



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson  
Office of Communications

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COVID-19 BRIEFING  
April 20, 2020

3:00 PM (CST)

Good afternoon. Thank you for listening again today.

As of 2:00 p.m. today, there have been 5,807 positive cases of COVID-19 in Missouri, including 177 deaths. Over 56,000 Missourians have been tested.

As I said last week, we are seeing signs in the data that Missouri is slowing the course of COVID-19.

On Saturday, I spoke with the infectious disease doctors from across the state, and the common theme is that we are seeing stabilization in the health care system. This is very encouraging news, and we will continue to be data driven in our approach.

We are cautiously optimistic that we are beginning to stabilize, and we are preparing to reopen Missouri for business.

Today, Director Todd Richardson is here to give an update on these efforts.

*(TODD RICHARDSON SPEAKS)*

Thank you, Todd.

COVID-19 has had devastating impacts on public health and the economy. More people are staying home. Business operations have been limited, many have lost their jobs, and state revenues are down.

COVID-19 is unlike anything we have ever dealt with before, and like many families during this time, we are having to make adjustments and cut back on our state expenditures.

To ensure our budget is balanced and we have the funds to deal with COVID-19 going forward, we are planning to restrict over \$47 million dollars in addition to the \$180 million we announced earlier this month.

These restrictions include reduced funding for nine of our state agencies, Office of the Attorney General, and the General Assembly.



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These are not easy decisions, and they are not made lightly, but this is the right thing to do to ensure our budget is balanced and we are financially prepared to deal with the impacts of COVID-19 going forward.

I appreciate the leadership in the General Assembly on these decisions, especially the House and Senate Budget Chairs.

Just as families and businesses have to balance their budgets and make hard decisions, we are doing the same.

We will continue to advocate to the White House and our congressional delegation for federal funding to help reduce the economic impact of COVID-19 in Missouri.

Not only are we working to ensure that our budget is balanced this year, but we are also working to make sure that our most essential health care programs are funded into the future.

Today, I signed House Bill 2456 to continue to fund some of the state's most essential health care services through reimbursement allowances.

This legislation is critical in allowing the state to fund health care services, and I am thankful to the General Assembly for prioritizing this piece of legislation.

Before we answer questions, I'll turn it over to Director Karsten for an update on PPE.

*(DIRECTOR KARSTEN SPEAKS)*

Thank you, Director Karsten.

Now I'll turn it over to Kelli for questions.

*(OPEN FOR QUESTIONS)*

I want to assure Missourians that there is light at the end of the tunnel. We are putting recovery plans in place and are preparing to get Missourians back to work as quickly as possible.

While we must be prepared for a slow and steady road to recovery, we are positive about the future and confident that we will come back stronger than ever before.

I look forward to seeing Missourians safe, healthy, and back to work.

Thank you and God Bless.