



**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 22-03**

**TERMINATING COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY; RESCINDING  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-03, EXECUTIVE ORDER 21-29, AND  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 21-36**

Since early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has upended life for Oregonians. More than 6,930 Oregonians have lost their lives to this deadly disease since March 2020, and at least 28,159 Oregonians have been hospitalized with COVID-19.

Oregonians—frontline workers, children, parents, families, businesses, and all of us—have worked together during the last two years to protect each other. In March 2020, with Oregon facing unprecedented challenges, I issued Executive Order 20-03, declaring a state of emergency for COVID-19. Pursuant to that emergency declaration, at various times during the pandemic I have used my statutory emergency authorities to take extraordinary actions, when necessary, to keep Oregonians safe. Oregon’s cautious, science-driven approach to the pandemic undoubtedly saved lives. Oregon’s case rates and deaths remain among the lowest in the nation. Had our rates been as high as the average state, we would have lost at least 5,700 more Oregonians. These are our neighbors, family members, and friends who are still with us today as a result of the collective effort and sacrifice of Oregonians to keep each other safe as this pandemic raged.

Today, lifesaving vaccines and booster shots are readily available and free of cost to any Oregonian age five and up. Through the tireless efforts of our frontline health care workers, pharmacists, community organizations, National Guard troops, volunteers, public health workers, and community members throughout the state, more than 3.1 million Oregonians, including more than 90% of Oregon’s seniors, have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. We have worked to continue to close equity gaps for Black, Indigenous, Latino, Latina, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, Tribal, and Oregonians of color. Oregonians have come together by the millions to protect themselves, their families, and their communities by becoming vaccinated.

In June 2021, the state’s pandemic response shifted from acute emergency response to long-term management and recovery. At that time, I rescinded executive orders that had imposed COVID-19 safety measures. Although we knew the pandemic was not over, and recovery would be a longer-term proposition, it was time to begin transitioning from managing the pandemic under the Governor’s statutory emergency powers to managing the COVID-19 pandemic under ordinary government processes like legislative action and agency rulemaking—as we would any other established public health challenge.





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This transition to ordinary government processes for managing COVID-19 has been tested twice during the last nine months, as the Delta and Omicron variants arrived in Oregon. While those who were vaccinated were well protected, both variants drove up cases, hospitalizations and, tragically, deaths, and strained our state's hospital capacity. When it became necessary to put in place mandatory safety requirements for the public, I remained steadfast that our transition to ordinary government processes should continue, whenever possible. Accordingly, necessary public health and safety requirements for the Delta and Omicron variants—such as requirements for face coverings, vaccinations for K-12 school teachers and staff, and vaccinations for health care workers—were promulgated through agency rulemaking processes authorized under the Oregon Administrative Procedures Act, not pursuant to my emergency powers.

Admittedly, the COVID-19 state of emergency at times continued to be of critical importance during recent months. For example, emergency authorities allowed me to quickly and efficiently direct the state executive branch workforce to get vaccinated, to help protect both them and the community. As a result of that directive, 98 percent of the state workforce is in compliance with state requirements, including 85 percent who are now fully vaccinated. Additionally, prior to the Legislative Assembly's enactment of Senate Bill 1529 (2022) earlier this month, an emergency declaration had been necessary to activate and support hundreds of volunteers for SERV-OR, the state's volunteer medical provider program. The emergency declaration provided other flexibilities and supports, as well, such as activating statutory liability protections for K-12 schools, allowing flexibility for court deadlines, allowing flexibility for health care licensing, and allowing the state to continue to draw down federal disaster aid such as enhanced SNAP benefits.

But thanks to our collaboration with the Legislative Assembly and state agencies, the emergency declaration itself is no longer necessary to our ongoing COVID-19 response. We have learned throughout the pandemic to be prepared for the unexpected with this virus. As we continue to navigate future COVID-19 variants, our goals remain the same: to save lives, support doctors, nurses, and health care workers, and keep Oregon businesses, schools, and communities open. I am confident that we can navigate those challenges, together, relying on the normal governmental processes set forth in our laws.





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As this pandemic and other disasters like catastrophic wildfires have taught us, a sudden crisis can require the Governor to invoke extraordinary emergency authorities, in order to respond immediately and to keep people safe. But those powers must be used carefully and sparingly, and only when absolutely necessary, as they temporarily alter the normal balance of power. Emergency powers cannot—and should not—go on forever. Instead, response efforts should be transitioned to normal government processes and authorities, as soon as possible, to ensure that essential checks and balances remain in place.

The Legislative Assembly's partnership and engagement on pandemic-related issues—including its efforts during three extraordinary special sessions in 2020—have been essential to accomplishing that goal. Efforts by the Oregon Health Authority and other state agencies have been essential too, as they have transitioned our pandemic response to agency rulemaking processes. Because of these efforts, Oregon now is in a position in which it can meet the challenges of COVID-19, using normal legislative and agency authorities and processes. For that reason, it is time to end the COVID-19 state of emergency.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS DIRECTED AND ORDERED:**

1. Effective Date. The directives of this Executive Order shall be effective as of 12:01 a.m., April 1, 2022.
2. Rescinding Executive Order 20-03; Terminating COVID-19 State of Emergency. Following consultation with public health officials, and pursuant to my authority under ORS 401.204(1), I hereby proclaim and order that Executive Order 20-03 is rescinded, and that the COVID-19 state of emergency declared therein is terminated, as of the effective date of this Executive Order.
3. Rescinding Executive Order 21-36. Executive Order 21-36, which previously extended the COVID-19 state of emergency, is rescinded as of the effective date of this Executive Order.





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4. Rescinding Executive Order 21-29. Executive Order 21-29, which imposed a COVID-19 vaccination requirement for the executive branch of state government pursuant to the Governor's emergency authorities, is rescinded as of the effective date of this Executive Order.

Done at Salem, Oregon, this 17th day of March, 2022.



Handwritten signature of Kate Brown in blue ink.

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Kate Brown  
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

Handwritten signature of Shemia Fagan in blue ink.

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Shemia Fagan  
SECRETARY OF STATE