



FILED
INDEX DEPARTMENT

MAR 31 2023

IN THE OFFICE OF
SECRETARY OF STATE

Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation

WHEREAS, since early March 2020, Illinois has faced a pandemic that has caused extraordinary sickness and loss of life, infecting over 4,109,000, and taking the lives of more than 36,600 residents; and,

WHEREAS, protecting the health and safety of Illinoisans is among the most important functions of State government; and,

WHEREAS, as Illinois continues to respond to the public health disaster caused by Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), a novel severe acute respiratory illness that spreads rapidly through respiratory transmissions, the unprecedented burden on residents, healthcare providers, first responders, and governments throughout the State continues; and,

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization initially declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on January 30, 2020, and the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services declared that COVID-19 presents a public health emergency on January 27, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic, and has now reported more than 761 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than 6.8 million deaths attributable to COVID-19 globally; and,

WHEREAS, despite efforts to contain COVID-19, the virus continues to spread rapidly, resulting in the need for federal and State governments to continue to take significant steps; and,

WHEREAS, COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death, but a proportion of the population remains unvaccinated, including some younger children who only recently became eligible for vaccination; and,

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of Illinois, declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area in response to the outbreak of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President declared a nationwide emergency pursuant to Section 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act"), covering all states and territories, including Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2020, the President declared a major disaster in Illinois pursuant to Section 401 of the Stafford Act; and,

WHEREAS, as COVID-19 has continued to spread in Illinois, causing ongoing health and economic impacts, and as variants and subvariants of the virus, including the Omicron variant, have caused continuing additional risk and harm, I have declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area every month since March 2020; and,

WHEREAS, as circumstances surrounding COVID-19 have evolved and new evidence has emerged, there have been frequent changes in information and public health guidance; and,

WHEREAS, the unprecedented nature of COVID-19, including the health consequences it has on not just the respiratory system but the heart, brain, kidneys, and the body's immune response, has made and continues to make the virus's effects and its path difficult to predict; and,

WHEREAS, social distancing, face coverings, and other public health precautions have proven to be critical in slowing and stopping the spread of COVID-19, especially when community spread of the disease is high; and,

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued revised guidance on February 25, 2022 to lift its recommendation for universal indoor masking, including in K-12 settings; and,

WHEREAS, that CDC guidance provided a framework for assessing community COVID-19 levels based on COVID-19 hospital admissions, inpatient bed availability, and number of COVID-19 cases; and,

WHEREAS, the CDC's guidance now only recommends universal masking in communities with high community COVID-19 levels; and,

WHEREAS, the CDC continues to advise that some community settings, such as schools and high-risk congregate settings may require additional layers of prevention based on the characteristics of the setting and in the event of an outbreak; and,

WHEREAS, some people infected by the virus remain asymptomatic but nonetheless may spread it to others; and,

WHEREAS, public health guidance advises that minimizing physical interactions between people who are not fully vaccinated and who do not reside in the same household is critical to slowing the spread of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, as COVID-19 has spread in Illinois over the course of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations, the circumstances causing a disaster throughout the State have changed and continue to change, making definitive predictions of the course the virus will take over the coming months extremely difficult; and,

WHEREAS, at the time I issued the first Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, there were 11 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in one Illinois county; and,

WHEREAS, as of today, there have been over 4,109,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in all 102 Illinois counties; and,

WHEREAS, the first death attributed to COVID-19 in Illinois was announced on March 17, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, as of today, more than 36,600 residents of Illinois have died due to COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, from the outset, studies have suggested that for every confirmed case there are many more unknown cases, some of which are asymptomatic individuals who can pass the virus to others without knowing; and,

WHEREAS, the virus continues to infect too many individuals and claim the lives of too many Illinoisans each day; and,

WHEREAS, it is important for the State to prepare for potential surges and new variants of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is not limited to the most populous counties, and all regions of the State continue to face significant COVID-19 risk; and,

WHEREAS, without precautions COVID-19 can spread exponentially, even in less populous areas; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. has had more than 104 million total cases and more than 1,125,300 deaths; and,

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has claimed the lives of and continues to impact the health of Black and Hispanic Illinoisans at a disproportionately high rate – magnifying significant health disparities and inequities; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Department of Public Health activated its Illinois Emergency Operations Plan and its Emergency Support Function 8 Plan to coordinate emergency response efforts by hospitals, local health departments, and emergency management systems in order to avoid a surge in the use of hospital resources and capacity; and,

WHEREAS, as the virus has progressed through Illinois, the crisis facing the State continues to require an evolving response to ensure hospitals, health care professionals and first responders are able to meet the health care needs of all Illinoisans and in a manner consistent with CDC guidance that continues to be updated; and,

WHEREAS, in order to ensure that health care professionals, first responders, hospitals and other facilities are able to meet the health care needs of all residents of Illinois, the State must have critical supplies, including PPE, such as masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois maintains a stockpile that supports the existing PPE supply chains and stocks at various healthcare facilities; and,

WHEREAS, while the State continues to make every effort to ensure an adequate supply of PPE, if those procurement efforts are disrupted or Illinois experiences a surge in COVID-19 cases, the State may face a life-threatening shortage of critical supplies for health care workers and first responders; and,

WHEREAS, if COVID-19 cases surge, the State could face a shortage of critical health care resources and health care staff; and,

WHEREAS, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in a nationwide shortage of healthcare professionals that is impacting the delivery of healthcare services in Illinois including the availability of staff, beds, and healthcare services in health care facilities, including State-operated facilities; and,

WHEREAS, in addition to causing the tragic loss of more than 36,600 Illinoisans and wreaking havoc on the physical health of tens of thousands more, COVID-19 has caused extensive economic loss and continues to threaten the financial welfare of a significant number of individuals and businesses across the nation and the State; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Department of Employment Security continues to respond to the economic crisis in a number of ways to address the unprecedented economic effects of the pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity continues working to address the economic crisis; and,

WHEREAS, many executive agencies in the State continue to focus significant resources on the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, many State agencies continue working to administer American Rescue Plan and Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds; and,

WHEREAS, the economic loss and insecurity caused by COVID-19 has threatened the viability of business and the access to housing, medical care, food, and other critical resources that directly impact the health and safety of residents; and,

WHEREAS, COVID-19 also has been extraordinarily disruptive to schools, and it is among the highest priorities of the State to ensure that students are able to obtain a quality education and that schools are able to provide an environment that is safe for students, teachers, and the community; and,

WHEREAS, based on the foregoing facts, and the ongoing health and economic impacts that will be felt over the coming month by people across the State, the current circumstances in Illinois surrounding the spread of COVID-19 constitute an epidemic emergency and a public health emergency under Section 4 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act; and,

WHEREAS, based on the foregoing, the ongoing potential that the State could face shortages of healthcare resources in the event of a surge in infections constitutes a public health emergency under Section 4 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act; and,

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the State of Illinois to be prepared to address any disasters and, therefore, it is necessary and appropriate to make additional State resources available to ensure that that our healthcare delivery system is capable of serving those who are sick and that Illinoisans remain safe and secure and able to obtain medical care; and,

WHEREAS, this proclamation will assist the State in facilitating economic recovery for individuals and businesses in an effort to prevent further devastating consequences from the economic instability COVID-19 has caused; and,

WHEREAS, this proclamation will assist Illinois agencies in coordinating State and federal resources, including materials needed to test for COVID-19, personal protective equipment, and medicines, in an effort to support the State responses as well as the responses of local governments to the present public health emergency; and,

WHEREAS, this proclamation will assist Illinois agencies in coordinating State and federal recovery funds; and,

WHEREAS, these conditions provide legal justification under Section 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act for the new issuance of a proclamation of disaster; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Constitution, in Article V, Section 8, provides that “the Governor shall have the supreme executive power, and shall be responsible for the faithful execution of the laws,” and states, in the Preamble, that a central purpose of the Illinois Constitution is “provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the people”;

NOW, THEREFORE, in the interest of aiding the people of Illinois and the local governments responsible for ensuring public health and safety, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, hereby proclaim as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7, I find that a disaster exists within the State of Illinois and specifically declare all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area. The proclamation authorizes the exercise of all of the emergency powers provided in Section 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7, including but not limited to those specific emergency powers set forth below.

Section 2. The Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency are directed to coordinate with each other with respect to planning for and responding to the present public health emergency.

Section 3. The Illinois Department of Public Health is further directed to cooperate with the Governor, other State agencies and local authorities, including local public health authorities, in the development and implementation of strategies and plans to protect the public health in connection with the present public health emergency.

Section 4. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is directed to implement the State Emergency Operations Plan to coordinate State resources to support local governments in disaster response and recovery operations.

Section 5. To aid with emergency purchases necessary for response and other emergency powers as authorized by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, the provisions of the Illinois Procurement Code that would in any way prevent, hinder or delay necessary action in coping with the disaster are suspended to the extent they are not required by federal law. If necessary, and in accordance with Section 7(1) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7(1), the Governor may take appropriate executive action to suspend additional statutes, orders, rules, and regulations.

Section 6. Pursuant to Section 7(3) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7(3), this proclamation activates the Governor's authority, as necessary, to transfer the direction, personnel or functions of State departments and agencies or units thereof for the purpose of performing or facilitating emergency response programs.

Section 7. The Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Insurance and the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services are directed to recommend, and, as appropriate, take necessary actions to ensure access to testing for COVID-19 and that consumers do not face financial barriers in accessing diagnostic testing and treatment services for COVID-19.

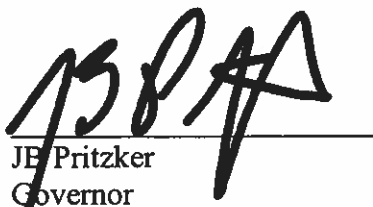
Section 8. The Illinois State Board of Education is directed to recommend, and, as appropriate, take necessary actions to address any impact to learning associated with the present public health emergency and to continue to alleviate any barriers to the use of remote learning during the effect of this proclamation that exist in the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 et. seq.

Section 9. All State agencies are directed to cooperate with the Governor, other State agencies and local authorities in the development and implementation of strategies and plans to cope with and recover from the economic impact of the present public health emergency.

Section 10. Pursuant to Section 7(14) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7(14), increases in the selling price of goods or services, including medical supplies, protective equipment, medications and other commodities intended to assist in the prevention of or treatment and recovery of COVID-19, shall be prohibited in the State of Illinois while this proclamation is in effect.

Section 11. This proclamation can facilitate requests for federal emergency and/or disaster assistance if a complete and comprehensive assessment of damage indicates that effective recovery is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments.

Section 12. This proclamation shall be effective immediately and remain in effect for 30 days.


JB Pritzker
Governor

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