

Governor Whitmer Announces Statewide Closure of All K-12 School Buildings

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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School building closures will last Monday, March 16 through Sunday, April 5

LANSING, Mich. -- Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced that in order to slow the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Michigan, she is ordering the closure of all K-12 school buildings, public, private, and boarding, to students starting Monday, March 16 until Sunday, April 5. School buildings are scheduled to reopen on Monday, April 6.

As of tonight, the number of presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in Michigan is 12.

“This is a necessary step to protect our kids, our families, and our overall public health,” said **Governor Whitmer**. “I am working with partners across state government to ensure educators, parents, and students have the support they need during this time, and to ensure our children who rely on school for meals have access to food. I know this will be a tough time, but we’re doing this to keep the most people we can safe. I urge everyone to make smart choices during this time and to do everything they can to protect themselves and their families.”

“Closing our K-12 school buildings is the responsible choice that will minimize the risk of exposure for children, educators, and families and mitigate the spread of coronavirus,” said Michigan State **Superintendent Michael Rice**. “The Department of Education will continue to work closely with our partners in state government to help our students and educators in each school district get through this time. This is about protecting the most people in Michigan.”

Governors across the country, including Mike DeWine (R-OH), Andy Beshear (D-KY), and Larry Hogan (R-MD), have taken similar steps to close schools and ensure the protection of children and families in their states.

“Closing our school buildings is the smart thing and the right thing to do for the public’s health,” said Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Chief Deputy for Health and Chief Medical Executive **Dr. Joneigh Khaldun**. “These actions will help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Michigan. I will continue to work with Governor Whitmer and our four COVID-19 task forces to ensure we protect our children, our families, and our communities.”

Patients with confirmed infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The best prevention for viruses, such as influenza, the common cold or COVID-19 is to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home, and avoid contact with others.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

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