

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ONGOING NOVEL CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

COVID-19 Bulletin #4 - March 23, 2020

Monday, March 23, 2020 | 05:45pm

Today, Governor Bill Lee provided an update on Tennessee's efforts around COVID-19 relief.

Gov. Lee's daily press conferences can be viewed live each day this week at 3 p.m. CT [here](#). Gov. Lee has also established a website specific to COVID-19 updates which can be found [here](#).

Updates & Reminders

Executive Order 17

Yesterday, Gov. Lee signed [Executive Order 17](#) which called for businesses across the state to utilize alternative business models to protect vulnerable populations while doing everything possible to keep Tennesseans in a financially stable position.

The executive order accomplishes the below actions, among others:

- Prohibits social gatherings of 10 or more people;
- Directs restaurants, bars, and similar food and drink establishments to exclusively offer drive-thru, take-out or delivery options to support families, businesses and the food supply chain;
- Allows for the sale of alcohol by take-out or delivery (with the purchase of food) in closed containers to those who are age 21 and up;
- Directs gyms and fitness/exercise centers or substantially similar facilities to temporarily close and suspend in-person services;
- Restricts visitation to nursing homes, retirement homes, and long-term care or assisted-living facilities to essential care only; and
- Encourages businesses to enact policies that take extra steps to assist vulnerable populations by considering measures such as shopping hours exclusive from the general public.

Administration Actions

COVID-19 Unified Command

Today, Gov. Lee established the COVID-19 Unified Command, a joint effort led by Commissioner Stuart McWhorter to streamline coordination across the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), Tennessee Department of Health and Tennessee Department of Military.

Commissioner McWhorter currently heads the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration and will leave this post to head the COVID-19 Unified Command. Eugene Nubert will serve as acting commissioner of F&A. McWhorter appointed retired Brig. Gen. Scott Brower to serve as chief of staff for the Unified Command.

The COVID-19 Unified Command also includes:

- Patrick Sheehan, TEMA Director
- Dr. Lisa Piercey, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Health
- Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Adjutant General, Tennessee Department of Military

This group is charged with changing the way Tennessee attacks COVID-19 to simultaneously address health, economic and supply crises. Additional information can be found [here](#).

Personal Protective Equipment

To address one of the greatest challenges during this pandemic, acquiring personal protective equipment (PPE), Tennessee higher education institutions are now utilizing 3D printers to create face shields to be used in conjunction with PPE and to safely extend the life of our supply.

- The institutions will produce between 1500-2000 shields which will be centrally packaged at Austin Peay State University, the campus that originated the prototype.
- After completion, the PPE equipment will be delivered directly to the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency.
- Campuses participating in the initial production of face shields currently includes four Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology and four universities.

Executive Order 18

Today, Gov. Lee signed [Executive Order 18](#) to further efforts in gaining more personal protective equipment. The executive order prohibits hospitals and surgical outpatient facilities from performing elective surgeries and instructs dentists to halt non-emergency dental services. Practitioners are asked to donate their personal protective equipment at their nearest National Guard Armory until April 13.

Current Department of Health Testing Results (as of 2 p.m. 3/23)

Testing Location	Total COVID-19 Tests Completed	Number Negative	Number Positive
TN State Public Health Laboratory	983	911	72
All other commercial and private laboratories	--	--	543

Total positives in TN

615

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For more information on COVID-19 in Tennessee, please visit the Tennessee Department of Health's website [here](#).