

Good afternoon.

In a global pandemic, days are like weeks, and every single hour changes. The actions we take today will save lives.

Over the past week, we have taken action to help “flatten the curve” of coronavirus transmission in Oregon. That means decreasing the rate of infection while bringing state and federal resources up to the same speed as the spread of the virus.

In order to protect the health and safety of Oregon families, my overall goals are:

- To decrease the transmission rate in Oregon
- To preserve our hospital capacity for those who need it most
- To mitigate the real world and economic impacts of this global health crisis on Oregonians, particularly our most vulnerable families

Every step we are taking to achieve these goals is being made with community input and careful consideration of their impacts. Each action has ripple effects across our state, both on a personal level and an economic one.

But, working together, we can overcome these hurdles in an Oregon Way. What may work for one state, may not work here. And vice versa.

I have been weighing the economic impacts of mandating the closure of places where Oregonians gather.

I will be issuing an Executive Order on new social distancing measures for Oregon, effective March 17 for at least four weeks.

The order will include the following:

- A statewide cancelation of all events and gatherings larger than 25 people—with essential locations like workplaces, grocery stores, pharmacies, and retail stores exempted. Although I urge Oregonians to avoid any gatherings of 10 people or more.

- Restaurants, bars, and other establishments that offer food or beverages for sale are restricted to carry-out and delivery only with no on-site consumption permitted.
- Food service at hospitals, workplaces and other essential facilities will continue.
- I am also urging all other businesses to evaluate your practices to accommodate social distancing measures. Basically, can your business do the equivalent of restaurant take-out? If you cannot do that, I strongly urge you to close your doors to customers temporarily.
- As with my previous orders on social distancing any establishments not complying with these measures will be subject to a Class C misdemeanor, as established in Oregon's state of emergency statutes. However, I ask you to comply with the spirit of the law so our law enforcement officers can focus on more pressing needs of our communities during this emergency.

Tomorrow I am convening a Coronavirus Economic Advisory Council to mitigate the impacts of this action and any others that adversely affect our economy.

We are looking at a variety of tools that we have, including requests to the State Legislature and the federal government. We will have a report on their work in the coming days.

At the request of the Attorney General, I am also declaring an abnormal market disruption regarding essential items like hand sanitizer and toilet paper, to prevent price gouging during this public health crisis.

I have also assembled two command groups. One to manage our health care system's resources and the other to manage our state resources.

First, I am activating a COVID-19 Health Care System Response Joint Task Force. It's building off of an effort by the Metro area hospitals, the Oregon Health Authority and local public health officials who have been meeting in an effort to address capacity issues.

I am pleased to announce today that Metro hospitals will act as one large unified hospital system for the treatment of COVID-19.

- There will be a centralized, coordinated center for managing hospital bed inventory. We will expand bed capacity by adding beds in non-hospital settings.
- We are treating Personal Protective Equipment as a community resource to be preserved for health care workers and those who need it most.
- Likewise, testing resources will be aligned, including a standardized screening protocol.

It can be a model for how the crisis care plan will be implemented statewide. Dr. Dana Hargunani from the Oregon Health Authority will talk more about this agreement.

Second, we have activated the state's Unified Command emergency response organizational structure.

This is an incident management structure similar to what we would activate during a major Cascadia earthquake.

This will fully integrate the Oregon Health Authority's public health response efforts with the Office of Emergency Management's efforts to minimize any disruption to critical services in Oregon.

I'm going to have Andrew Phelps, Director of the Office of Emergency Management, summarize this emergency coordination function further.

I know Oregonians are some of the most resourceful people in the country. And in times of crisis, we come together and support each other. I am asking you to do that now.

Isolation from our friends and neighbors is the only way to flatten the curve of transmission and get Oregon through to the other side of this.

Closing schools and the places we gather were incredibly difficult decisions for me. Because we all know that as a community we hold each other together in times of need.

Working together, we are stronger together. Even if it's in ways we never thought possible.

Thank you.