

# mdcps e.bulletin

Information Alerts for the MDCPS Team

**To:** ALL MDCPS  
**From:** TAYLOR CHEESEMAN, *Interim Commissioner*

## LAUDERDALE COUNTY - SHELTER-IN-PLACE ORDER

*This morning, Governor Tate Reeves issued his first shelter-in-place order related to the COVID-19 emergency. The order applies to Lauderdale County because it "has been identified as a region that is at higher risk for transmission of COVID-19." This order will take effect at 10:00 p.m. tonight, March 31, 2020, and will remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 14, 2020. Under the order, individuals in Lauderdale County generally are ordered, subject to certain exceptions, to stay at home or in their place of residence.*

*In his public remarks about the order this morning, Governor Reeves acknowledged that this is the first, but likely not the last, of such orders. As local communities begin work to apply and enforce these orders, it is important that all MDCPS staff and service providers clearly understand how this order affects our work.*

*Executive Order No. 1463, signed by Governor Reeves on March 24, 2020, declared that child protection and child welfare are essential government functions, and that "vendors that provide essential services or products . . . needed to ensure the continuing operation of Essential Business or Operation, operation of government agencies, and to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public" are essential businesses. On March 25, 2020, I issued a letter to all MDCPS staff, consistent with prior guidance in the MDCPS Emergency Telework Policy, that under Executive Order No. 1458 and Mississippi Code Section 43-26-1(2), I had determined "that all agency personnel capable of telework are essential personnel and shall continue to carry out their functions throughout the State of Emergency."*

*Accordingly, all MDCPS functions are considered essential government functions, all MDCPS staff capable of telework are considered essential personnel, and all MDCPS contracted providers are considered essential businesses.*

*Today's shelter-in-place order exempts from its restrictions individuals carrying out essential government functions or conducting essential businesses. It states that "Essential Businesses or Operations identified in Executive Order 1463 as Supplemented may remain open and shall operate at such a level as necessary to provide essential services and functions." It further allows for such travel as is necessary to conduct these essential activities provided, however, that all such individuals abide by CDC and MSDH guidelines for preventative hygiene measures and appropriate social distancing.*

**Accordingly, MDCPS staff and MDCPS service providers should continue operations during the period the shelter-in-place order is in effect utilizing all preventative measures addressed in prior guidance issued by MDCPS, MSDH, and the CDC.**

**Further, all MDCPS staff should keep a copy of my March 25, 2020, letter regarding ESSENTIAL STAFF saved to their phone when engaged in any travel to complete their work. MDCPS staff should wear/carry their MDCPS ID badge during work.**