



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
No. 011 – March 13, 2020

For more information contact:
Tracy Wimmer
517-281-1876

Secretary Benson: Branch Operations Will Move to Appointment-Only for Three Weeks

Safety Precautions Being Taken to Slow the Spread of Coronavirus

LANSING, MICH. Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson announced at a press conference today that all 131 Michigan Secretary of State branch offices will be changing operations to slow the spread of the coronavirus. During the three-week period from March 16 to April 6 branches will only offer services for critical transactions that must be conducted in-person and only by appointment. “Walk-ins” will be asked to make an appointment, for the same day if available.

“The goal is to eliminate any potential crowding in our offices, and thereby support the work of Governor Whitmer and her administration to protect the health of all state employees and Michiganders,” said Benson.

The types of transactions available in-person at branches during this three-week period will be limited to the following three critical services:

- New driver's licenses and state IDs
- Title transfers
- Testing for an original commercial driver's license, chauffer's license, mechanic's license, motorcycle license, and recreational vehicle license

During the three-week period the number of appointments available will be increased, and same-day appointments will continue to be available. Services will also continue to be available online, by mail and at new self-service stations across the state, many of which accept cash. Saturday branch services will be suspended but weekday hours will be expanded as follows:

- Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Wednesdays: Remain 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

All existing appointments, including those not for the three limited transaction types, will be honored. Those who have appointments scheduled for non-critical services are asked to consider cancelling them in order to make the slot available for someone else. Before scheduling an appointment, Michiganders are strongly encouraged to use online, self-serve kiosk and renewal-by-mail options. The Department of State will also lift the restriction that requires demonstration of insurance to renew driver's licenses.

“Some people may not be able to conduct their business with us before their transaction expiration date,” said Benson. “We will waive late fees during this period, and we have notified Michigan State Police of our change in operations, and asked that they convey this information to local law enforcement.”

Branch staff will utilize the hygiene practices recommended to prevent the spread of the virus, and cleaning and sanitization protocols have been upgraded at all offices. Benson called on those who do need to utilize an in-person appointment to play their part in the preservation of public health by using hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes when visiting a branch office.

“We will work with the Whitmer Administration to monitor public health and the spread of the coronavirus in Michigan, in order to determine how we will operate after April 6,” said Benson. “We will also explore options to provide more services virtually, in preparation for the possibility that we may need to implement even more limited access to branch offices in the future.”

Appointments can be made at Michigan.gov/SOSAppointments and by calling 888-SOS-MICH.

This is a rapidly evolving situation. Updates will be posted to Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

###