

# Executive Order Number 18

## (COVID-19 EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 85)

August 04, 2021

**WHEREAS**, since early March 2020, Illinois has faced a pandemic that has caused extraordinary sickness and loss of life, infecting over 1,430,000, and taking the lives of more than 23,475 residents; and,

**WHEREAS**, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a novel severe acute respiratory illness that spreads rapidly through respiratory transmissions; and,

**WHEREAS**, as Illinois continues to respond to the public health disaster caused by COVID-19, the burden on residents, healthcare providers, first responders, and governments throughout the State has been unprecedented; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Delta variant of the coronavirus is more aggressive and more transmissible than previously circulating strains, and poses new risks in the ongoing effort to stop and slow spread of the virus; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Delta variant may cause more severe disease than prior strains of the virus; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the Delta variant now accounts for more than 90 percent of all sequenced coronavirus in the U.S.; and,

**WHEREAS**, protecting the health and safety of Illinoisans is among the most important functions of State government; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is critical that the State take every step possible to ensure children can attend school in-person; and,

**WHEREAS**, social distancing, face coverings, and other public health precautions have proven to be critical in slowing and stopping the spread of COVID-19; and,

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death, but a proportion of the population remains unvaccinated and some residents, including younger children, cannot yet receive the vaccine; and

**WHEREAS**, the CDC has provided guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC recently updated its COVID-19 guidance for schools, and now indicates that everyone in K-12 schools should wear a mask indoors, including teachers, staff, students, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status; and,

**WHEREAS**, the American Academy of Pediatrics likewise recommends universal masking in schools of everyone over the age of two, regardless of vaccination status, because a significant portion of the student population is not yet eligible for vaccines, and masking is proven to reduce transmission of the virus and to protect those who are not vaccinated; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) are issuing updated joint COVID-19 guidance and recommendations designed to allow schools in Illinois serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students to conduct in-person teaching and learning, while at the same time keeping students, teachers, staff, and visitors safe; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC continues to advise that day care providers use COVID-19 prevention strategies, including masking and physical distancing, even after day care providers and their staff are vaccinated; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) and IDPH are issuing updated joint COVID-19 guidance and recommendations for day care facilities, including all licensed day care centers, day care homes, group day care homes, and license-exempt facilities; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC continues to advise that congregate facilities use COVID-19 prevention strategies, including masking and physical distancing, regardless of vaccination status; and,

**WHEREAS**, IDPH issues and updates COVID-19 guidance for nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, which includes mitigation strategies such as masking and physical distancing, even among vaccinated residents, staff, and visitors; and,

**WHEREAS**, on July 23, 2021, considering the continuing spread of COVID-19 and the ongoing health and economic impacts that will be felt over the coming month by people across the State, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area;

**THEREFORE**, by the powers vested in me as the Governor of the State of Illinois, pursuant to the Illinois Constitution and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305, Sections 7(1), 7(2), 7(3), 7(8), 7(12), and 7(19) thereof, and consistent with the powers in public health laws, I hereby order the following:

**Section 1: School Mitigation Measures.** All public and nonpublic schools in Illinois serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students must follow the joint guidance issued by ISBE and IDPH and take proactive measures to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors, including, but not limited to:

- a. Requiring the indoor use of face coverings by students, staff, and visitors who are over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering, regardless of vaccination status, consistent with CDC guidance; and,
- b. Implementing other layered prevention strategies (such as physical distancing, screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, advising individuals to stay home when sick and get tested, contact tracing in combination with appropriate quarantine and

isolation, and cleaning and disinfection) to the greatest extent possible and taking into consideration factors such as community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks, consistent with CDC guidance.

**Section 2: Day Care Mitigation Measures.** All day care facilities in Illinois must follow the joint guidance issued by DCFS and IDPH and take proactive measures to ensure the safety of children, staff, and visitors, including, but not limited to:

- a. Requiring the indoor use of face coverings by children, staff, and visitors who are over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering, regardless of vaccination status, consistent with CDC guidance; and,
- b. Implementing other layered prevention strategies (such as physical distancing, screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, advising individuals to stay home when sick and get tested, contact tracing in combination with appropriate quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection) to the greatest extent possible and taking into consideration factors such as community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks, consistent with CDC guidance.

**Section 3: Long-Term Care Mitigation Measures.** All nursing homes and long-term care facilities in Illinois must continue to follow the guidance issued by the CDC and IDPH that requires the use of face coverings in congregate facilities for those over the age of two and able to medically tolerate a face covering, regardless of vaccination status.

**Section 4: Savings Clause.** If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, this invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Executive Order, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are declared to be severable.

---

**JB Pritzker, Governor**

Issued by the Governor August 4, 2021

Filed by the Secretary of State August 4, 2021