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CONTACT: Gillum Ferguson
Gillum.ferguson@tn.gov
615-878-5804

State of Emergency Remains Through October *Some Restrictions Amended, Mask Authority Continues*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – As a National State of Emergency remains in place, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee announced today the State of Emergency in Tennessee will continue through October with adjustments made to previous executive orders.

“Tennessee’s response continues to be one of the most targeted in the country and a continued State of Emergency ensures we have access to additional federal funds, ensure our health care capacity is stable and loosen restrictions that would otherwise hinder our response time,” said Gov. Lee. “COVID-19 is still a serious problem and I encourage every Tennessean to continue social distancing and doing their part to make wise choices and help mitigate the spread of the virus.”

Gov. Lee today signed Executive Order No. 63 to extend certain, targeted provisions of previous executive orders through October 30, including the authority of local governments to institute mask requirements. Remaining restrictions on businesses and gathering sizes in the 89 counties with a state-run health department have been removed.

Governor Lee also signed Executive Order No. 64, which extends through October 30 provisions that allow for remote notarization and witnessing of documents. Executive Order No. 60, which extends through October 28 provisions that allow for electronic government meetings subject to transparency safeguards, including the requirement of live broadcasts of electronic meetings to the public beginning October 1, remains in effect.

Executive Order No. 63 includes provisions that:

- Provide that persons with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms are required to stay at home, and that employers may not require or allow employees with COVID-19 to work;

- Urge persons to wear a cloth face covering in places where in close proximity to others, while facilitating local decision-making concerning face covering requirements;
- Urge social distancing from those outside of your household, while eliminating caps on gathering size that have proven overly complex and arbitrary because they do not adequately account for critical considerations such as venue capacity and physical characteristics, type of activity involved, and location (indoors vs. outdoors), and thus undermine the more important focus on social distancing;
- Providing a framework for safe visitation for nursing home and long-term-care facilities;
- Allow for the reopening of senior centers, while providing that capacity must be limited to the extent necessary to accommodate adequate social distancing;
- Provide that employers, businesses, and venues are expected to comply with the Tennessee Pledge for operating safely (the 6 counties with locally run county health departments continue to have existing statutory authority to issue additional directives on businesses/venues);
- Continue access to take-out alcohol sales to encourage carryout and delivery orders;
- Allow broad access to telehealth services;
- Increase opportunities for people to easily join the healthcare workforce;
- Facilitate increased testing and health care capacity;
- Extend deadlines and suspend certain in-person continuing education, gathering, or inspection requirements to avoid unnecessary person-to-person contact; and
- Increase opportunities to work remotely where appropriate.

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