



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 20, 2020

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT JOINS GOVERNOR PRITZKER TO ANNOUNCE STATE ORDER TO STAY AT HOME TO PREVENT FURTHER SPREAD OF COVID-19**

*New State Mandate Calls on Residents to Remain Home Unless Travel is Essential; Goal is to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19 and Protect Health and Safety of Residents*

CHICAGO--Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Governor JB Pritzker to announce a statewide order for Illinois residents to stay at home or place of residence. The order requires all residents to stay home, unless traveling for essential needs or business, and requires businesses not engaged in essential activities to cease all activities except for minimum basic operations. The order will take effect on Saturday, March 21 at 5 p.m., across the State of Illinois and will remain in place until the Governor's Disaster Proclamation expires on April 7. A copy of the order may be found [here](#).

These latest guidelines build on measures taken by the State and City over the past several weeks to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and to scale services and operations to ensure the health and safety of residents.

"Every action we've taken so far is based on the latest science and data from health officials as we combat the dynamic spread of COVID-19, and this is no exception," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This decision was not an easy one, but Governor Pritzker's order for Illinois residents to stay at home is the right thing to do to ensure we are protecting the health and wellbeing of our residents. We strongly encourage our residents to follow the guidelines and ensure the safety of their neighbors as we work to confront this crisis together."

To ensure the protection of all residents during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the State's order requires all residents to stay at home, unless they are engaged in essential activities, like going to the grocery store or the pharmacy. Under the order, individuals will no longer be able to engage in public or private group activities, participate in social activities at bars or nightclubs, or take unnecessary trips. The order also closes non-essential businesses from any activity except minimum basic operations, which includes activities to preserve inventory,



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process payroll, or facilitate working from home. For more information on the order, please see the City's FAQ [here](#).

During the order, individuals can still fulfill all of their essential needs, including:

- Traveling to obtain necessary supplies, including food, pet supplies, medicine, or take-out food;
- Attending appointments at a hospital or mental health provider;
- Visiting private businesses that offer essential services, including pharmacies, hardware stores, banks, and laundromats; and
- Using city or state governmental services, including fire and police.

If someone must leave their residence for one of the allowable activities outlined in the order, the individual is asked to comply with social distancing guidelines to the maximum extent possible.

The order explicitly defines “social distancing requirements” as maintaining at least six feet of distancing from other individuals, washing hands, covering coughs or sneezes, regularly cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands. Residents are still advised to refrain from participation in gatherings over 50 people or more, according to earlier guidance provided by the State of Illinois in consultation with CDC and health experts.

Residents who are sick must continue to stay home under the directive issued yesterday by the Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

“This is an unprecedented and challenging moment for every single Chicagoan,” said CDPH Commissioner Dr. Allison Arwady. “Though difficult, these bold measures are critical to stemming the spread of COVID-19 and securing the health of Chicago’s residents and families. No one is immune from this virus and everyone has a role to play in this fight, starting with adhering to the stay-in-place order, practicing social distancing when out, maintaining basic hand hygiene, as well as remembering to be especially mindful of our elderly residents and those with underlying medical conditions.”

The order does not interfere with the operation of essential businesses. Many businesses that provide essential services – including hospitals, banks, grocery stores, utility companies, and home-based care services for seniors and people with disabilities—will remain open to ensure all residents, including the most vulnerable populations, will have continued access to care.

The Lightfoot administration has taken a series of measures in recent weeks to protect residents and prevent further spread of the virus. This includes steps taken to limit access to public facilities, protect workers, reduce non-essential services and



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provide economic relief to those residents and businesses that are most financially vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19.

The City has expanded public-private partnerships to ensure ample resources are in place. Yesterday, the Mayor announced a new small business relief fund, which will direct \$100 million to provide cash flow for small businesses, allowing them to keep workers on the payroll. The City has also secured a \$2.5 million donation from the partners at Citadel and Citadel Securities to help Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the Greater Chicago Food Depository combat food insecurity amid the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

“Chicago’s businesses and residents should rest assured their first responders, including CPD, CFD, paramedics, and other public safety personnel, will continue to be on the job and working around the clock to ensure our communities and neighborhoods remain safe during this crisis,” said OEMC Executive Director Rich Guidice. “Meanwhile, we encourage everyone to continue to practice vital safety measures as directed by our City and State’s elected leaders, and help their fellow residents do the same.”

Notwithstanding the State’s order, City will also maintain core government services to meet the needs of its communities, preserving key functions of public safety agencies, including CPD, CFD, OEMC and the Department of Streets and Sanitation. To comply with guidance by health experts, the City has also announced the following changes to non-essential services and operations:

- Extended the closure of Chicago Public Schools until April 21
- Chicago Park District locations will be closed at the close of business today
- Chicago Public Library locations will close as of 12 p.m. tomorrow
- City Hall will remain closed to the public until further notice
- The City will continue to offer essential services (public safety, health, sanitation, water)

At the beginning of the month, Mayor Lightfoot, CDPH and the Office of Emergency and Management and Communications (OEMC) began spearheading the City’s COVID-19 Taskforce to put Chicago in the best position possible as the situation evolves. Under the Taskforce, 12 unique subcommittees are vigorously working to continuously address and update the City’s response tactics in the wake of this fast-moving and evolving situation.

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