

HR Tracker, ¶46,814, Kansas governor issues temporary, statewide “stay home” order to combat COVID-19 — STATE LAW, (Apr. 1, 2020)

Kansas Governor Laura Kelly on March 28, 2020, issued Executive Order 20-16, to institute a temporary, statewide stay-home order, as part of ongoing efforts to limit the spread of the novel Coronavirus in the state. The Order is in conjunction with the Kansas Essential Function Framework for COVID-19 response efforts and is in effect as of 12:01 a.m. on Monday, March 30. The measure will be in place at least until Sunday, April 19.

“Our modeling continues to suggest that the number of confirmed positive coronavirus cases in Kansas could reach as high as 900 over the next week,” Kelly said. “While I left these decisions to local health departments as long as possible, the reality is that the patchwork approach that has developed is inconsistent and is a recipe for chaos and, ultimately, for failure in our statewide fight to slow the spread of COVID-19.”

Under Executive Order 20-16, Kansans are directed to stay home unless performing one of the following essential activities:

- Obtaining food, medicine and other household necessities;
- Going to and from work at a business or organization performing an essential function as identified in the Kansas Essential Function Framework;
- Seeking medical care;
- Caring for children, family members or pets, or caring for a vulnerable person in another location;
- Engaging in an outdoor activity, provided individuals maintain a distance of six feet from one another and abide by the 10-person limitation on gathering size.

Executive Order 20-16 does not prohibit the conduct of business, government, or other operations or activities through telework, telecommunications, or other work-from-home capabilities that allow compliance with this Order.

Travel to and from work to pick up supplies for telework or other work-from-home activities is allowed, provided that employers and employees follow safety protocols, including maintaining a six-foot distance between individuals and follow other directives relating to social distancing, hygiene and other efforts to slow the spread of the disease.

The Order is in conjunction with previous orders responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Any contrary provision in previous Executive Orders, including Executive Order 20-15, “Establishing the Kansas Essential Functions Framework for COVID-19 response efforts,” is superseded by this Order.

In a public address to Kansans on March 28, Governor Kelly explained that this action became necessary for three key reasons:

- To provide statewide uniformity in response efforts;
- To prevent overwhelming hospitals—especially rural hospitals—who may not have the same capacity to handle an influx of COVID-19 patients;
- To buy Kansas more time as the state officials work with federal partners to secure badly needed protective personal equipment (PPE), additional ventilators and COVID-19 testing supplies.

Source: State of Kansas, Office of the Governor, Press Release, March 28, 2020.