

GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO
LA FORTALEZA
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Administrative Bulletin No.: OE-2020-023

EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO, HON. WANDA VÁZQUEZ-GARCED, TO IMPLEMENT THE NECESSARY CLOSURE OF GOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE SECTOR OPERATIONS IN ORDER TO COMBAT THE EFFECTS OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) AND TO CONTROL THE RISK OF INFECTION ON OUR ISLAND.



WHEREAS: Rulers are characterized by their interest in seeking the well-being of all their citizens. For this reason, as the Governor of Puerto Rico, on March 12, 2020, I declared a state of emergency across our island amid the threat of the coronavirus or COVID-19 global pandemic. This makes making every effort to safeguard the health, life, and safety of all Puerto Ricans the highest priority of my government. With the purpose of minimizing the potential of infection and transmission entailed by this terrible viral threat and given that it threatens the health of our citizens, we hereby issue Executive Order 2020-23.

WHEREAS: As we all know, as of today, the first 5 positive cases of coronavirus or COVID-19 infection have been reported in Puerto Rico. It is therefore imperative that we all take the highest preventive and caution measures, and that the government take all the necessary measures to control the spread of the virus that is affecting our citizens. We reaffirm that the Government of Puerto Rico is fully committed to ensuring the well-being and protection of our citizens.

WHEREAS: In order to prevent the spread and infection of COVID-19 on our Island, the Government of Puerto Rico has taken and will take all necessary steps to ensure the well-being of all citizens.

WHEREAS: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been taking public health and safety measures throughout the United States in response to the spread of COVID-19.

WHEREAS: In view of the above, the Puerto Rico Department of Health has stated that it is imperative that measures be taken to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This is in accordance with Art. VI. Sec. 5-6 of the Constitution of Puerto Rico, L.P.R.A, Volume 1; and Art. 1 of Act No. 81 of March 14, 1912, as amended, known as the *Puerto Rico Health Department Act*, 3 L.P.R.A sec. 171 ("Act No.


 I, Juan E. Segarra, USCCI #06-067/translator, certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate translation, to the best of my abilities, of the document in Spanish which I have seen.

81"). These measures have been taken and have been notified to our citizens from March 12, 2020. To date, despite all warnings and recommendations to stay at home, the importance and seriousness of the threat has not been entirely assimilated, with some people staying outside their homes until late at night and gathering in groups in public places, thus endangering their health and the health of others and putting themselves at risk of becoming infected and spreading this terrible and lethal virus. This situation has required me to take stronger measures for the benefit and protection of our people.

WHEREAS:

Article 6.10 of Act 20-2017, as amended, known as *the Puerto Rico Public Safety Department Act*, empowers the Governor to declare a state of emergency on our Island, and "[...] to amend and repeal any regulation, as well as to issue, amend, and rescind any order as it may deem appropriate in order to rule during the state of emergency or disaster."

THEREFORE:

I, **WANDA VÁZQUEZ-GARCED**, Governor of Puerto Rico, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of Puerto Rico, hereby **DECLARE** and **ORDER** the following:

Section 1:

In accordance with the state of emergency declared under Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2020-020 of March 12, 2020, it is hereby acknowledged that we are facing major threat circumstances that are putting the health of our citizens at risk. In view of the disregard and lack of prudence shown by some citizens who have failed to understand the seriousness of the declared emergency, it has become necessary to take stringent measures that will promote full compliance and respect for the isolation and quarantine orders that have been issued.

Section 2:

Under the powers conferred by Sections 5 and 6 of Art. VI of the Constitution of Puerto Rico, by Art. 1 of Act No. 81, and by Act No. 20-2017, a curfew is hereby **ORDERED** for all citizens, starting today at 9 p.m., during which everyone will be required to remain in their homes, as specified below.

It is hereby ordered that any person who has reasonable suspicion that he or she may have been exposed to the COVID-19, whether or not they are showing signs or symptoms of infection, and in order to prevent or limit the transmission and spread of the virus, shall remain in quarantine for fourteen (14) days as of the issuance of this Order. This implies that the person must strictly remain at home and limit his

or her activities outside their home to receiving medical treatment or care, in order to prevent the risk of infection within the community.

Section 3:

It is further ORDERED that social distancing be enforced by any person who has been infected or who has a reasonable suspicion that he or she may have been infected with the COVID-19 virus for fourteen (14) days from the date of this order, as well confining or restricting their activities to their home, according to medical instructions, in order to ensure their health and to prevent them from posing a risk to public health and preventing transmission to non-infected persons.

Section 4:

By virtue of the powers granted by the Constitution and the Laws of Puerto Rico, the closure of all governmental operations is hereby ORDERED, except for those related to essential services. This includes the closure of all businesses in Puerto Rico starting today, March 15, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. until March 30, 2020, unless otherwise provided, except for food retail or wholesale businesses providing services through drive-thru, carry-out, or delivery only, including prepared foods, medications or medical equipment, pharmacies, supermarkets, gas stations, banking or financial institutions, nursing homes, or other businesses related to the food, medical products, or fuel supply chains.

Section 5:

This order for total closure shall apply to shopping centers, movie theaters, dance clubs, concert halls, theaters, game or gambling rooms, casinos amusement parks, gyms, bars, or any similar place or event that may promote the gathering of a group of citizens in the same place.

Section 6:

This curfew will allow citizens to travel or walk along public roads from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. only on the following circumstances:

- (a) Purchasing food, pharmaceutical, and basic necessity products;
- (b) keeping medical appointments or visiting a hospital, laboratory, or healthcare facility;
- (c) going or coming from a workplace whose closure has not been ordered hereunder, public and private employees who perform essential work;
- (d) returning to your usual place of residence from an allowed activity;
- (e) to provide assistance, care, transportation of senior citizens, children, dependents, people with disabilities or people who require any type of medical or professional attention. The above, provided that all necessary precautions are taken to prevent infection;
- (f) visiting financial institutions.



Section 7: During the curfew, citizens may only travel on public roads in an emergency situation.

The curfew shall continue until March 30, 2020. Individuals authorized under this Order due to work and/or emergency reasons shall be excluded from this curfew.

The provisions of this Section shall not apply to individuals duly identified as public or private security agency employees at the state and federal level, health professionals; hospital, personnel working in hospitals, pharmacies, pharmaceutical companies, bioscience facilities or health centers; personnel working in the wholesale food and product manufacturing and supply chain, from their origin to consumer retail outlets; personnel working with utilities or critical infrastructure; call centers; ports and airports personnel; members of the press; or citizens who are addressing emergency or health situations. These individuals shall be authorized to travel on public roads to and from work when necessary.

It is hereby ordered that the Puerto Rico Police Department and the Public Safety Department take all necessary measures to enforce the provisions of this Executive Order.

Section 8: Failure to comply with the provisions contained in this Emergency Executive Order by any person and/or business shall result in the implementation of criminal penalties and fines as provided by all applicable laws, as well as by Act No. 20-2017, as amended, which establishes a term of imprisonment not to exceed six (6) months or a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both penalties, at the discretion of the court, for any person who fails to comply with the evacuation orders issued by the Public Safety Department or its Bureaus.

Section 9: DEROGATION. This Executive Order supersedes any other executive order that may be inconsistent with the provisions herein, to the extent of such inconsistency.

Section 10: VALIDITY. This Executive Order shall enter into force immediately and shall remain in force until March 30, 2020, and/or until further notice.

Section 11: NON-CREATION OF ENFORCEABLE RIGHTS. This Executive Order is not intended to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by any person or entity, in any matter, civil, criminal, or administrative, against the Government of Puerto Rico or its agencies, officials, employees, or any other

person.

Section 12: PUBLICATION. This Executive Order must be filed immediately with the Department of State and the widest possible publication is hereby ordered.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I hereby issue this Executive Order under my signature and cause the Great Seal of the Government of Puerto Rico to be affixed in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on this 15th day of March of 2020.

A blue ink signature of Wanda Vázquez-Garced.

WANDA VÁZQUEZ-GARCED
GOVERNOR

Enacted in accordance with the law on this 15th day of March of 2020.

A blue ink signature of Elmer L. Román González.

ELMER L. ROMÁN GONZÁLEZ
SECRETARY OF STATE