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IN THE OFFICE OF  
SECRETARY OF STATE

## Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, since early March 2020, Illinois has faced a pandemic that has caused extraordinary sickness and loss of life, infecting over 1,735,000, and taking the lives of more than 26,000 residents; and,

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

**WHEREAS**, as Illinois continues to respond to the public health disaster caused by Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), a novel severe acute respiratory illness that spreads rapidly through respiratory transmissions, the burden on residents, healthcare providers, first responders, and governments throughout the State has been unprecedented; and,

**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on January 30, 2020, and the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services declared that COVID-19 presents a public health emergency on January 27, 2020; and,

**WHEREAS**, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic, and has now reported more than 250 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than 5 million deaths attributable to COVID-19 globally; and,

**WHEREAS**, despite efforts to contain COVID-19, the virus has continued to spread rapidly, resulting in the need for federal and State governments to take significant steps; 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**, on March 9, 2020, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of Illinois, declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area in response to the outbreak of COVID-19; and,

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, the President declared a nationwide emergency pursuant to Section 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act"), covering all states and territories, including Illinois; and,

**WHEREAS**, on March 26, 2020, the President declared a major disaster in Illinois pursuant to Section 401 of the Stafford Act; and,

**WHEREAS**, on April 1, 2020, due to the exponential spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, on May 28, 2021, due to the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, and the ongoing health and economic impacts of the virus, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, on June 25, 2021, due to the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, and the ongoing health and economic impacts of the virus, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, on July 23, 2021, due to the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, and the ongoing health and economic impacts of the virus, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, on August 20, 2021, due to the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, and the ongoing health and economic impacts of the virus, including the additional risk and harm of the Delta variant of the coronavirus, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, on September 17, 2021, due to the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, and the ongoing health and economic impacts of the virus, including the additional risk and harm of the Delta variant of the coronavirus, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, on October 15, 2021, due to the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois, and the ongoing health and economic impacts of the virus, including the additional risk and harm of the Delta variant of the coronavirus, I declared all counties in the State of Illinois as a disaster area; and,

**WHEREAS**, as circumstances surrounding COVID-19 have evolved and new evidence emerges, there have been frequent changes in information and public health guidance; and,

**WHEREAS**, the unprecedented nature of COVID-19, including the health consequences it has on not just the respiratory system but the heart, brain, kidneys, and the body's immune response, has made the virus's effects and its path difficult to predict; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Delta variant 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 nearly all sequenced coronavirus in the U.S.; 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**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has issued guidance for fully vaccinated people,<sup>1</sup> indicating that they can conduct numerous activities outdoors without wearing a mask or staying 6 feet apart, while recommending wearing a mask indoors in public in areas of substantial or high transmission, as well as where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC continues to advise that cloth face coverings or masks protect persons who are not fully vaccinated from COVID-19; and,

**WHEREAS**, the CDC advises that schools follow the CDC's guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools which recommends universal masking and working with local public health officials to determine the layered prevention strategies needed in their area; and,

<sup>1</sup> Individuals are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine. Individuals who do not meet these requirements, regardless of age, are not considered fully vaccinated.

**WHEREAS**, while the State continues to make every effort to ensure an adequate supply of PPE, if those procurement efforts are disrupted or Illinois experiences a surge in COVID-19 cases, the State may face a life-threatening shortage of critical supplies for health care workers and first responders; and,

**WHEREAS**, Illinois continues to use a significant number of hospital beds and ICU beds; and, if COVID-19 cases surge, the State could face a shortage of critical health care resources; and,

**WHEREAS**, there are parts of the country in which there are few if any available ICU beds as a result of the Delta variant, and many parts of Illinois have a diminishing number of available ICU beds as a result of the Delta variant; and,

**WHEREAS**, Illinois now has tested more than 37 million total specimens for COVID-19; and,

**WHEREAS**, in addition to causing the tragic loss of more than 26,000 Illinoisans and wreaking havoc on the physical health of tens of thousands more, COVID-19 has caused extensive economic loss and continues to threaten the financial welfare of a significant number of individuals and businesses across the nation and the State; and,

**WHEREAS**, nationwide, more than 80 million people have filed unemployment claims since the start of the pandemic; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Department of Employment Security announced that the State's unemployment rate continues to be high; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Department of Employment Security is responding to the economic crisis in a number of ways, including through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is working to address the economic crisis, including through assistance programs such as the Business Interruption Grants Program for businesses that experienced a limited ability to operate due to COVID-19 related closures; and,

**WHEREAS**, many executive agencies in the State continue to focus significant resources on the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and,

**WHEREAS**, many State agencies will have a role in administering American Rescue Plan and Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds over the coming months; and,

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has required the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) to address the outbreak's impact on the State's food supply chain through regulation and oversight of meat and poultry facilities and livestock management facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic's disruption to the livestock market has required IDOA to concentrate its resources on working with livestock owners and producers in addressing safe and environmental animal disposal concerns through its oversight and regulation of the Dead Animal Disposal Act; and

**WHEREAS**, IDOA regulates and investigates many other industries that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic including, but not limited to, pesticide applicators, animal shelters, pet shops, and gas stations, and the continued, proper regulation of these industries requires IDOA to commit additional time and resources into creating new procedures for conducting remote investigations and trainings; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic's detrimental impact to IDOA's regulated industries has required IDOA to place additional time and resources into organizing and managing the timely implementation of the Business Interruption Grant Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the economic loss and insecurity caused by COVID-19 threatens the viability of business and the access to housing, medical care, food, and other critical resources that directly impact the health and safety of residents; and,

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**Section 4.** The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is directed to implement the State Emergency Operations Plan to coordinate State resources to support local governments in disaster response and recovery operations.

**Section 5.** To aid with emergency purchases necessary for response and other emergency powers as authorized by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, the provisions of the Illinois Procurement Code that would in any way prevent, hinder or delay necessary action in coping with the disaster are suspended to the extent they are not required by federal law. If necessary, and in accordance with Section 7(1) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7(1), the Governor may take appropriate executive action to suspend additional statutes, orders, rules, and regulations.

**Section 6.** Pursuant to Section 7(3) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7(3), this proclamation activates the Governor's authority, as necessary, to transfer the direction, personnel or functions of State departments and agencies or units thereof for the purpose of performing or facilitating emergency response programs.

**Section 7.** The Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Insurance and the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services are directed to recommend, and, as appropriate, take necessary actions to ensure expanded access to testing for COVID-19 and that consumers do not face financial barriers in accessing diagnostic testing and treatment services for COVID-19.

**Section 8.** The Illinois State Board of Education is directed to recommend, and, as appropriate, take necessary actions to address any impact to learning associated with the present public health emergency and to continue to alleviate any barriers to the use of remote learning during the effect of this proclamation that exist in the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1-1 et. seq.

**Section 9.** All State agencies are directed to cooperate with the Governor, other State agencies and local authorities in the development and implementation of strategies and plans to cope with and recover from the economic impact of the present public health emergency.

**Section 10.** Pursuant to Section 7(14) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305/7(14), increases in the selling price of goods or services, including medical supplies, protective equipment, medications and other commodities intended to assist in the prevention of or treatment and recovery of COVID-19, shall be prohibited in the State of Illinois while this proclamation is in effect.

**Section 11.** This proclamation can facilitate requests for federal emergency and/or disaster assistance if a complete and comprehensive assessment of damage indicates that effective recovery is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments.

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