

# Governor Ducey Announces Latest COVID-19 Actions

**PHOENIX** — Governor Doug Ducey today announced additional mitigation strategies to combat the spread of COVID-19 in Arizona.

“We remain focused in the state of Arizona on proactively limiting the spread of COVID-19,” said Governor Ducey. “These latest actions are based on the facts and on data, and come after careful consultation with public health experts from every county in Arizona, our hospitals, local elected officials, and private sector partners. They reflect guidance from the CDC and the latest recommendations from our Department of Health Services, while going even further to bolster our efforts with additional manpower and resources. This is an all-in effort. We are determined to take all necessary precautions to address this outbreak and will continue to act with urgency to protect public health.”

These executive actions include:

## **Ensuring food access**

- Governor Ducey is activating the National Guard to assist grocery stores and food banks with re-stocking shelves in the face of heightened demand.
  - Arizona grocery stores are facing unprecedented demand, and this assistance will help ensure the continuation of food supply.
  - Food banks are also struggling with adequate volunteer levels to serve those in need.

## **Increasing hospital capacity**

- An Executive Order that halts all elective surgeries in the state of Arizona to free up medical resources and maintain the capacity for hospitals and providers to continue offering vital services.
  - This will help keep critical personal protective equipment (PPE) available for the fight against COVID-19.

## **Updated guidance and flexibility for restaurants, bars and other businesses:**

- An Executive Order that requires restaurants in Arizona counties with confirmed COVID-19 cases to provide dine-out options only, and that all bars in those counties close. This also applies to movie theaters and gyms.
  - This builds on the previous guidance from the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to ensure one consistent policy across jurisdictions. It is effective close of business Friday, March 20.

- To assist in mitigating the financial consequences of restaurant closures, the Executive Order also allows restaurants to deliver alcoholic beverages with the purchase of food.
  - Additionally, the Governor's directive allows manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers to buy back unopened products from restaurants, bars and clubs.

### **Waiving ADOT requirements for seniors and commercial drivers:**

- An Executive Order to delay expiration dates on Arizona driver licenses ensuring residents over the age of 65 do not need to visit Motor Vehicle Division offices to renew their driver licenses during the public health emergency.
  - This protects seniors and vulnerable Arizonans from community spread and supports efforts to social distance.
  - The policy applies to commercial vehicle drivers — ensuring that drivers stay on the road not in-line at MVDs.

### **Actions Arizona Has Taken To Date:**

- On January 27, 2020, the state activated the Health Emergency Operations Center to track suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 at the local, national and global level.
- On March 2, 2020, Arizona became one of the first states in the nation to be certified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to test for COVID-19.
- On March 4, 2020, Arizona received \$500,000 in federal funding (<https://www.azdhs.gov/director/public-information-office/index.php#news-release-030420>) <sup>[1]</sup> to support COVID-19 Response, providing immediate access to resources for a limited number of states and local jurisdictions impacted by the outbreak.
- On March 9, 2020, Governor Ducey met with CEOs and executives of facilities that provide services to the elderly, such as nursing homes, as well as senior care advocates to discuss the latest COVID-19 guidance from the CDC and to hear from local health care leaders serving vulnerable populations.
- On March 11, 2020, Governor Ducey issued a Declaration of Emergency and an Executive Order (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-doug-ducey-issues-declaration-emergency-executive-order-combat>) <sup>[2]</sup> to provide health officials and administrators with tools and guidance necessary to combat the continued spread of COVID-19 and to reduce financial burdens on Arizonans by lowering healthcare costs associated with the virus (more information provided below).
- On March 11, 2020, Arizona received over \$12.4 million (<https://www.azdhs.gov/director/public-information-office/index.php#news-release-031220>) <sup>[3]</sup> from the CDC to support the public health response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Key funding priorities will include surveillance and investigation activities, laboratory testing, infection control supply procurement and distribution, and risk communication.

- On March 12, 2020, Governor Ducey signed legislation (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-ducey-signs-legislation-expand-public-health-emergency-funds>) [4] to appropriate \$55 million to Arizona's Public Health Emergency Fund to support the state's continued efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19.
- On March 12, 2020, Governor Ducey and Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman held a conference call with more than 400 district, charter and private school administrators to brief superintendents, school leaders and educational organizations on the state's latest efforts (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-ducey-superintendent-hoffman-dr-cara-christ-share-covid-19-update>) [5] to respond to the global COVID-19 outbreak, and take their questions.
- On March 15, 2020, Governor Ducey and Superintendent Hoffman announced a statewide closure of Arizona schools from Monday, March 16, 2020 through Friday, March 27, 2020 to bring certainty and consistency in schools (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-doug-ducey-and-superintendent-kathy-hoffman-announce-closure-arizona>) [6] across Arizona.
- On March 16, 2020, Governor Ducey met with representatives from private-sector testing labs to discuss efforts underway to expand public lab testing capacity for COVID-19.
- On March 17, 2020, Governor Ducey met with hospital Chief Medical Officers in Phoenix to discuss their efforts to address COVID-19. That same day, he met with hospital leaders in Southern Arizona to discuss the latest information on COVID-19 and hear from them.
- On March 17, 2020, ADHS issued new guidance related to dining establishments, child care providers, nursing homes, and additional social distancing measures. The guidance, which reflects recent recommendations from the CDC, recommends canceling or postponing gatherings of 10 or more people.
- On March 18, 2020, Governor Ducey and Kristine FireThunder, Director of the Governor's Office of Tribal Relations, held a conference call with Arizona's Tribal Leaders to discuss emergency declarations being issued in line with the state declaration of emergency, as well as ongoing steps being taken to comply with recently released guidance from ADHS and CDC.
- On March 19, Governor Ducey met with county and local health officials from across Arizona to build on the state's efforts to address COVID-19.
- ADHS is conducting regular briefings, webinars, and providing guidance to community stakeholders including, school administrators, healthcare providers, government officials and business leaders.

View the Executive Order on limiting in-person Motor Vehicle Division visits for driver license renewals (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/executive-order/2020-08>) [7].

View the Executive Order on limiting the operations of certain businesses to slow the spread of COVID-19 (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/executive-order/2020-09>) [8].

View the Executive Order on delaying elective surgeries to conserve personal protective equipment necessary to test and treat patients with COVID-19 (<https://azgovernor.gov/governor/executive-order/2020-10>) [9].

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#### Links

[1] <https://www.azdhs.gov/director/public-information-office/index.php#news-release-030420>

[2] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-doug-ducey-issues-declaration-emergency-executive-order-combat>

[3] <https://www.azdhs.gov/director/public-information-office/index.php#news-release-031220>

[4] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-ducey-signs-legislation-expand-public-health-emergency-funds>

[5] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-ducey-superintendent-hoffman-dr-cara-christ-share-covid-19-update>

[6] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/news/2020/03/governor-doug-ducey-and-superintendent-kathy-hoffman-announce-closure-arizona>

[7] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/executive-order/2020-08>

[8] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/executive-order/2020-09>

[9] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/executive-order/2020-10>