



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 21, 2020

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Gov. Bill Lee COVID-19 Bulletin 22

Today, Governor Bill Lee provided an update on Tennessee's efforts regarding COVID-19 relief. Gov. Lee's daily press conferences can be viewed live this week Monday through Thursday at 3 p.m. CDT [here](#). Gov. Lee has also established a website specific to COVID-19 updates which can be found [here](#).

Key Updates

Phased Reopening Begins Next Week

Next week, 89 of Tennessee's 95 counties will begin a phased reopening of the state's economy as we work to bring industries like retail, restaurants, and close contact services to a safe and methodical opening.

For the remaining six counties, Gov. Lee and the Economic Recovery Group are working directly with local officials and health departments in Tennessee's major metropolitan areas (Shelby, Madison, Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, and Sullivan counties) as they plan their unique re-open strategies.

Tennesseans must maintain habits like social distancing, working from home when possible, handwashing, and utilizing cloth masks. Certain restrictions will remain in place to ensure we do this properly and safely, such as discouraging social gatherings of 10 or more and restricting visitors at nursing homes and hospitals until further notice.

Gov. Lee and the Economic Recovery Group will provide specific guidance for Tennessee industries later this week. More information on Tennessee's Economic Recovery Group is available [here](#).

Relief for Tennessee's Small and Rural Hospitals

COVID-19 has placed a considerable strain on Tennessee's small and rural hospitals. Earlier this month, Gov. Lee announced \$10 million in grants to support these hospitals that are facing financial strain due to the ongoing response to COVID-19.

Yesterday, the first four grants were distributed, totaling more than \$1 million in state funds to the following organizations:

- Lincoln Medical Center
- Henderson County Community Hospital
- Lauderdale County Community Hospital
- Three Rivers Hospital in Waverly

In addition to grant assistance, these hospitals have also successfully drawn down \$7.5 million in federal COVID relief funds. We anticipate several additional applications from small and rural hospitals that will be processed and verified in the coming days.

Additional information on Small and Rural Hospital Grants can be found [here](#).

Data Update

- Today represents our lowest increase in COVID-19 cases to date.
- Our number of recovered cases continues to exceed the number of new positive cases.

Additional data updates from the Tennessee Department of Health can be found [here](#).

Engaging Minority Communities

Dr. Kimberly Lamar from the Tennessee Department of Health's [Office of Minority Health Disparities Elimination](#) provided an overview of efforts to engage minority communities to seek testing and treatment for COVID-19. Actions include:

- The Health Disparities Task Force engages non-profits, faith leaders, legislators and local leaders to ensure regular communication with minority communities.
- Expanded testing efforts coordinate with local health clinics and safety net clinics to ensure underserved populations have access to testing.
- Focused resources to improve race/ethnicity data collection to better target testing and prevention efforts.
- Launching additional public service announcements regarding minority health concerns during COVID-19 and additional communications to recognize front line workers in health care and essential businesses.

Financial Stimulus Accountability Group

Funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, began flowing to Tennessee last week, with our state expected to receive more than \$2.3 billion with additional funding going directly to Memphis and Nashville.

In partnership with the legislature and constitutional officers, Financial Stimulus Accountability Group, will work to properly steward these funds and serve Tennesseans.

The first meeting of the Stimulus Financial Accountability Group will be held remotely tomorrow, April 22, and members will discuss major spending priorities and review the federal expectations for these funds.

Members of the group include:

- Governor Bill Lee
- Lieutenant Governor Randy McNally
- House Speaker Cameron Sexton
- Senator Bo Watson
- Senator Raumesh Akbari
- Representative Pat Marsh
- Representative Harold Love Jr.
- Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller of the Treasury
- Commissioner Butch Eley, Finance & Administration
- Stuart McWhorter, COVID-19 Unified Command

Additional information on the Stimulus Financial Accountability Group can be found [here](#), and additional information from the U.S. Department of Treasury on the CARES ACT can be found [here](#).

Current Department of Health Testing Results (as of 2 p.m. 4/21)

Confirmed Cases	Hospitalizations	Fatalities	Recovered	Total Tests
7,394	760	157	3,828	108,182

For more information on COVID-19 in Tennessee, please visit the Tennessee Department of Health's website [here](#).

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