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Gov. Bill Lee Issues Executive Order Declaring State of Emergency in Response to COVID-19

Order will free up funds, resources to help combat coronavirus spread

Thursday, March 12, 2020 | 02:20pm

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Today, Governor Bill Lee issued Executive Order No. 14 declaring a state of emergency in Tennessee to facilitate the treatment and containment of COVID-19.

“Today’s action will move us into a position to utilize additional emergency funds as needed and relax provisions of certain laws to provide the flexibility needed to respond to this disease,” said Gov. Lee. “While the risk to the general public remains low, we encourage all Tennesseans to exercise caution and maintain good hygiene practices as there are serious risks to our vulnerable populations. We will continue to evaluate and adapt our position accordingly to fit what we believe is best for Tennesseans.”

Executive Order 14 declares a state of emergency to facilitate the treatment and containment of COVID-19. To achieve these goals, the order:

- Implements the Tennessee Emergency Management Plan;
- Permits health care professionals licensed in other states to provide health care services in Tennessee related to COVID-19;
- Allows pharmacists to dispense an extra 30-day supply of maintenance prescriptions as needed in response to COVID-19;
- Allows health care professionals to provide localized treatment to patients in temporary residences;
- Expands testing sites for COVID-19;
- Allows the construction of temporary health care structures in response to COVID-19;
- Implements price-gouging protections on medical and emergency supplies;
- Suspends restrictions on vehicles transporting emergency supplies to areas affected by COVID-19;
- Permits the waiver of certain regulations on childcare centers as needed to respond to the effect of COVID-19;
- Authorizes TennCare policy changes to ensure that covered individuals receive medically necessary services without disruption; and
- Directs coordination with health insurance plans to improve access to screening, testing, and treatment for COVID-19.

Vulnerable populations should stay home where possible and avoid large gatherings or locations where they are more likely to contract the virus. Vulnerable populations include older adults and adults with underlying conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and respiratory illness. Non-essential visits to nursing homes and hospitals are strongly discouraged.

The full text of Executive Order No. 14 can be found [here](#).

Up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Tennessee can be found [here](#).

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