

# Governor Issues Emergency Declaration for COVID-19

Mar 12, 2020

Governor Laura Kelly has issued an emergency declaration for the State of Kansas in response to COVID-19 (coronavirus). The declaration authorizes the use of state resources and personnel to assist with response and recovery operations in affected counties that meet certain criteria.

“The safety and well-being of Kansans is our priority, first and foremost,” Kelly said. “The landscape of COVID-19 is fast-changing. Today is evidence of that.”

Tonight, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) announced the first COVID-19 related death in Kansas. A man in his 70s was brought to the hospital and died shortly after arrival. Testing done post-mortem came back positive for COVID-19. He was living in a long-term care facility in Wyandotte County.

“We are working on identifying contacts right now,” Dr. Lee Norman, KDHE Secretary, said. “We understand the concern and encourage Kansans to remain vigilant.”

“To prevent the spread of COVID-19 to our most vulnerable population, it’s important to follow the recommended guidelines of screening and restricting visitors to our long-term care facilities,” Department for Children and Families and Department for Aging and Disability Services Secretary Laura Howard said.

The Governor issued the emergency declaration Thursday afternoon.

“Our state is well prepared,” Kelly said. “With this emergency declaration we can activate our response and coordinate fully. This is part of the process and will make access to important resources more accessible. We continue to work closely with our local, state and federal partners to respond to the potential spread of the virus – or any situation that may arise.”

COVID-19 can be found at the following sources:

- [Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

If you have symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath and believe you may have had contact or have had contact with someone with a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, stay home and call your healthcare provider.

You may also call the KDHE phone bank at 1-866-534-3463 (1-866-KDHEINF) today Monday – Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. For more information about COVID-19, visit KDHE’s website and Frequently Asked Questions at [www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/) and [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

[To see the State of Disaster Emergency Proclamation, click here.](#)