



# Legislative Update

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## LEGISLATIVE LEADERS ANNOUNCE RETURN TO SESSION ON APRIL 27

House and Senate majority party leaders made a joint announcement on April 15 that the legislature will return to session activity on April 27. House Speaker Haahr and Majority Leader Vescovo joined with Senate Pro Tem Schatz and Majority Leader Rowden in making the announcement.

Citing the constitutional obligation to approve an operating budget by the May 8 deadline, the announcement focused on the need to keep state government funded and services operating without operation.

Given the health concerns over large gatherings, legislators will continue to adhere to social distancing and infection mitigation procedures. Members of the public are urged to observe social distancing guidelines and participate in the legislative process electronically when possible.

Beyond approving the state operating budget for next year, it is not yet clear what other legislation will be considered. When the legislature returns on April 27, only three session weeks will remain until the session ends on May 15.

The budget must be substantially redrafted based on the best possible projections of state revenues in a changing world with a slowing economy and skyrocketing unemployment. Final action on the budget bills in regular session must be completed by May 8. Given these challenges and time constraints, the legislature will likely only consider bills that have already been approved by the chamber of origin and advanced to the other chamber.

Some legislative leaders are eager to finish action on their top priorities, including SJR 38 (Hegeman), a joint resolution that seeks to undermine the ethics and redistricting reforms of CLEAN Missouri. SJR 38 has already been approved by the Senate and would only require House approval in the remaining weeks, assuming the House makes no changes to the language. The Association strongly opposes SJR 38.

## GOVERNOR EXTENDS STAY AT HOME ORDER UNTIL MAY 3

Governor Parson announced on April 16 that he would extend the statewide "stay at home" order through May 3. At the same time, the Governor indicated that he would begin to make changes to that order on May 4 to gradually reopen businesses around the state. The Governor announced that the state intends to expand COVID-19 testing, provide more personal protective equipment (PPE), expand hospital capacity, if needed, and improve outbreak predictions.

Commissioner Vandeven announced that DESE has received a federal waiver that allows flexibility in the use of the \$208 million in CARES funding to be distributed to schools through the Title I funding mechanism. The Commissioner also announced creation of a task force to consider options for summer school and re-entry into regular term school attendance this fall.

**Legislative Update 2020**

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