



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION NUMBER 131 JBE 2021

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY MITIGATION MEASURES

- WHEREAS,** pursuant to the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, La. R.S. 29:721, *et seq.*, the Governor declared a public health emergency on March 11, 2020 in Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020 in response to the threat posed by COVID-19;
- WHEREAS,** pursuant to the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, La. R.S. 29:721, *et seq.*, on March 11, 2020 in Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020, the Governor declared that a statewide public health emergency existed in the State of Louisiana because of COVID-19 and expressly empowered the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and the Secretary of the Department of Health and/or the State Health Officer to take all actions authorized under state law;
- WHEREAS,** La. R.S. 29:761 provides that "[b]ecause the government must do all that is reasonable and necessary to protect the health and safety of its citizens; because new and emerging dangers, including emergent and resurgent infectious diseases . . . pose serious and immediate threats; because a renewed focus on the prevention, detection, management, and containment of public health emergencies is essential; and because emergency health threats . . . may require the exercise of extraordinary government powers and functions, the state must have the ability to respond, rapidly and effectively, to potential or actual public health emergencies";
- WHEREAS,** on March 22, 2020, in Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020, the Governor issued a Stay at Home order that, among other things, ordered the people of Louisiana to stay at their homes unless taking essential trips or to travel to or from a place of employment, ordered some non-essential businesses to be closed, and placed limitations on other businesses that were allowed to remain open, which was ultimately extended until May 15, 2020;
- WHEREAS,** on April 16, 2020, the White House Coronavirus Task Force issued guidelines entitled "Opening Up America Again" that provided guidance to the states on how various parts of the economy could be re-opened;
- WHEREAS,** this guidance calls for the re-opening to occur in three phases, with the gating criteria for movement between phases being a 14-day downward trajectory in influenza-like and COVID-like symptoms, a 14-day downward trajectory in cases or positive tests as a percent of total tests, and the ability for hospitals to treat all patients without crisis care;
- WHEREAS,** on Wednesday, March 3, 2021, the Governor renewed the public health emergency, keeping the state of Louisiana in Phase 3 of Resilient Louisiana, maintaining many of the mitigation measures that have successfully slowed the spread of COVID-19 in the state;
- WHEREAS,** despite the success of the mitigation measures and adoption of vaccines in helping to beat back the third surge of COVID-19 in the state, the escalating prevalence of the Delta variant in the state has resulted in a significant increase in cases and hospitalizations, with the state giving up all of the progress made since mid-February;

WHEREAS, the need for the mitigation measures in this proclamation remains significant, as the success of the vaccine administration in Louisiana shows that the state can again turn the corner on this pandemic if there is continued vigilance and increased vaccinations; and

WHEREAS, these measures are necessary to protect the health and safety of the people of Louisiana.

NOW THEREFORE, I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A) Pursuant to the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, La. R.S. 29:721 et seq. and the Louisiana Health Emergency Powers Act, La. R.S. 29:760, *et seq.*, a statewide public health emergency is declared to continue to exist in the State of Louisiana as a result of the continued threat posed to Louisiana citizens by COVID-19, the effects of which continue to threaten the lives and health of the citizens of the state.
- B) The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and Secretary of the Department of Health are hereby expressly empowered to take any and all actions authorized under the Louisiana Health Emergency Powers Act, La. R.S. 29:760, *et seq.*, in relation to this public health emergency.
- C) The Secretary of the Department of Health and/or the State Health Officer are hereby expressly empowered to take any and all actions authorized thereto under Titles 29 and 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes and under the State Sanitary Code (LAC Title 51) in relation to this public health emergency.

SECTION 2: COVID-19 MITIGATION MEASURES

- A) All individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should stay at home, unless travelling outside the home for an essential activity, such as:
 - 1) Obtaining food, medicine, and other similar goods necessary for the individual or a family member of the individual.
 - 2) Obtaining medical care and treatment and other similar vital services for an individual or a family member of the individual.
 - 3) Going to and from an individual's workplace.
 - 4) Going to and from the home of a family member.
 - 5) Going to and from an individual's place of worship.
 - 6) Engaging in outdoor activity, provided individuals maintain a distance of six feet from one another.

Those individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness, as designated by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), are those with conditions such as asthma, chronic lung disease, compromised immune systems (including from smoking, cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, or use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medications), diabetes, serious heart disease (including heart failure, coronary artery disease, congenital heart disease, cardiomyopathies, and hypertension), chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, liver disease, or severe obesity or those who are 65 or older or living in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

This Subsection does not apply to any individuals who are fully vaccinated (someone who is at least two weeks beyond receiving a full administration of COVID-19 vaccine).

SECTION 3: FACE COVERINGS

- A) Except as provided for in the remaining Subsections of this Section, the statewide face covering mandate is no longer in effect. However, all individuals, especially those most vulnerable and those who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19, are still strongly encouraged to wear face coverings while interacting with members of the public.
- B) In accordance with the order issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on January 29, 2021, all individuals shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth while passengers and operators of public conveyances, including airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, buses, taxis, ride-shares, and the corresponding transportation hubs. The CDC order is found at https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/Mask-Order-CDC_GMTF_01-29-21-p.pdf.
- C) All offices of the State of Louisiana shall continue to encourage all employees and visitors to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth, **unless the person has been fully vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine.**
- D) All Local Education Agencies (LEAs), early childhood centers, and higher education institutions are hereby authorized to determine whether to require face coverings starting with the 2021 summer programs.
- E) **All correctional institutions in the State of Louisiana shall continue to require a face covering over the nose and mouth.**
- F) The requirements in Section 3 (B), (D), and (E) do not apply to the following:
 - 1) Any individual who will not come in contact with any other individual (outside of their immediate household members) or who will be able to maintain strict social distancing of six feet apart from any other individual (outside of their immediate household members);
 - 2) any child under the age of eight, however all children between the ages of two and seven years old are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering in accordance with Subsection (A) of this Section;
 - 3) any individual with a medical condition that prevents the wearing of a face covering;
 - 4) any individual who is consuming food or drinks;
 - 5) any individual seeking to communicate with someone who has or is suspected of having a communication disorder;
 - 6) any individual giving a speech for broadcast or to an audience;
 - 7) any individual temporarily removing his or her face covering for identification purposes;
 - 8) any athlete participating in organized athletic activities; or
 - 9) in groups of 10 or less when all in the group have been fully vaccinated.
- G) All local governing authorities and operators of private businesses and organizations shall retain the authority to issue more restrictive measures than that imposed by the State, including requiring members of the public to wear face coverings while in local governmental buildings and private business establishments.

SECTION 4: The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and the State Fire Marshal are directed to ensure compliance with this order, and are empowered to exercise all authorities pursuant to La. R.S. 29:721, *et seq.*, and La. R.S. 29:760, *et seq.*

SECTION 5: All departments, commissions, boards, agencies and officers of the state, or any political subdivision thereof, are authorized and directed to cooperate in actions the state may take in response to the effects of this event.

SECTION 6: Unless otherwise provided in this order, these provisions are effective from Wednesday, July 21, 2021 to Wednesday, August 11, 2021, or as extended by any subsequent Proclamation, unless terminated sooner.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand
officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of
Louisiana in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 21st
day of July, 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards", is written over a horizontal line.

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

ATTEST BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. L. Anderson", is written over a horizontal line.

SECRETARY OF STATE