



March 19, 2020

Below is an update on the COVID-19 pandemic as it pertains to Minnesota as of 6:00 PM on 3/19/2020.

Updates from the Governor

Governor Tim Walz signed an executive order today ordering health care providers to prioritize COVID-19 care by postponing elective surgeries, including elective dental procedures.

This order complies with guidance issued on March 17, 2020, from the Centers on Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as similar guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued on March 18, 2020, to delay elective surgeries and procedures, both to conserve health care resources and to reduce contact between patients and providers.

“The greatest risk we face during the COVID-19 pandemic is overwhelming our health care systems and limiting their ability to respond to emerging cases,” said Governor Walz. **“This executive order keeps more health care resources open and prioritizes life-saving intervention for COVID-19 patients and other emergency care.”**



Previous Actions by the Governor

March 18: The Governor took action to support businesses affected by COVID-19 by announcing a 30-day Sales and Use Tax grace period for businesses identified in Executive Order 20-04.

March 18: [Executive Order 20-08](#) clarifying the types of businesses and places of public accommodation subject to closure per Executive Order 20-04. The executive order clarifies that the closure order applies to salons, barbershops, and other similar establishments.

March 17: [Executive Order 20-07](#) providing paid leave for state employees who are not able to work for reasons related to COVID-19 and suspended the waiting period for insurance coverage for new employees.

March 17: [Executive Order 20-06](#) to exempt vehicles and drivers providing direct assistance for emergency relief efforts in response to COVID-19 from certain regulations including provisions on weight and hours of service.

March 17: Governor Walz signed [Ch. 70 S.F. 4334](#) into law, allocating \$200 million toward an emergency and long-term grant program to respond to the needs of health care and long-term care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

March 16: [Executive Order 20-05](#) to strengthen Minnesota's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and ensure that workers who are not able to work as a result of COVID-19 have benefits available. Specifically, this Executive Order waives the employer surcharge and allows the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to pay unemployment benefits immediately, providing fast relief to employees who need it.

March 16: [Executive Order 20-04](#) to order the temporary closure of Minnesota restaurants and bars to dine-in customers. He also ordered the temporary closure of other places of public accommodation and amusement, including theaters, museums, fitness centers, and community clubs.

March 16: [Executive Order 20-03](#) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Minnesota's Veterans Homes. This executive order allows Veterans Homes to protect residents and staff by temporarily restricting visitors, reducing the risk of COVID-19 spread among residents.

March 15: [Executive Order 20-02](#) authorizing the temporary closure of Minnesota K-12 public schools to students in order for school administrators and teachers to make long-term plans for the continuity of education and essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

March 13: [Executive Order 20-01](#) declaring a peacetime emergency in Minnesota and unveiled legislative proposals to prepare for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Everyone can work to reduce the spread of COVID-19

- Stay home if you can.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Cover your cough.
- Events of any size should only be continued if they can be carried out with adherence to guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations, hand hygiene, and social distancing. When feasible, organizers could modify events to be virtual.
- Up-to-date guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health on recommended community mitigation strategies can be found [here](#).

Resources

- **MDH Public Hotline Number: 651-201-3920**
- [CDC Situation Updates](#)
- [Apply for Unemployment Insurance](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Health Updates](#)
- [About COVID-19](#)

Coverage

- [Minnesota restaurants, bars and other venues get tax extension](#)
 - [Coronavirus outbreak: Applying for unemployment in Minnesota? 'Please do it online'](#)
 - [Latest on COVID-19 in Minnesota: 89 cases; virus continues statewide spread](#)
 - [Minnesota and Vermont will classify grocery store employees as emergency workers](#)
 - [Minnesota man infected with coronavirus praised for quick action](#)
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