



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health  
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State Health Commissioner

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## ORDER OF THE STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

### Amended Order of Public Health Emergency

WHEREAS, the State Health Commissioner declared COVID-19 a disease of public health threat on February 7, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Governor Ralph S. Northam declared a state of emergency due to COVID-19 on March 12, 2020, in Executive Order No. 51 by virtue of the authority vested in the Governor by Article V, Section 7, of the Constitution of Virginia and by §§ 44-146.17 and 44-75.1 of the Code of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and State Health Commissioner issued Commonwealth of Virginia Order of Public Health Emergency One on March 17, 2020, declaring a public health emergency, and Amended Order of Public Health Emergency One on March 20, 2020; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 spreads from person-to-person, transmitted via respiratory droplets, and can be spread from an infected person who does not have symptoms to another person; and

WHEREAS, the risk of disease transmission is particularly high in congregate settings such as evacuation shelters and puts displaced populations seeking congregate evacuation shelter at great risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID19 along with the staff and volunteers that serve them; and

WHEREAS, it is advised that to the extent possible, shelters serving persons displaced by evacuation orders adhere to social distancing recommendations, enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces, and other appropriate workplace guidance from state and federal authorities while in operation; and

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that due to the continuing spread of COVID-19, the capability of congregate shelters adhering to social distancing is not feasible due to increased case numbers; and

WHEREAS, despite the availability of multiple vaccines and increasing vaccine supply, it will take several months or longer to sufficiently vaccinate the Virginia population and it is anticipated that there will be continuing spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, it is not feasible that congregate shelters will be capable of adhering to social distancing; and

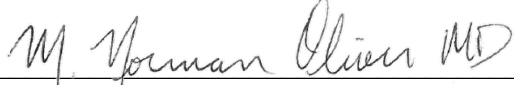
WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia seeks to curtail the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Commonwealth, protect our health care workers, and protect all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 32.1-13 of the Code of Virginia, the State Health Commissioner, acting for the State Board of Health when it is not in session pursuant to § 32.1-20 of the Code of Virginia, is vested with authority to make separate orders to meet any emergency not provided for by general regulations, for the purpose of suppressing conditions dangerous to the public health and communicable, contagious, and infectious diseases.

NOW THEREFORE, the State Health Commissioner hereby issues this Order directing the implementation of non-congregate sheltering of populations temporarily displaced due to evacuation orders. Where non-congregate sheltering is not possible, congregate emergency shelters may operate to serve the temporarily displaced population and shall adhere to social distancing recommendations, enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces, and other appropriate guidance from state and federal authorities to the extent possible.

WHEREAS, this Order shall remain in full force and effect until terminated or rescinded.

Given under my hand this 13<sup>th</sup> Day of April, 2021.

  
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M. Norman Oliver