



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

May 18, 2021

The Honorable Denise Merrill  
Secretary of the State  
State Capitol Hartford, CT 06106

Frederick J. Jortner  
Clerk of the State House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06016

Michael Jefferson  
Clerk of the State Senate  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06016

### **RE: Declaration of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies**

Dear Secretary Merrill and Clerks of the General Assembly:

On March 10, 2020, in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 disease associated with a novel coronavirus that was affecting multiple countries and states and had resulted in the spread of infections in Connecticut and surrounding states, as well as resulting shortages of personal protective equipment and other supplies that could jeopardize public safety and civil preparedness, and in order to provide me and other appropriate officials with all authorities necessary to limit the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and protect public safety within the State of Connecticut, I declared a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State, pursuant to Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Those states of emergency were to remain in effect through September 9, 2020.

On September 1, 2020, in anticipation of the expiration of those states of emergency and in recognition of continued and newly emerging threats to public health and safety and civil preparedness posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I renewed the March 10, 2020 declarations and declared new public health and civil preparedness emergencies through February 9, 2021.

On January 26, 2021, again in anticipation of the expiration of those states of emergency and in recognition of the continued threats and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the need to pursue a vigorous vaccination campaign and continue to provide health care and economic relief the Connecticut's citizens, I again renewed the emergency declarations and declared new public health and civil preparedness emergencies until April 20, 2021.

In March 2021 the General Assembly passed, and I signed into law, Special Act 21-2, which ratified my previous declarations and explicitly authorized me to renew such declarations through May 20, 2021 and exercise all authorities granted by Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes. As a result, after consultation with legislative leaders, I renewed such declarations through May 20, 2021, extended many of the COVID-19 Orders through that date, and allowed to expire many more COVID-19 Orders that were no longer required to respond to the pandemic, so that only approximately 28 percent of all executive orders issued during this emergency remain in effect. In addition, I have worked with the General Assembly to codify certain measures that provided additional public health resources, such as a 2-year expansion of access to telehealth services, and business flexibility, such as a year-long extension of measures to allow expanded outdoor dining with expedited approvals.

Connecticut continues to make considerable progress in responding to COVID-19 and mitigating its devastating public health and economic effects. The steady reduction in positive COVID-19 tests and hospitalizations has been accompanied by steady progress in vaccination, with nearly 60 percent of the population, including more than 92 percent of residents older than 65, having received at least one vaccine dose. In recognition of that progress, I have announced that tomorrow, all remaining business restrictions will be lifted, those who are vaccinated need not wear masks except in certain high-risk or high-density indoor settings, and in the coming weeks, many state employees will return to state offices after having worked remotely. The gradual and safe return to normal operations in many aspects of public and private life will make it possible to end many statutory or regulatory modifications that have provided the necessary flexibility and speed to ensure the health and safety of our citizens and business continuity during these challenging times. As a result, tomorrow, I will be allowing to expire or setting expiration dates on many additional COVID-19 Orders.

Still, COVID-19 remains a global threat, capable of spreading quickly among the significant portion of the population who remain unvaccinated or who, because of certain underlying conditions, cannot derive robust protection from vaccination. An effective mass vaccination program and an adequate response to the continued public health threats and economic impacts of the pandemic require that I retain the flexibility and resources that the declared states of emergency provide.

The General Assembly has thus passed and I have signed into law House Bill 6686 and House Bill 5653, which authorize my renewal of the declarations through July 20 and establish additional oversight for any continued renewal after that date.

Therefore, for the same reasons I declared emergencies on March 10 and declared new and renewed emergencies on September 1, January 26, and April 19 pursuant to Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the General Statutes, I am renewing the existing public health emergency and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the state.

In addition, I will continue to manage several public health and civil preparedness risks. Among many other things, I will need to continue to administer our mass vaccination program, respond to the potential threat posed by new and more infectious COVID-19 variants, such as one recently identified in connection with the outbreak in India, and manage the safe and orderly resumption of more business and government activity, while continuing to administer state and federal relief connected to the state of emergency. As I did in September, January, and April, out of an abundance of caution and to eliminate any confusion about the extent of my emergency powers to address the many risks and concerns that will arise in the coming months and did not constitute clear justifications for the original emergencies I declared in March of 2020 and again in September 2020, January 2021, and April 2021, and pursuant to Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, I hereby declare that new states of public health and civil preparedness emergency exist throughout the State.

These new and renewed states of emergency shall run concurrently and remain in effect through July 20, 2021, unless earlier terminated by me. The Department of Public Health, along with municipal and district health departments, as well as multiple other state agencies in supporting roles, are responding to these renewed public health and civil preparedness emergencies. As I did at the time I declared and renewed the public health and civil preparedness emergencies noted above, on March 10, 2020, September 1, 2020, January 26, 2021, and April 19, 2021, and in accordance with Section 19a-131a (f) of the Connecticut General Statutes, I hereby authorize and direct the Commissioner of Public Health to delegate the powers regarding isolation or quarantine to municipal and district directors of public health, while concurrently retaining such authority.

Orders regarding additional measures to protect public health and safety and ensure the state's civil preparedness will follow as I determine to be necessary.

I am filing this declaration with you under my hand and seal on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ned Lamont".

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Ned Lamont  
Governor