



What Will the End of the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Mean to You?

February 13, 2023

The federal government recently announced it plans to end the COVID-19 emergency declarations on May 11, 2023. As we lead up to this date, the Logan County Health District will send frequent updates with as much detailed information as possible about what this policy change will mean to organizations, healthcare providers, individuals, and families.

Let's start by answering some basic questions:

1. What is an emergency declaration?

Under United States law, the president can declare a state of emergency during a crisis. President Trump first declared a public health emergency declaration due to COVID-19 on January 31, 2020. While the state of emergency is in effect, the executive branch has "emergency powers" to address the crisis. When the state of emergency ends, those powers are lifted, and policies that the president has enacted using emergency powers will expire.

2. What emergency declarations were issued related to COVID-19?

President Trump first declared a public health emergency on January 31, 2020, and declared a national emergency on March 13, 2020. A public health emergency lasts 90 days, so it has been renewed multiple times since then. Governors in all 50 states also issued state emergency declarations related to COVID-19 at some time, which are separate from the national emergency and public health emergency. Governor DeWine first declared a state of emergency due to COVID-19 on March 9, 2020, and rescinded it on June 18, 2021.

3. What COVID-19 policies will be affected?

Under the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, the federal government has had more flexibility in several health-related areas—including fully covering the cost of most COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccines. When the emergency declaration ends, coverage for COVID-19 will become more like coverage for other medical conditions. In the coming weeks, more information will become available about specific changes, some of which might vary by health insurance.

4. Does this mean COVID-19 is over?

Ending the COVID-19 emergency declarations does not mean the virus has been eradicated. Around 100 Ohioans are still dying of COVID-19 every week. States of emergencies are intended to be temporary, and when emergency powers expire, that does not mean that all policies related to COVID-19 end. The Logan County Health District will continue to provide consultation and guidance to the community to protect everyone against COVID-19.

The Logan County Health District continues to advise that everyone get vaccinated, get the latest booster, use at-home tests if you've been exposed or have symptoms, stay home if you're sick, and wear a high-quality mask when COVID-19 levels are high. These precautions are the best ways we can continue to protect ourselves and manage the pandemic as it continues to evolve.