

**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**EMERGENCY ORDER PROHIBITING GATHERINGS OF 1,000 OR MORE
PERSONS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID -19)**

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2020, in response to the 2019 novel coronavirus disease, COVID-19, the Governor of Pennsylvania issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic, or global epidemic; and

WHEREAS, and the Mayor of Philadelphia issued a Declaration of Extraordinary Circumstance on March 11, 2020, which allows regulations that will be promulgated today, March 12, 2020, by the Board of Health adding COVID-19 to the City's list of reportable and quarantinable diseases to become effective immediately upon transmission to the Department of Records; and

WHEREAS, Section 6-206 of The Philadelphia Code provides that the Department may by order forbid the congregation of persons when necessary to prevent the further spread of a communicable and quarantinable disease; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, including by people with no symptoms or mild symptoms who may unknowingly spread the disease to others; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 can cause severe disease and death, particularly in older adult and other vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, scientific evidence shows that preventing mass gatherings is an effective way to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, mass gatherings create circumstances that are likely to exacerbate the spread of COVID-19, including, but not limited to: the increased likelihood of attracting people from a broad geographic area, the prolonged time period during which large numbers of people are in close proximity, the difficulty in tracing exposure when large numbers of people attend a single event, and the inability to ensure that attendees are able to engage in adequate hygienic and social distancing practices; and

WHEREAS, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health has determined that it is immediately necessary to forbid gatherings of one-thousand (1,000) or more persons in the City of Philadelphia in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth herein;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Thomas A. Farley, Health Commissioner of the City of Philadelphia, in my capacity as head of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and pursuant to all authority granted me under the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, The Philadelphia Code and the Regulations of the Board of Health of the City of Philadelphia, hereby **ORDER** as follows:

Section 1. Definitions

“Mass Gathering.” Any event or convening that brings together or is likely to bring together one-thousand (1,000) or more persons at the same time in a single confined or enclosed indoor or outdoor space, such as, without limitation, an auditorium, concert hall, theater, amphitheater, stadium (indoor or outdoor), arena, event center, meeting hall, conference center, dance hall, night club, large cafeteria or other large area designed for banquets or the consumption of food, public park or the public right-of-way. An indoor space that is separated by walls or similar floor to ceiling barriers that prevent the flow of air is not considered a single confined or enclosed space. With respect to gatherings in outdoor spaces, a “Mass Gathering” shall include only gatherings where most participants are or are likely to be within arm’s length of one another.

Section 2. Prohibition of Mass Gatherings

Mass Gatherings are prohibited in the City of Philadelphia throughout the duration of this Order. Failure to comply with this Order shall result in orders to disperse and the imposition of such other remedies and penalties as provided for by law.

Section 3. Effective Date and Duration

This Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until the end of April 11, 2020, unless otherwise rescinded, superseded, amended, or extended by further Order.

Date: March 12, 2020



Thomas A. Farley, MD, MPH
Health Commissioner
City of Philadelphia