



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson

Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Parson Announces COVID-19 Related State of Emergency to Expire on December 31

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) – Today, Governor Mike Parson announced that Missouri's COVID-19 related State of Emergency will expire and not be renewed on December 31, 2021. Governor Parson first issued an Executive Order (EO) declaring a State of Emergency existed due to COVID-19 on March 13, 2020.

"Thanks to the effectiveness of the vaccine, widespread efforts to mitigate the virus, and our committed health care professionals, past needs to continue the state of emergency are no longer present," **Governor Parson** said. "Over the last 22 months, we have coordinated with local, state, and private partners to mitigate COVID-19 and work towards returning to normalcy. We all now know how to best fight and prevent serious illness from this virus. The State stands ready to provide assistance and response, but there is no longer a need for a state of emergency."

Governor Parson extended the COVID-19 related State of Emergency five times before issuing a final targeted executive order for health care needs in August 2021. Currently, only three of Missouri's border states and 20 other states in the nation have state of emergencies related to COVID-19 in place.

At one time, nearly 600 statutory and regulatory waivers were approved across Missouri state government. Since that peak, waivers have reduced by nearly 80 percent. All remaining COVID-19 related waivers authorized under EO 21-09 will terminate on December 31, 2021.

Agencies, boards, commissions, and departments are able to pursue rulemaking if permanent changes to regulations are needed after December 31 to improve long-term outcomes for Missourians, health care facilitates, and businesses. The General Assembly can also make any needed policy changes when they return for the 2022 legislative session on January 5.

The state has communicated to its health care partners that there will be flexibility during a transitional period to fully resume pre-pandemic operations.

With the expiration of EO 21-09, the Missouri National Guard will no longer be activated for COVID-19 related missions.

"In Missouri, we never had mandates or forced lockdowns," **Governor Parson** said. "The main focus of our state of emergency was to provide regulatory flexibility to support and assist Missourians, health care facilities, and businesses and coordinate a COVID-19 response that saved lives and livelihoods. We encourage all Missourians to consider COVID-19 vaccination and to stay diligent, but we can work together to fight COVID-19 while living our normal lives. It is time to take this final step and move forward as a state."

The best method to prevent serious illness from COVID-19 is vaccination, and more and more Missourians continue choosing to get primary and booster vaccinations. In the month of December alone, more than 565,000 doses of vaccine were administered and 42 percent were part of a primary vaccine series.

Nearly 94 percent of Missourians 65 and older, the most vulnerable, have received at least one dose. More than 73 percent of Missourians 18 and older and over 62 percent of all Missourians have chosen to initiate vaccination.

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