



MERCER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
305 West Main  
Princeton, Missouri 64673  
Tel: 660-748-3630

### **Public Health Emergency Order County of Mercer Order 20-02**

WHEREAS, the existence and spread of the COVID -19 virus has resulted in the declaration of a worldwide pandemic, and it is necessary and appropriate to continue protective action to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19 and to reduce the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, a gathering of individuals without necessary mitigation for the spread of infection may pose a risk of the spread of infectious disease; and

WHEREAS, the County wishes to employ all means available under the law to protect public life, health, safety and property to limit the development, contraction and spread of COVID-19 creating this emergency;

WHEREAS, as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 new cases of COVID-19 have shown a significant decrease, and available testing for acute illness has grown to an acceptable level to warrant loosening restrictions in the prior Emergency Order issued by the Mercer County Health Department; and

WHEREAS, I, Gina Finney, Administrator of Public Health for the Mercer County Health Department and Health Officer for the County of Mercer do find the aforementioned conditions constitute a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Mercer County, and creates a public health emergency situation within the meaning of Chapter 192 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and Title 19 Division 20, Chapter 20 of the MO Code of State Regulations;

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

**NOW, THEREFORE, under the power vested in me under appropriate local, state and federal regulations and other enabling provisions, I, Gina Finney, Administrator of Public Health for the Mercer County Health Department and Health Officer for the County of Mercer do hereby order the following:**

All Persons shall:

1. Remain home if sick or ill, except to seek medical treatment from a licensed medical provider.
2. Implement personal protective measures, such as staying home when sick, frequent handwashing, and routine cleaning of surfaces.
3. Engage in social distancing by taking responsible efforts to be separated from other individuals by at least six (6) feet.
4. Persons at high risk due to pre-existing conditions or advanced age are advised to remain sheltered at home as much as practical, and should avoid group gatherings.
5. Stay and Play here within our rural counties – we are a rural area and travel to urban areas poses the risk of further communicable disease exposure.

All Businesses shall:

1. Limit the number or persons in any particular location as follows:
  1. 25% or less of the entity's authorized fire or building code occupancy for businesses with square footage less than 10,000 square feet.
  2. 10% or less of the entity's authorized fire or building code occupancy for businesses with square footage of 10,000 square feet or more.
  3. Base occupancy shall be calculated by municipal code, if applicable, or at the rate of 1 person per 30 square feet if located in a municipality where the code does not define occupancy load, or for any business located within an unincorporated area of Mercer County.
2. Maintain a distance of at least six feet between all persons, if able.
3. Provide alternative protective measures, including but not limited to coverings for the nose and mouth for employees whose regular job duties require them to work closer than six feet from other employees or customers.
4. Continue to permit all employees who are capable to work from their residence or regular place of abode.
5. Require ill employees to exclude themselves from work while sick or ill until such time as employees symptoms have resolved, or they have been cleared to return to work from a licensed healthcare provider.
6. Provide for regular cleaning, disinfection, and other mitigation of risk.

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## Interim Guidance on Group Gatherings:

In addition to Mercer County Public Health Order 20-01, the Health Officer for Mercer County (Gina Finney) provides the following Interim Guidance on Group Gatherings.

The following guidance is intended for church services and those who are organizing or attending other group gatherings:

- Churches are encouraged to allow space for social distancing by opening additional seating areas, offering more in-person services with fewer attendees (use business square footage guidelines), or combining in-person services with online video technology.
- All persons are encouraged to limit attendance at other group gatherings. Group gatherings should be limited to 30 or fewer persons.
- All business and personal requirements of Public Health Order 20-01 are applicable to group gatherings.
- Persons at high risk due to pre-existing conditions or advanced age are advised to remain at home as much as practical and should avoid group gatherings.

Violation of this order constitutes an imminent threat to public health and shall be in violation of RSMo 192.300(4).

This order shall begin at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, May 4, 2020 and shall remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 31, 2020 unless earlier amended or revoked by the County Health Officer of Mercer County.

It is so ordered this on May 1, 2020.

Gina Finney, RN, BSN

Administrator / County Health Officer

Mercer County Health Department

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