

Missouri Announces Plan to Gradually Reopen Economic and Social Activity

Labor & Employment Law Update

on April 28, 2020

On Monday, April 27, 2020, Missouri Governor Mike Parson announced "Phase One" of the "Show Me Strong Recovery Plan" to gradually reopen the economic and social activity in the state, beginning on May 4, 2020. As part of Phase One, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services issued an Order relaxing restrictions on businesses and social activities.

The relaxed restrictions are:

- **Retail sales** businesses can re-open, so long as the number of individuals in the retail location is limited as follows:
 - if the location is less than 10,000 square feet, then 25% or less of the business' fire or building code occupancy;
 - if the location has more than 10,000 square feet, then 10% or less of the business' fire or building code occupancy
- All **schools** remain closed for the 2019-2020 school year; however, staff and students may reenter school buildings to work, retrieve personal belongings, and return school property.
 - Summer school is permitted to proceed under guidelines set forth by the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.
 - Daycares, child care and schools are permitted to provide child care in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- **Restaurants** can reopen for dining-in services if social distancing measures are taken, including spacing of six feet between tables, lack of communal seating areas and a prohibition on seating more than ten people at a single table.
- It remains prohibited for individuals to visit nursing homes, long-term care facilities, retirement homes or other assisted living homes unless they are there "to provide critical assistance or in end-of-life circumstances."
- With respect to all of these activities, individuals leaving their homes to engage in permitted activities, including when frequenting businesses and

going to and from places of worship, must still “at all times practice social distancing” as prescribed by the CDC.

Businesses reopening pursuant to these guidelines are encouraged to take additional steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19:

- Implement basic infection prevention measures informed by industry best practices
- Modify physical workspaces to maximize social distancing
- Minimize business travel
- Develop an infectious disease preparedness and response plan
- Do not allow symptomatic people to physically return to work until cleared by a medical provider
- Encourage telework whenever possible and feasible with business operations
- Return to work in phases and/or split shifts
- Limit access to common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact
- Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance

However, businesses looking to open back up on May 4 should proceed with caution. While this Order is statewide, it does not limit counties and municipalities from continuing to enact and enforce their own protective measures, including Stay-At-Home Orders already in place, with additional restrictions. This is especially true in St. Louis County and St. Louis City, which have recently extended their respective orders indefinitely.

This blog continues to monitor developments in Missouri, St. Louis County and St. Louis City. Check back for updates as additional guidance from the state and local authorities becomes available.

Missouri Announces Plan to Gradually Reopen Economic and Social Activity