with us even in the valley of the shadow of death to comfort us and finally who gives to us abundant life. While these have been difficult times for our congregations and communities, it is with great anticipation that we discuss the resumption of public worship. The decision for congregations to cease public worship could not have been foreseen just a few months ago. Such decisions were not made because of the state's intrusion on our religious liberties, but out of love and concern for our neighbor. Therefore, the decision to resume public worship should be made with the same care and consideration. Based on location and the composition of the members, some congregations may not resume public worship as quickly as others. Once again, this is a time to bear with one another in love as pastors and congregation leaders make decisions motivated by love for God and neighbor.

Included with this letter are guidelines for Missouri District congregations developed in consultation with the District Praesidium and informed by the previous guidance that has been provided. Also, there is an order from the Director of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and Governor Mike Parson's "Show-Me Strong Recovery Plan: Phase I Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions." These documents are intended to assist you in developing a plan for your congregation's resumption of public worship. Let me be clear however, such a plan should take steps to limit the number of attendees at each service based upon the formula in the Governor's plan or local fire or building code occupancy and also while maintaining social distancing.

Now is a time for us to thank God for the ways in which our congregations have been fed by the Word of God as it has been delivered through a variety of forms. But we are thankful to God that we may soon be able to return to public worship to receive God's gifts, response in praise and thanksgiving and encourage one another in the faith. As we do so, we should still take great care in our plans for the sake of all those who are part of our respective flocks. If pastors and congregation leaders have questions, please do not hesitate to contact your respective Circuit Visitor or myself.

May God strengthen and sustain you all by the working of the Holy Spirit through the blessed Word as we look forward to the Church gathered together around Christ first in our respective congregations and finally in the Church Triumphant!

Peace in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Lee Hagan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Peace in Christ,".

President R. Lee Hagan

Missouri District Guidelines for Resuming Public Worship 5/1/2020

1. As previously noted in guidance that has been offered, decisions by congregations' leaders seek to honor the third, fourth, and fifth commandments as we love and honor God, respect government authority, and serve our neighbor in love.
2. Congregation leaders and pastors should refer to local, county and state government orders as they consider any resumption of public worship. While the April 27, 2020 order of the Director of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services allows for a return to public worship with very specific limitations from May 4 to May 31, 2020, congregation leaders and pastors should defer to local jurisdiction for specific guidance.
3. Governor Parson has released "Show-Me Strong Recovery Plan: Phase I Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions." The guidelines include restrictions on the building capacity based upon formulas for the fire or building code occupancy. These restrictions also include the six-foot social distancing requirement.
4. Congregations may not all return to public worship as local restrictions may differ, but the way that the congregation serves the needs of the members may also differ. Pastors should discuss possible scenarios with other pastors within the circuit in advance of a return to public worship. Some congregations have been offering "drive-in" worship services after consultation with local health departments. Some of those may choose to continue for the moment or others may cease the "drive-in" service in favor of the return to worship in the sanctuary.
5. To maintain these restrictions, congregation leaders may find it necessary to offer more worship service opportunities than are normally offered.
6. Plans for a return to public worship therefore should include the congregation leaders offering a process for signing up to attend a specific service so as to limit the number of attendees.
7. Congregation leaders and pastors may wish to involve health care professionals in developing a plan for public worship.
8. Here are a number of suggested steps for a return to public worship:
 - Anyone planning to attend should be symptom free and not considered "at-risk."
 - Prior to each service, the pews should be sanitized/disinfected.
 - Hymnals and pew Bibles should be removed temporarily.
 - A gloved usher should hold the door open for people coming and going. If there are multiple doors, the congregation may wish to direct people to specific doors so that the door can be opened for them.
 - The service should be printed out in a (disposable) bulletin or projected (if this is part of the congregation's practice).
 - Rope off pews to maintain social distancing (one or two pews between family groups)
 - Families should be directed to not sit directly behind other family groups.
 - Offering plates should be placed in entry ways and not passed.
 - There should be no shaking of hands or physical contact.
 - At this point, there should not be face-to-face Sunday School, Bible class, choir or other gatherings beyond worship.
 - Arranging the church parking lot so that there are empty spaces between vehicles.
9. Congregation leaders should also give careful consideration to the matter of distributing Lord's Supper. Please consider referring to the March 27 Pastoral Letter and Guidelines for

Distributing the Lord's Supper that is available on the district website. Here are some specific steps to consider:

- The preparation of the Communion vessels should be taken with great care to limit contact of people, vessels and elements. Those preparing the vessels should wash hands before and after and may wish to wear latex gloves if available.
 - The pastor should wash his hands prior to distribution. He may choose to wear latex gloves if available.
 - Distribution should take place separate from a communion rail so that communicants need not kneel or come in contact with hard surface.
 - Distribution should be done one family group at a time rather than continuous flow.
 - Pastors should carefully consider the process of distributing the host in relation to the contact with the communicants and the handling of both the hosts and the vessels.
 - Individual cups should be used and spaced out across the tray so that there are empty spaces around each cup.
 - Pastors should only commune members of their own congregation unless the other pastor is aware and such provisions have already been established.
10. Congregations that are currently recording or livestreaming services should continue to do for the sake of those who are at-risk or not comfortable attending public worship for the foreseeable future.
 11. There will be further conversations about pastoral care and those who view online services in the future. Under the present circumstances we understand that not all congregations are able to provide online services. At some point in the future, pastors will be wise to encourage online viewers who are members of other congregations to return to meeting together with the other members of their congregation. Congregation leaders and pastors should also discuss how to further engage online guests who do not have church homes.
 12. Congregations should also provide intentional care for shut-ins and at-risk members who are not able to attend public worship.



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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RELAY MISSOURI for Hearing and Speech Impaired and Voice dial: 711

Randall W. Williams, MD, FACOG
Director



Michael L. Parson
Governor

April 27, 2020

The Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services, finding it necessary to protect public health and prevent the further spread of COVID-19, pursuant to the authority granted under section 192.020, RSMo, and 19 CSR 20-20.040, hereby order the following:

1. When individuals leave their homes or places of residence to work, to access food, health care, necessities, or to engage in other activities, they should at all times practice social distancing. Individuals may go to and from an individual's place of worship, provided that limitations on social distancing are properly adhered to.
2. In accordance with the guidelines from the President and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), every person and business in the State of Missouri shall abide by social distancing requirements, including maintaining six feet (6') of space between individuals. This provision shall not apply to family members or individuals performing job duties that require contact with other people closer than six feet (6'). Individuals performing job duties that require contact with other people closer than six feet (6') should take enhanced precautionary measures to mitigate the risks of contracting or spreading COVID-19. This provision shall apply in all situations, including, but not limited to, when customers are standing in line or individuals are using shared indoor or outdoor spaces.
3. In accordance with the guidelines from the President, the CDC, and the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, people shall not visit nursing homes, long-term care facilities, retirement homes, or assisted living homes unless to provide critical assistance or in end-of-life circumstances. Elderly or otherwise vulnerable populations should take enhanced precautionary measures to mitigate the risks of contracting COVID-19.
4. Any entity that employs individuals that is engaged in retail sales to the public, shall limit the number of individuals in any particular retail location as follows:
 - (1) Twenty-five (25) percent or less of the entity's authorized fire or building code occupancy, as set by local authorities, for a retail location with square footage of less than ten thousand square feet (10,000 ft²);
 - (2) Ten (10) percent or less of the entity's authorized fire or building code occupancy, as set by local authorities, for a retail location with square footage of ten thousand square feet (10,000 ft²) or more.
5. In accordance with the guidelines from the President and the CDC, schools shall remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic school year. At the discretion of the school district, nothing in this Order shall prohibit school teachers, school staff, students, and parents from reentering school buildings in order to work, retrieve personal belongings, or return school property as long as limitations on social distancing are properly adhered to. Summer school may

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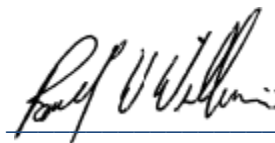
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proceed under guidelines set forth by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Notwithstanding section 2 of this Order, nothing in this Order shall prohibit daycares, child care providers, or schools from providing child care in accordance with CDC guidelines. Further, this Order does not prohibit schools from providing Food and Nutritional Services for those children that qualify.

6. Restaurants may offer dining-in services, provided that the limitations on social distancing and other precautionary public health measures, including proper spacing of at least six feet (6') between tables, lack of communal seating areas to parties that are not connected, and having no more than ten (10) people at a single table, are properly adhered to. The continued use of drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options is encouraged throughout the duration of this Order.
7. State office buildings shall be open to the public as soon as practicable, and essential state functions shall continue. The State Capitol Building shall remain open to the public during meetings or proceedings of the General Assembly.
8. Pursuant to section 44.101, RSMo, this Order shall not be construed to prohibit or restrict the lawful possession, transfer, sale, transportation, storage, display, or use of firearms or ammunition during the declared state of emergency, subject to the provisions set forth herein.

Pursuant to section 192.290, RSMo, this Order shall be observed throughout the state and enforced by all local and state health authorities; provided however, nothing herein shall limit the right of local authorities to make such further ordinances, rules, regulations, and orders not inconsistent with this Order which may be necessary for the particular locality under the jurisdiction of such local authorities. Local public health authorities are hereby directed to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Order by any legal means.

This Order shall be in effect beginning 12:01 A.M., Monday, May 4, 2020, and shall remain in effect until 11:59 P.M., Sunday, May 31, 2020, unless extended by further order of the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services with said extensions not to exceed the duration of the effective period of Executive Order 20-09.



Randall W. Williams, MD, FACOG
Director



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Show-Me Strong Recovery Plan: Phase I Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

Missouri’s economic recovery plan will focus on the diversity of Missouri – its people, businesses, communities, and infrastructure, among others. A strategic “re-opening” of Missouri’s economy will not be successful without proactive steps taken to mitigate risk of COVID-19 resurgence by our state’s businesses, communities, and citizens.

While the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has issued guidance on what the federal government considers “essential businesses,” Governor Parson believes that ALL of Missouri’s businesses and employers are vital to our state’s economy and individual well-being.

General Guidelines to Reopen Missouri’s Economy

During Phase I, we can gradually start to reopen economic and social activity. This will be a deliberate process, and is flexible to adapt to the situation. Some communities may be able to reopen at a faster rate, while others may need to continue restrictions to keep the virus from spreading. During Phase I, we should limit our activity and interactions and continue to maintain social distancing and practice good hygiene to protect our neighbors and ourselves.

The plan to reopen the economy and get Missourians back to work is based on ensuring a healthy workforce by:

- Flattening the curve and expanding healthcare capacity, while utilizing federal programs and deploying state resources;
- Making decisions based on Missouri-specific data and medical expertise;
- Protecting healthcare workers, first responders, and other direct care workers so that our citizens have access to the care they need;
- Looking after our most vulnerable and at-risk populations;
- Partnering with community leaders and incorporating flexibility based on each community’s circumstances;
- Slowing and containing the spread of COVID-19; and
- Implementing a measured approach to mitigate risk of a resurgence.



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The ability to reopen Missouri’s economy rests on both our healthcare system and our healthcare suppliers. Together, we will accomplish the following goals:

- Rapidly expand testing capacity and volume in the state, including testing for those who are currently contagious and those who have developed immunity to the virus;
- Expanding reserves of personal protective equipment (PPE) by opening public and private supply chains, and continuing to utilize Missouri businesses in that effort;
- Continuing to monitor and, if necessary, expanding hospital and health care system capacity, including isolation and alternate care facilities for those that cannot self-quarantine at home; and
- Improving the ability to predict potential outbreaks using Missouri’s public health data.

General Guidelines for Missourians

- Citizens who feel sick should stay home
- Continue to practice good hygiene, including:
 - Washing hands with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces;
 - Avoiding touching your face;
 - Sneezing or coughing into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow; and
 - Disinfecting frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Avoid socializing in groups that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing (receptions, trade shows, etc.). When in public (parks, outdoor recreation spaces, shopping malls, etc.), individuals should maximize physical distance from others.
- Minimize travel to the extent possible.

General Guidelines for Business

- Prepare to implement basic infection prevention measures informed by industry best practices, regarding:
 - Protective equipment;
 - Temperature checks;
 - Testing, isolating, and contact tracing; and
 - Sanitation, including disinfection of common and high-traffic areas (entrances, breakrooms, locations where there is high-frequency employee interaction with the public/customers).
- Modify physical workspaces to maximize social distancing.
- Minimize business travel.



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- Develop an infectious disease preparedness and response plan, including policies and procedures for workforce contact tracing when an employee tests positive for COVID-19.
- Monitor workforce for indicative symptoms. Do not allow symptomatic people to physically return to work until cleared by a medical provider.
- Develop, implement, and communicate about workplace flexibilities and protections, including:
 - Encouraging telework whenever possible and feasible with business operations;
 - Returning to work in phases and/or split shifts, if possible;
 - Limiting access to common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact; and
 - Ensuring that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance.

General Guidelines for Communities

- Closely monitor and track the containment, spread, and any resurgence of COVID-19, and adjust plans as necessary.
- Limit situations where citizens cannot maintain social distancing.
- Facilitate widespread testing of symptomatic and asymptomatic citizens.
- Work to protect the most vulnerable populations.

Frequently Asked Questions

**Under guidance from the federal government, we are considered an “essential business.”
How does this order affect me?**

This order applies to ALL Missouri businesses. Businesses that are categorized as “essential” by the federal government should continue current operations, and incorporate our General Guidelines for Business outlined above.

Businesses that were considered “non-essential” by the federal government may resume operations in Missouri in accordance with the Order and these guidelines.

What if my job requires me to be within six feet (6’) of another employee and/or customer?

The social distancing requirements do not apply to individuals performing job duties that require contact with other people closer than six feet (6’).



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Businesses and employees should work together to implement public health and safety measures for employees and customers, using the above direction as a guide, in addition to any guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Under these conditions, businesses such as barber and cosmetology shops, hair salons, and tattoo parlors are allowed to operate.

Gyms and hotel swimming pools can also open if they adhere to strict social distancing and sanitation protocols.

Are there restrictions on businesses?

Yes. Workplaces that are engaged in retail sales to the public must limit the number of customers in each retail location to the following standards based on the workplace’s fire or building code occupancy:

- For smaller locations (less than 10,000 square feet), they must maintain 25 percent or less of the authorized occupancy;
- For larger locations (10,000 square feet or greater), they must maintain 10 percent or less of the authorized occupancy.

Employees at the workplace and vendors delivering products into the store are not included in this calculation and do not count toward occupancy limitations.

Are grocery stores considered a business “engaged in retail sales to the public?”

Yes, and such stores are subject to the occupancy limitations in the Order.

Grocery stores are strongly encouraged to set aside hours, outside of regular store hours, to allow third-party grocery delivery services to provide grocery shopping services for their customers. This will allow individual shoppers to shop during regular store hours, and reduce congestion during such times. This will further allow such services to function in an environment where their services may be in excessive demand.

Shoppers at all retail stores are also encouraged, when possible, to limit the number of people shopping in stores to one person per household at any one time. This will better enable all families to access necessary goods in grocery stores, and further reduce the number of individuals necessary to access such goods.



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My local jurisdiction does not have a building or fire code. Do the limitations on square footage apply to my retail business?

Yes. If your business is not subject to fire or building code occupancy limitations set by your local jurisdiction, you should calculate your occupancy limits based on the following formula:

For a business with a retail location less than 10,000 square feet:

- Building Square Feet divided by 30 = Quotient
- Quotient x .25 = Occupancy Limit

For a business with the retail location of 10,000 square feet or more:

- Building Square Feet divided by 30 = Quotient
- Quotient x .10 = Occupancy Limit

Examples:

- A 40,000 square foot grocery store would be able to have 133 customers in the store at any one time.
- An 8,000 square foot retail store would be able to have 66 customers in the store at any one time.

My local fire or building code occupancy limitation calculation is lower than that allowed for businesses without any fire or building code limits, or is lower than a neighboring jurisdictions fire or building code limitations. Can I apply the same formula for calculating occupancy for my business as those without a code?

Yes. You may use either the calculation set forth above for businesses without a fire or building code occupancy limitation, or the calculation applied to your business based upon your specific local jurisdiction fire and building code occupancy limitation, whichever is greater.

Examples:

- My 30,000 square foot retail business has a local jurisdiction fire or building occupancy limitation of 700 people. Using the formula allowing only 10% of the local jurisdiction, I would be able to have 70 customers in my store at any one time. For an identical business without a local fire or occupancy limitation, they would be able to have 100 customers in their store at any one time. Under this guidance, you may have up to 100 customers in your store at any one time.
- My 6,000 square foot retail business has a local jurisdiction fire or building occupancy limitation of 150 people. Using the formula allowing only 25% of the local jurisdiction, I would be able to have 37 customers in my store at any one time. For an identical business without a local fire or occupancy limitation, they would be able to have 50 customers in



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their store at any one time. Under this guidance, you may have up to 50 customers in your store at any one time.

My business has a public waiting room with congregate seating. Should I limit access to it?

Implementing a system where customers/citizens can wait inside their vehicles prior to entering the business is strongly encouraged, as are pre-scheduled appointments to minimize interaction between people. In situations where this is not feasible, such as public transit, medical offices, and parks, entities should develop public health and safety measures using the above direction as a guide, in addition to any guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Does this order prevent me from receiving non-emergency healthcare, such as a routine eye exam or dental care?

Medical providers, such as dentists and optometrists, may provide usual services at their discretion. The social distancing requirements do not apply to individuals performing job duties that require contact with other people closer than six feet (6').

Medical providers should develop and implement public health and safety measures for employees and patients, using the above direction as a guide, in addition to any guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Implementing a system where patients can wait inside their vehicles prior to entering the office is strongly encouraged, as are pre-scheduled and spaced out appointments to minimize interaction between people.

May restaurants open their dining rooms?

Yes. In concert with the Missouri Restaurant Association, we are strongly encouraging restaurants to prioritize public health and safety by implementing measures including, but not limited to, regulating self-serve options such as salad bars and buffets, using disposable menus, and employee use of personal protective equipment if available. Tables and seating shall be spaced out according to social distance requirements.

The continued use of drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options is encouraged.

Food court establishments may operate, but the social distancing and communal seating requirements will prevent them from offering seating.



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How do these guidelines apply to childcare facilities?

Daycares, childcare providers, or schools providing childcare for working families can continue operations, but should follow the CDC guidance targeted for those operations found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>.

May I attend service at my place of worship?

Yes. As long as the social distancing requirements are followed, places of worship are allowed to hold in-person services. Common practices that may occur with worship services, such as hand shaking and shared communion cups, should be avoided. Places of worship are also encouraged to continue use of alternative means of services through streaming services and other opportunities.

I am a member of a fraternal organization. Are we allowed to open our building and meet?

Yes. Fraternal organizations such as the Knights of Columbus and the Fraternal Order of Eagles may gather, but must adhere to the social distancing and communal seating areas requirements.

Will I still be able to participate in my local parks and recreation organized activities and/or camps this summer?

Yes. Traditional summer activities such as utilizing aquatic facilities, community centers, fitness centers, libraries, organized athletics, and camps offer a variety of recreational opportunities for Missouri citizens. If these services are offered, we encourage adjustments be considered to mitigate the risks of contracting or spreading COVID-19 between participants, patrons, and staff, such as limiting the number of participants, modifying activities, restructuring programs, and increasing sanitization measures for facilities and participants.

We also advise areas of high touch or high traffic, such as playgrounds, remain closed.

Can I attend an event at a large venue or stadium, or go to a movie theater?

Yes. However, seating shall be spaced out according to social distancing requirements.

This will apply to events such as amusement parks and attractions, concerts, funerals, museums, school graduations and weddings.



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How will this order be enforced?

The State is working with local health authorities to support the order. Local health authorities and law enforcement maintain the same jurisdiction and authority they have always had.

Can my local health authority impose requirements that are more restrictive?

Yes. This Order establishes the minimum requirements that must be complied with statewide. Local health authorities may enforce more restrictive public health requirements for businesses or individuals.

The only exception is the Order from the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services dated March 24, 2020, removing the authority of a local health authority from closing or restricting the operations of a business which is a part of the food supply, whether that be agricultural production, manufacturing, distribution, or sale of food. This limited waiver does not limit the authority of a local health authority from closing or restricting the operations of a retail food establishment.

How long is this order in effect?

The Order is in place through Sunday, May 31, 2020. The Order will be re-evaluated before it expires, and may be further restricted, less restricted, or extended in the current form.