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ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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NEWS RELEASE

State Health Officer issues stay at home order and strict quarantine requirements

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris has issued a health order effective until April 30 which requires every person in Alabama to stay at his or her place of residence except as necessary to perform essential activities. Anyone leaving home must maintain six feet of separation from other people.

Essential activities are defined in the health order and are as follows:

- To obtain necessary supplies
- To obtain or provide necessary services
- To attend religious services
- To take care of others
- To work at essential businesses and operations
- To engage in outdoor activity
- To seek shelter
- To travel as required by law
- To see family members

Essential businesses and operations, listed below, must take all reasonable steps to avoid gatherings of 10 persons or more and maintain a consistent six-foot distance between persons.:

- Essential government functions
- Health-care providers and caregivers
- Essential infrastructure
- Manufacturing facilities
- Agricultural operations and farms,
- Essential retailers
- Essential services
- Media operations
- Education operations
- Financial services
- Professional services
- Providers of basic necessities to economically disadvantaged populations
- Construction and construction-related services
- Essential public services
- Military or defense operations
- Essential services or product providers
- Religious entities
- Federally designated critical infrastructure
- Other state-designated essential businesses and operations

Effective immediately, any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 shall be quarantined to their place of residence for a period of 14 days after receiving positive test results. Quarantined persons may not leave their place of residence for any reason other than to seek necessary medical treatment.

The statewide order also requires quarantined persons to take precautions as directed by their health care provider or the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) to prevent the spread of the disease to others. Persons needing assistance with their needs while under quarantine may contact Alabama Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). Requests for exemptions will no longer be accepted. One of the items addresses attendance at religious services and reads as follows:

“A person may leave his or her place of residence to attend an event that is a religious worship service, wedding, or funeral in either of the following circumstances:

- (i) The event involves fewer than 10 people and the people maintain a consistent six-foot distance from one another; or
- (ii) The event is a “drive-in” worship service that adheres to the following rules:
 1. All participants shall remain in their vehicles for the entirety of the service;
 2. The participants in each vehicle all share the same place of residence; and
 3. Participants do not interact with participants in another vehicle.”

Regarding grocery stores, pharmacies and other stores, the following rules apply:

Emergency maximum occupancy rate. A retail store shall allow no more than 50 percent of its normal occupancy load inside the store at any one time. The store must station enough staff at the store entrances and exits to enforce this requirement.

Social distancing. An employee of a retail store may not knowingly allow customers or patrons to congregate within six feet of one another.

Sanitation. A retail store shall take reasonable steps to comply with guidelines on sanitation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and ADPH.

Permissible reasons for people to leave their residences and places where they may go are described in more detail in the health order which may be viewed at alabamapublichealth.gov.

The April 3 order supersedes and preempts all orders previously issued by the State Health Officer and Jefferson and Mobile County Health Officers concerning COVID-19 mitigation measures. Jefferson and Mobile County Health Officers are authorized, after approval by the State Health Officer, to implement more stringent measures as local circumstances require.