



COVID-19 at a Glance

Region 5

*Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina,
South Carolina, Tennessee*



COVID-19 at a Glance

Alabama

Overview

As the federal government leads the national response to COVID-19, states have taken a number of actions to mitigate the spread of the virus and reduce barriers to testing and treatment for those affected. This fact sheet provides state-level information on adopted social distancing measures, health policy action to reduce barriers to testing and treatment, and legislation that has been introduced in response to COVID-19.

Action to Mitigate Spread of COVID-19

As of March 16, 2020, every state has made an emergency declaration, with most taking the form of a State of Emergency or a Public Health Emergency. These declarations allow governors to exercise emergency powers and many have used this power to take additional actions to slow the spread of the virus by adopting social distancing measures.

Action Taken	
Stay at Home Order	Statewide
Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers	N/A
Non-Essential Business Closures	All Non-Essential Businesses
Mandated School Closures	Yes
Large Gatherings Ban	>10 People Prohibited
Bar/Restaurant Limits	Closed except for takeout/delivery
Primary Election Postponement	Yes

Health Policy Action on COVID-19

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) passed by the federal government on March 18, 2020 took action to ensure access to COVID-19 testing by requiring Medicare, Medicaid, all group health plans, and individual health insurance policies to cover testing and associated visits related to the diagnosis of the virus during the federally-declared emergency period. Additionally, FFCRA gives states the option to provide Medicaid coverage of COVID-19 testing for uninsured residents with 100% federal financing.

Many states have gone a step further to implement policies to increase access to COVID-19 testing and treatment, with some states already moving to require insurers to cover a COVID-19 vaccination with no cost-sharing if and when one becomes available. Other states are requiring state-certified insurance carriers to waive patient cost-sharing for COVID-19 treatment.

States have also announced other actions, including extending special enrollment periods (SEP) in state-based health insurance exchanges, enabling early prescription drug refills, and requesting approval for Section 1135 waivers that permit them to waive or modify certain Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, and HIPAA requirements during a national emergency. While the FFCRA creates a federal emergency paid sick leave program through December 2020, some states have enacted mandatory sick leave policies that will fill in gaps in the new federal emergency leave.

Action Taken	
Waive Cost Sharing for COVID-19 Treatment	N/A
Requires Waiver of Prior Authorization Requirements	N/A
Free Vaccine When Available	N/A
Early Prescription Refills	N/A
Premium Payment Grace Period	N/A
Marketplace SEP	N/A
Section 1135 Waiver	Approved
Paid Sick Leave	N/A

Essential Businesses

An essential employee is a designated employee that is required to work during a business closure in order to meet operational requirements. Essential employees' designation is determined by the state, along with the responsibilities of the employee, and the reasons for closing. There are 14 essential employment categories listed by the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA): healthcare employees, first responders, food and agricultural employees, energy employees, water and sanitation, transportation and logistics, public workers, manufacturing, communications and IT, community-based government operations and essential functions, financial services, hazardous material management, defense industrial base, and chemical management. Alabama currently recognizes only healthcare providers, public workers, and emergency services as essential employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this could change if a stay at home order is issued.

Date Issued	Designation of Essential Businesses
4/3/20	Order Of The State Health Officer Suspending Certain Public Gatherings Due To Risk Of Infection By Covid-19 and State Health Officer issues stay at home order and strict quarantine requirements



COVID-19 at a Glance

Alabama

State Legislation Responding to COVID-19

Bill Number	Description	Status
<u>SJR 40</u>	Urges individuals to fist bump rather than shake hands.	Enacted
<u>SR 49</u>	Urges Congress to fund additional rental assistance due to coronavirus.	Adopted
<u>HR 107</u>	Urges the promotion, sharing and posting of practices to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.	Pending
<u>HJR 121/HJR 122</u>	Urges the Governor to expand Medicaid coverage for new mothers in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic.	Pending
<u>HB 186</u>	Makes supplemental appropriations; includes an appropriation of \$5,000,000 from the general fund to the Department of Public Health to be used for coronavirus preparedness and response activities.	Enacted
<u>HB 447</u>	Relates to Medicaid; extends the program to provide assistance to certain state residents in recognition, in part, of potential economic and health impacts of a COVID-19 outbreak.	Pending
<u>HB 448</u>	Relates to Medicaid; extends the postpartum coverage period for pregnant women eligible for Medicaid assistance in recognition, in part, of potential economic and health impacts of a COVID-19 outbreak.	Pending



COVID-19 at a Glance

Florida

Overview

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Action Taken	
Stay at Home Order	Statewide
Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers	From Certain States
Non-Essential Business Closures	All Non-Essential Businesses
Mandated School Closures	Yes
Large Gatherings Ban	N/A
Bar/Restaurant Limits	Closed except for takeout/delivery
Primary Election Postponement	N/A

Health Policy Action on COVID-19

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Action Taken	
Waive Cost Sharing for COVID-19 Treatment	N/A
Requires Waiver of Prior Authorization Requirements	N/A
Free Vaccine When Available	N/A
Early Prescription Refills	State Requires
Premium Payment Grace Period	N/A
Marketplace SEP	N/A
Section 1135 Waiver	Approved
Paid Sick Leave	N/A

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Essential Employees in Florida fall in the 14 categories, with a special focus on transportation.

Date Issued	Designation of Essential Businesses
4/1/20	Executive Order No. 20-91 and Essential Services List



COVID-19 at a Glance

Florida

State Legislation Responding to COVID-19

Bill Number	Description	Status
<u>SR 1934</u>	Declares the Florida State University Seminoles basketball team, by virtue of tremendous skill on the court and the heart and spirit shown by the players and coaches this basketball season, the 2020 NCAA basketball champions by default upon cancellation of the NCAA tournament due to concerns raised by the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19.	Adopted
<u>HB 5001</u>	Relates to General Appropriations Act; appropriates \$27,296,000 from the Federal Grants Trust Fund to the Department of Health to spend federal dollars approved in the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020; appropriates \$25,150,000 from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of health to address the coronavirus outbreak.	Eligible for Governor



COVID-19 at a Glance

Georgia

Overview

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Action Taken	
Stay at Home Order	Statewide
Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers	N/A
Non-Essential Business Closures	N/A
Mandated School Closures	Yes
Large Gatherings Ban	>10 People Prohibited
Bar/Restaurant Limits	Closed except for takeout/delivery
Primary Election Postponement	Yes

Health Policy Action on COVID-19

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) passed by the federal government on March 18, 2020 took action to ensure access to COVID-19 testing by requiring Medicare, Medicaid, all group health plans, and individual health insurance policies to cover testing and associated visits related to the diagnosis of the virus during the federally-declared emergency period. Additionally, FFCRA gives states the option to provide Medicaid coverage of COVID-19 testing for uninsured residents with 100% federal financing.

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States have also announced other actions, including extending special enrollment periods (SEP) in state-based health insurance exchanges, enabling early prescription drug refills, and requesting approval for Section 1135 waivers that permit them to waive or modify certain Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, and HIPAA requirements during a national emergency. While the FFCRA creates a federal emergency paid sick leave program through December 2020, some states have enacted mandatory sick leave policies that will fill in gaps in the new federal emergency leave.

Action Taken	
Waive Cost Sharing for COVID-19 Treatment	N/A
Requires Waiver of Prior Authorization Requirements	N/A
Free Vaccine When Available	N/A
Early Prescription Refills	State Requires
Premium Payment Grace Period	All Policies
Marketplace SEP	N/A
Section 1135 Waiver	Approved
Paid Sick Leave	N/A

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Date Issued	Designation of Essential Businesses
4/2/20	Executive Order to Ensure a Safe & Healthy Georgia



COVID-19 at a Glance

Georgia

State Legislation Responding to COVID-19

Bill Number	Description	Status
SR 5	Concurs with Governor Brian P. Kemp's Executive Order declaring a public health state of emergency.	Adopted
HB 792	Transfers \$100 million from the Revenue Shortfall Reserve to combat the spread of the coronavirus.	Enacted



COVID-19 at a Glance

Mississippi

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Action Taken	
Stay at Home Order	Statewide
Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers	N/A
Non-Essential Business Closures	All Non-Essential Businesses
Mandated School Closures	Yes
Large Gatherings Ban	>10 People Prohibited
Bar/Restaurant Limits	Closed except for takeout/delivery
Primary Election Postponement	Yes

Health Policy Action on COVID-19

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) passed by the federal government on March 18, 2020 took action to ensure access to COVID-19 testing by requiring Medicare, Medicaid, all group health plans, and individual health insurance policies to cover testing and associated visits related to the diagnosis of the virus during the federally-declared emergency period. Additionally, FFCRA gives states the option to provide Medicaid coverage of COVID-19 testing for uninsured residents with 100% federal financing.

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Action Taken	
Waive Cost Sharing for COVID-19 Treatment	N/A
Requires Waiver of Prior Authorization Requirements	N/A
Free Vaccine When Available	N/A
Early Prescription Refills	N/A
Premium Payment Grace Period	All Policies
Marketplace SEP	N/A
Section 1135 Waiver	Approved
Paid Sick Leave	N/A

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Mississippi recognizes all 14 categories as essential services and employees, with a special focus on construction and related services.

Date Issued	Designation of Essential Businesses
3/24/20	Executive Order 1463 and Executive Order No. 1466



COVID-19 at a Glance

Mississippi

State Legislation Responding to COVID-19

Bill Number	Description	Status
<u>HB 1647</u>	Authorizes local governmental entities and local school districts to grant administrative leave with pay to the employees of those local governmental entities and local school districts in the event of certain disasters or emergencies.	Enacted
<u>HCR 65</u>	Extends the 2020 regular session of the legislature for a period of thirty days from the final day of the one hundred twenty five day session to a specified date; authorizes the house and senate to adjourn for more than three days; provides that they shall reconvene on a specified date, unless the speaker and lieutenant governor jointly determine that it is not necessary to reconvene; authorizes the speaker and lieutenant governor to reconvene the house and senate before or after a specified date.	Adopted



COVID-19 at a Glance

North Carolina

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Action Taken	
Stay at Home Order	Statewide
Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers	N/A
Non-Essential Business Closures	All Non-Essential Businesses
Mandated School Closures	Yes
Large Gatherings Ban	>10 People Prohibited
Bar/Restaurant Limits	Closed except for takeout/delivery
Primary Election Postponement	N/A

Health Policy Action on COVID-19

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Action Taken	
Waive Cost Sharing for COVID-19 Treatment	N/A
Requires Waiver of Prior Authorization Requirements	N/A
Free Vaccine When Available	N/A
Early Prescription Refills	N/A
Premium Payment Grace Period	N/A
Marketplace SEP	N/A
Section 1135 Waiver	Approved
Paid Sick Leave	N/A

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Date Issued	Designation of Essential Businesses
3/27/20	Executive Order 121 and Interim Guidance for Owners, Staff and Patrons of Essential Businesses



COVID-19 at a Glance

North Carolina

State Legislation Responding to COVID-19

Bill Number	Description	Status
<i>No legislation has been introduced as of 4/23/20</i>		



COVID-19 at a Glance

South Carolina

Overview

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Action Taken	
Stay at Home Order	Statewide
Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers	N/A
Non-Essential Business Closures	All Non-Essential Businesses
Mandated School Closures	Yes
Large Gatherings Ban	All Gatherings Prohibited
Bar/Restaurant Limits	Closed except for takeout/delivery
Primary Election Postponement	N/A

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Action Taken	
Waive Cost Sharing for COVID-19 Treatment	N/A
Requires Waiver of Prior Authorization Requirements	N/A
Free Vaccine When Available	N/A
Early Prescription Refills	N/A
Premium Payment Grace Period	N/A
Marketplace SEP	N/A
Section 1135 Waiver	Approved
Paid Sick Leave	N/A

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South Carolina does not have an official list of essential employees released.

Date Issued	Designation of Essential Businesses
N/A	N/A



COVID-19 at a Glance

South Carolina

State Legislation Responding to COVID-19		
Bill Number	Description	Status
SB 1161	Requires all individual and group health insurance plans, health maintenance organizations and the state health plans to waive cost sharing requirements associated with testing for COVID-19 and to define applicable terms.	Pending
SB 1188	Relates to property insurance; provides that every policy of insurance in force in this state insuring against loss or damage to property, notwithstanding the terms of the policy and including any endorsement thereto or exclusions to coverage included therewith, that includes a loss of use and occupancy, or business interruption, shall be construed to include, among the covered perils under the policy, coverage for business interruption directly or indirectly resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.	Pending
HB 3411	Makes general appropriations; authorizes certain bodies to receive funds directly from the federal government in response to COVID-19; establishes the Coronavirus Relief fund; appropriates \$20 million to the Disaster Trust Fund; appropriates \$180 million to the COVID-19 Response Reserve account established by the State Treasurer; authorizes the Governor to direct necessary expenditures, including those to underwrite the cost for protecting the health and safety of voters and poll workers; authorizes the Superintendent of Education to exercise certain emergency powers in response to COVID-19; and relates to flexibility for state agencies and institutions of higher learning.	Pending
HB 3485	Establishes the Coronavirus Relief Fund to provide funding as necessary to address the state's response to the coronavirus public health emergency; sets forth authorized uses of the Fund.	Pending
HB 4014	Makes a supplemental appropriation of \$45 million to the Executive Budget Office for use by the Department of Health and Environmental Control for the state's response to COVID-19.	Enacted
HB 5417	Memorializes the United States Congress to refrain from increasing federal unemployment taxes until a specified date.	Pending
HB 5419	Prohibits a magistrate or circuit court from commencing an eviction proceeding for the nonpayment of rent within a certain number of days grace period.	Pending
HB 5452	Requires the Department of Health and Environmental Control to ensure testing prioritization for first responders who present with symptoms of coronavirus.	Pending