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## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH NINETEENTH AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CONTROL MEASURES<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on March 14, 2020, Governor Brian P. Kemp issued Executive Order 03.14.20.01, declaring a Public Health State of Emergency in Georgia due to the impact of Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); and

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, the Georgia General Assembly concurred with Executive Order 03.14.20.01 by joint resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 30, 2021, Governor Kemp issued Executive Order 6.30.20.01 declaring a State of Emergency for Continued COVID-19 Economic Recovery to address the continuing negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the State's economy, supply chain, and healthcare infrastructure, and on July 1, 2021, the Public Health State of Emergency initially declared by Executive Order 03.14.20.01 expired; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Emergency for Continued COVID-19 Economic Recovery was renewed by Executive Orders 7.22.21.02, 8.19.21.01, 9.20.21.01, 10.21.21.01, 11.19.21.01, 12.17.21.01, 1.18.22.01, 2.18.22.01, 3.21.22.01, and expired on April 15, 2022;

**WHEREAS**, on January 31, 2020, the Secretary of Health and Human Services determined that a public health emergency exists nationwide due to the impact of Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); and

**WHEREAS**, the public health emergency has been extended by the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

**WHEREAS**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has provided [COVID-19 community levels](#) to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals that become infected must continue to follow appropriate protocols to limit further spread; and

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<sup>1</sup>This Nineteenth Amended Administrative Order amends and supersedes all prior "Administrative Orders for Public Health Control Measures" in connection with COVID-19.

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that is transmitted primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

**WHEREAS**, I have determined that it is necessary and appropriate to require persons who:

- have received a positive lab-confirmed test for COVID-19, or
- are suspected to have COVID-19 based on symptoms recognized by the CDC,

to isolate themselves at home, in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, reduce the number of people who will become infected, and avoid unnecessary strain on Georgia's healthcare system.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 31-2A-4(4) and 31-12-4, and Chapter 511-9-1 of the Rules of the Georgia Department of Public Health ("Department"),

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** as follows:

Isolation of Persons with Known or Suspected COVID-19

1. *Persons With Known COVID-19.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider, public health official, or clinical laboratory of a positive laboratory-confirmed test for COVID-19 or upon a positive result from a self-administered, at-home COVID-19 test, the person testing positive for COVID-19 shall immediately isolate himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department.
2. *Persons With Suspected COVID-19.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider or public health official that COVID-19 infection is diagnosed or suspected based on symptoms, the person with suspected COVID-19 infection shall immediately isolate himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department. As of the date of this Order, the CDC recognizes the following symptoms of COVID-19 infection: fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.
3. Each isolated person shall avoid unnecessary physical contact with any and all persons and shall comply fully with the [Isolation Protocol](#) which may be updated from time to time.
4. Each isolated person shall remain in isolation until such time as he or she no longer presents a risk of infection to the public, as determined by the Isolation Protocol then in effect. As of the date of this Administrative Order, the Isolation Protocol requires an isolated person to remain in isolation as follows:

(1) *If the person was diagnosed with COVID-19 and developed symptoms*, isolation may be discontinued when at least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and at least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever-reducing drugs, and symptoms have improved (e.g., cough, shortness of breath). If symptoms are not improving or fever has not resolved, the person should stay in isolation until these criteria are met. If leaving isolation before 10 days have passed, the person should wear a well-fitting mask for the remainder of 10 days.

(2) *If the person was diagnosed with COVID-19 but never developed any symptoms (i.e., asymptomatic)*, then isolation may be discontinued when at least 5 days have passed since the positive laboratory test and there are still no symptoms. If leaving isolation before 10 days have passed, the person should wear a well-fitting mask for the remainder of 10 days.

5. Isolated persons should monitor their symptoms and seek prompt medical attention if the symptoms get worse, as instructed in the [Isolation Protocol](#).
6. Isolated persons may leave isolation in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or natural disaster, or if the person's health condition worsens and he or she requires treatment in a healthcare facility.
7. Following guidance from the CDC on isolation remains the safest way to protect teachers and students from the spread of COVID-19. To facilitate in-person learning, K-12 schools and Early Care and Education Programs (ECEs) (i.e., childcare programs) may allow students, teachers, and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 to return to school or childcare settings after following the isolation requirements above, including wearing a well-fitting mask for the remainder of 10 days to minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others.
8. Each isolated person shall cooperate with state and local public health personnel by answering questions as necessary to identify and locate those persons with whom the isolated person has been in close contact (within six feet for fifteen minutes or more) beginning two days before symptoms began or, for isolated persons who have experienced no symptoms of COVID-19, beginning two days before the test was completed. If requested by public health personnel, the isolated person shall provide a list of the locations visited by the isolated person during the time frame that he or she may have been able to transmit the disease.

#### Persons Exposed to COVID-19

1. *Persons With COVID-19 Exposure Likely to Result in Infection*. Upon notification by a healthcare provider, public health official, or isolated person of exposure to

COVID-19 based on close contact (ex. within six feet for fifteen minutes or more) with a person who must be isolated as provided herein, the person so exposed should wear a high-quality mask or respirator (e.g., N95) anytime they are around other persons inside their home or in public regardless of vaccine status or recovery from previous infection.

2. If at any time in the 10 days following exposure, the exposed person experiences the following symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, the exposed person shall be considered a person with suspected COVID-19 and shall follow the requirements for isolation set forth above and in the [Isolation Protocol](#) unless directed otherwise by a healthcare provider or public health.
3. Each exposed person shall avoid unnecessary physical contact with any and all persons and shall comply fully with the [Guidance for Exposed Persons](#) which may be updated from time to time.
4. Following guidance from the CDC remains the safest way to protect teachers and students from the spread of COVID-19. Schools and ECEs may follow the standard guidance above to facilitate in-person learning.
5. During the 10-day period after exposure, the exposed person shall monitor themselves for fever or any symptoms of respiratory illness. If at any time the exposed person experiences the following symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, the exposed person shall be considered a person with suspected COVID-19 and shall follow the requirements for isolation set forth above and in the [Isolation Protocol](#) unless directed otherwise by a healthcare provider or public health.

Staff members of the Department are available at **866-PUB-HLTH (866-782-4584)** to assist and counsel persons subject to this Administrative Order concerning their illness or exposure and their compliance with this Order.

During the period of isolation, the ability of persons subject to this Order to communicate with others outside the isolation site, including their ability to exchange confidential communications with legal and medical advisors of their own choosing, will be preserved and facilitated to the extent possible without jeopardizing the integrity of the isolation.

Failure to comply with this Order is a misdemeanor offense pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 31-5-8. If the Department has reasonable grounds to believe that a person subject to isolation refuses to comply with the requirements of this Order, the Department may provide information to law enforcement as necessary to ensure compliance and to facilitate criminal prosecution.

Further, any person who refuses to isolate himself or herself as required by this Order may be subject to such further action as may be necessary to protect the public's health.

**SO ORDERED**, this 15th day of August, 2022.



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Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.  
Commissioner  
State Health Officer