

Governor Carney Declares State of Emergency to Prepare for Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Emergency declaration allows for broad coordination of state agencies to respond to outbreak

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Thursday issued a [State of Emergency declaration](#) to prepare for the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). The State of Emergency directs the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and the Delaware Department of Health & Social Services' Division of Public Health to mobilize state agency resources to assist with Delaware's response to the virus.

The declaration becomes effective at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, March 13, 2020.

Governor Carney's emergency declaration also:

- Requires the Delaware National Guard to take precautionary and responsive actions to assist with Delaware's response to the coronavirus;
- Advises event organizers in Delaware to cancel non-essential public gatherings of 100 people or more, to prevent community spread of coronavirus;
- Allows the State of Delaware to conduct public meetings electronically to prevent unnecessary public gatherings;
- Prohibits price gouging, or an excessive price increase of goods or services, during the coronavirus outbreak.

"We are taking this situation extremely seriously," said

Governor Carney. “We have been expecting positive cases in Delaware, and for the last two months we have prepared our state’s response in close coordination with the experts at the Delaware Division of Public Health and the Delaware Emergency Management Agency. Today’s emergency declaration will make sure we have the authority and resources necessary to effectively prevent the spread of this virus.

“There are things every Delawarean can do to stay healthy. Wash your hands. Cover your cough. Stay home from work or school if you are sick. It’s especially important for at-risk populations, specifically elderly Delawareans, to avoid large gatherings. And we’re advising Delaware organizations to cancel large, non-essential public events to prevent community spread of the coronavirus. We will continue to respond aggressively to this situation in close coordination with state and federal public health experts.”

Governor Carney’s emergency declaration **WILL NOT:**

- Require schools or businesses to close their facilities;
- Implement any driving restrictions in Delaware;
- Close state office buildings.

On Wednesday, Governor Carney and the Delaware Department of Human Resources [issued guidance](#) to state employees about coronavirus and potential impacts on the state workforce. Full-time and casual/seasonal state employees may be eligible for 14 or 30 days of Paid Emergency Leave if they are forced to miss work due to a coronavirus impact, or to care for a family member.

Costs related to diagnostic testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) will be waived for Delaware families who are covered by the state’s health plan.

Delawareans with questions about COVID-19 or their exposure risk can call the Division of Public Health’s Coronavirus Call Center at 1-866-408-1899 or TTY at 1-800-232-5460 from 8:30

a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, or email DPHCall@delaware.gov.

For the latest on Delaware's response, visit de.gov/coronavirus.

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[Click here](#) to read the State of Emergency declaration.