



Dear State of Missouri Team:

Just over three months ago, we learned of the first case of COVID-19 in Missouri. We have all been through many ups, downs, twists and turns in that amount of time.

More of us began working remotely. The term “social distancing” became part of our everyday vocabulary. We became WebEx pros. We became homeschooling parents and grandparents. We missed celebrating once-in-a-lifetime events while stay at home orders were in place. We lost loved ones.

To meet the unprecedented challenges we have faced, we had to come together as a state. All state agencies banded together to tackle these issues and get us where we needed to be to move forward. This was, and is, to stop the spread of infection and get our economy back on the rise. The collaboration across state government and with federal and statewide partners has served us well.

Fast-forward three months. The Governor’s four “Show Me Strong Recovery” Pillars were met.

- Testing performed in Missouri increased by 220% since April 20.
- We continue to receive and distribute PPE, receiving national recognition of the State’s PPE Marketplace. This has been helping hospitals, health care providers, businesses and many other organizations.
- Hospital capacity has greatly improved. Hospitalizations have fallen 43% statewide from May 1-June 10.
- We have a robust analytics platform that we are studying daily. It was developed with statewide partners to provide the Governor with Missouri-specific data.
- The positivity rate of those PCR-tested for COVID-19 is at 5.7% and continues to trend downward. The number is an important indicator because it can provide insights into whether a community is conducting enough testing to find cases, including mild cases and those who are asymptomatic.

We are greatly appreciative of the whole State of Missouri team. Team members from across state government worked on the front lines and behind the scenes. They have made sure the government performed its duty of keeping people safe.

For these reasons, Governor Parson announced the reopening of our state Tuesday.

But it is important to know that we are not flipping a switch and returning to life as we knew it in January 2020. COVID-19 is still here, and we need to reopen the state responsibly.

This means social distancing is not going to be removed from our vocabulary. This includes good hand-washing, wearing face coverings when needed, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces. This means visitations of our loved ones in nursing homes may look a little different than they once did. We are continuing to monitor all areas of the state closely for any outbreaks or clusters of cases so they can be addressed early with mitigation efforts. This is all part of reopening responsibly to avoid a resurgence in illnesses.

Thank you for all you do each day to protect the health and keep the people of Missouri safe.

In good health,

Dr. Randall Williams

Director, Department of Health and Senior Services

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