



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson
Office of Communications

COVID-19 BRIEFING
April 16, 2020

3:00 PM (CST)

Good afternoon. Thank you for listening again today.

As of 2:00 p.m. today, there have been 5,111 positive cases of COVID-19 in Missouri, including 152 deaths. Our hearts go out to their families and loved ones.

While we never want to see these numbers rise, the numbers were projected to be much worse in Missouri had we not taken fast and decisive action to implement social distancing.

Our state agencies have been working with Missouri public health experts, using Missouri-specific data to track the course of COVID-19 in our state.

We are seeing very early signs in the data that lead us to be cautiously optimistic that we are beginning to slow the course of the infection and see improvement across Missouri – even in our hardest-hit areas like St. Louis and Kansas City.

Our hospital system still has available capacity, and we have expanded capacity even more in case a surge occurs.

Today, I am extending the “Stay Home Missouri” Order through Sunday, May 3rd, so we can prepare to reopen the economy and get Missourians back to work.

Between now and May 4th, we will continue to monitor the situation and work with Missouri's hospitals, health care providers, public health experts, business leaders, and state departments to develop a plan. With the safety of Missourians at its core, our approach will be deliberate and data-driven.

I understand that social distancing has caused significant sacrifice on the part of Missourians, but as I've said before, this is a time when we must ALL make sacrifices.

I'm so proud of the people of Missouri. Because of you, we have improved the predictions for COVID-19 in our state.

You have listened. You have taken social distancing seriously. You have looked out for each other, and you have followed the Stay Home Order.

Because of your diligent efforts and sacrifices, we are able to put Missourians back to work.



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Today, I would like to explain our initial framework which will support a more detailed plan to safely and gradually move into the recovery phase of COVID-19.

Our efforts will be informed by public health experts, using Missouri-specific data. We must keep up our efforts to flatten the curve and reduce our cases of COVID-19. If good social distancing continues, we will see opportunities to reopen the state for business.

Our plan will have two initial phases, which are intended to protect those most at risk of exposure to COVID-19 and return Missouri to a new normal.

- First – protect health care workers, first responders, and other direct care workers so that our most vulnerable citizens have access to the care they need.
- Second – strategically reopen businesses supported by testing data and insights from employers AND employees.

Our “Show-Me Strong” Recovery Plan rests on 4 essential pillars:

- Rapidly expand testing capacity, including testing for those who are currently contagious and those who have developed immunity.
- Expand our reserves of PPE by opening public and private supply chains, and continuing to utilize Missouri businesses in that effort.
- Continue to monitor and, if necessary, expand hospital and health care system capacity, including alternate care facilities.
- Improve our ability to predict potential outbreaks using Missouri's public health data.

As I said, we will be following a data driven approach that combines a number of sources on data specific to Missouri. This approach allows us to look at the evolving situation locally, regionally, AND statewide.

Localized data includes:

- Hospitalization of known and presumed COVID-19 cases
- Considering population density and mobility
- Lab testing results



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- Health care facility capacity to treat COVID-19, including available hospital beds and ventilators

This data-driven approach incorporates the most up-to-date data from hospitals and other sources across the state. This work is being done by Missouri public health experts, health care providers, and research institutions.

This approach will allow us to focus state resources, better contain the spread of COVID-19, and reopen Missouri.

Now I'll turn it over to Kelli for questions.

(OPEN FOR QUESTIONS)

Missouri is incredibly diverse, and our reopening efforts will be careful, deliberate, and done in phases. The timing may not look the same in every community – our hardest hit areas like St. Louis and Kansas City may take longer to fully recover.

We must be ready for a slow but steady road to recovery, with SOME sort of social distancing continuing even as we begin to reopen the economy.

Thank you again for your efforts and sacrifices during this difficult time. I look forward to seeing Missourians safe, healthy, and **BACK TO WORK**.

Thank you and God Bless.