



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson
Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2020

**Governor Parson Requests Federal Major Disaster Declaration for Missouri
in Response to COVID-19**

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) – Governor Mike Parson has requested that President Donald J. Trump approve a major disaster declaration for the entire state of Missouri to provide federal assistance for state and local COVID-19 pandemic preparedness and emergency response efforts.

In the request filed Tuesday, Governor Parson said the pandemic is of such severity and magnitude that an effective response is beyond the state and local governments.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has already had a devastating effect on the state of Missouri, straining hospitals, healthcare facilities and nursing homes, businesses large and small, schools, and tens of thousands of Missourians who have been forced out of their jobs,” **Governor Parson** said. “Although it is continuing to develop, it’s already clear the COVID-19 pandemic will have a more sweeping impact on the entire state of Missouri than any other previous disaster that has affected our citizens. There is an urgent need for federal assistance to help Missouri families meet today’s challenges and the many more that we will face.”

Governor Parson requested two programs statewide, Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Crisis Counseling, under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Individual Assistance Program, which provides assistance to individuals and families. The Governor said the closure of multiple employment sectors will greatly impact all Missourians and that the state and local capabilities to provide mental health services will also require federal assistance.

Governor Parson also requested FEMA's Public Assistance Program to assist local governments and qualifying nonprofit agencies with emergency response expenses, including those of first responders, in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also requested that FEMA assist with debris removal expenses if needed for the removal and disposal of bio-hazard and other contaminated materials as a result of the pandemic response.

On March 13, Governor Parson declared a state of emergency in Missouri and activated the State Emergency Operations Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 21, Governor Parson directed Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Director Dr. Randall Williams to order social distancing statewide. Dr. Williams limited social gatherings in Missouri to no more than 10 people; directed Missourians to avoid eating or drinking in restaurants, bars, or food courts; and ordered that schools remain closed.

Last week, Governor Parson's request for low-interest federal disaster loans for Missouri small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of COVID-19 was approved by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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