



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson
Office of Communications

COVID-19 BRIEFING
April 24, 2020

3:00 PM (CST)

Good afternoon. Thank you for listening again today.

As of 2:00 p.m. today, there have been 6,625 positive cases of COVID-19, including 262 deaths. Over 65,000 Missourians have been tested at this time.

As you know, we are preparing to reopen Missouri for business on Monday, May 4th.

Since Missouri's first case nearly 50 days ago, we have accomplished a tremendous amount of work together.

We have issued seven Executive Orders and waived or suspended over 450 state statutes and regulations.

We have ordered nearly \$40 million dollars worth of PPE, and we have significantly increased our testing capacity.

We were approved for a major federal disaster declaration.

We mobilized the Missouri National Guard to further assist our efforts.

We converted a hotel into a hospital in the St. Louis region in just 11 days.

On March 21, we issued our first statewide social distancing order.

And through it all, I am so proud of how Missourians have pulled together to help one another during this challenging time. From state government, to the private sector, to everyday citizens, Missourians everywhere have stepped up to do their part.

It is because of these efforts and **WORKING TOGETHER** that Missouri is in a better place, so we can move forward and bring back our economy.

We have drastically improved the predictions for Missouri, and we are moving forward with our plan to reopen the state on Monday, May 4th.



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Today, I am extending the Emergency Declaration in the state of Missouri through June 15th.

I want to be clear that this is NOT an extension of the Stay Home Order. We will be reopening Missouri on May 4th.

Extending the Emergency Declaration simply allows us to continue utilizing our resources and deploying them around the state, even as we move into the recovery process.

This also enables us to keep all of the waivers or suspensions of state statutes and regulations in place while we adjust to the reopening.

We know there have been a lot of questions about what the reopening will look like. Next week, we will officially introduce the reopening plan, which will take effect on May 4th.

Some of the items we will address include:

- Guidelines for small businesses and retail manufacturing.
- A plan for restaurants to reopen.
- Businesses such as barber shops, hair salons, and gyms, as well as other jobs requiring people to be within 6 feet of each other.
- We will also have guidance for attending church services per conversations with religious leaders across the state.
- We are also working with DESE to hopefully develop a process for senior graduation.
- Events such as weddings and outdoor functions will also be addressed.
- We know youth and summer sports and other outdoor activities will also be a question, and we will be addressing that as well.

While we will gradually reopen the economy during this first phase of our plan, it will still be important to maintain certain measures of social distancing to protect both ourselves and others.

Every community across Missouri has been affected differently by COVID-19, some worse than others. That said, some communities will be able to reopen at a faster rate than others.

If local leaders decide additional measures should be implemented, they may add to the current guidelines.



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We know there will be more questions in the coming days, and we will be releasing information on a daily basis.

But I want to be clear that none of these decisions have been made alone.

From the start, we have been in constant communication with leaders at the federal, state, and local levels to develop our recovery plan.

We have also received input from our hospitals, health care providers, public health experts, emergency personnel, mayors, county commissioners, religious leaders, businesses, and employees across the state.

This has been a group effort, and I want to thank everyone who has provided their advice and expertise throughout this process.

Kelli, questions?

(OPEN FOR QUESTIONS)

We know COVID-19 will be around for a while, but we must still be able to adapt and move forward.

This means finding ways to manage the virus while still keeping Missouri safe and businesses open.

But at the end of the day, it is going to come down to taking responsibility and doing the right thing to protect yourself and others around you.

We know this has been hard for everyone, but we greatly appreciate Missourians' patience and efforts.

We still have a ways to go, but we ARE on the road to recovery.

Thank you and God bless.