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State of Rhode Island

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

21-109

November 12, 2021

DECLARATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY FOR NEW COVID-19 VARIANTS

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, Executive Order 20-02 was issued for a declaration of a state of emergency due to the dangers to health posed by the original strain of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that is responsible for COVID-19, and that Order has been extended to remain in effect through at least November 27, 2021;

WHEREAS, at the time of that declared state of emergency, the original SARS-CoV-2 strain had a rate of spread of 2-3, meaning that one person would likely spread the virus to 2-3 others;

WHEREAS, the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 ("Delta Variant") has become the dominant strain in Rhode Island and nationally;

WHEREAS, the Delta Variant may have a viral load 1,000 times greater than the original strain of SARS-CoV-2 that hit Rhode Island in 2020;

WHEREAS, the Delta Variant is more than twice as contagious as recent variants, and 3-4 times more contagious than the original strain, leading to a significant increase in transmission among those who are not vaccinated and breakthrough infection in some people who are fully vaccinated;

WHEREAS, both unvaccinated and vaccinated people can spread the Delta Variant;

WHEREAS, since August 11, 2021, Rhode Island has been experiencing a high level of community transmission of the Delta Variant, defined as more than 100 cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people in the past 7 days;

WHEREAS, as of October 31, 2021, Rhode Island had 139.7 new cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people in the prior 7 days;

WHEREAS, as of October 31, 2021, Rhode Island had 83 hospitalized COVID-19 patients;

WHEREAS, as of October 31, 2021, Rhode Island had 61 cases of COVID-19 in long term care facilities;

WHEREAS, as of October 31, 2021, 6 of the State's 10 acute care hospitals were exceeding capacity, and it is known that SARS-CoV2 spreads more easily in less humid environments, which are characteristic of the impending winter;

WHEREAS, since vaccines are only authorized for people 5 and older, people less than 5 years old are particularly susceptible to infection from the Delta Variant, which is more likely to affect children than the original strain; children age 5-11 years have only become eligible for vaccination as of November 3, 2021;

WHEREAS, Rhode Island has been seeing increasing cases of COVID-19 in children, particularly children age 5-9 years which have the highest case rates of any age group and expects to see more childhood cases increase;

WHEREAS, this increase in prevalence of the Delta Variant poses a significant and imminent risk to Rhode Islanders of increased symptomatic disease, hospitalization, and death; and

WHEREAS, a serious threat to public health exists because of the Delta Variant and the State needs to take additional measures to limit the spread of the Delta Variant and other new variants of concern.

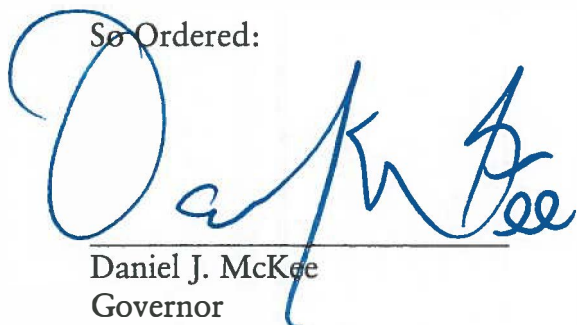
NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANIEL J. MCKEE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island, pursuant to Article IX of the Rhode Island

Constitution and the Rhode Island General Laws, including, but not limited to, Title 30, Chapter 15, and Title 23, Chapter 8 do hereby proclaim, order and direct the following:

1. The declaration of a state of emergency for the State of Rhode Island due to the dangers to health and life posed by the Delta Variant and other emerging variants and activation of the state disaster emergency plan to deal with this specific threat hereby remain effective.
2. Pursuant to the powers granted by the Rhode Island Constitution and its General Laws, and any other applicable provisions of state or federal law, I shall from time to time issue additional recommendations, directions and orders as circumstances require, either written or verbal.

This Order, superseding Executive Order 21-86, shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect through December 11, 2021, unless renewed, modified or terminated by subsequent Executive Order.

So Ordered:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. McKee", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Daniel J. McKee
Governor