



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official  
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**

**MESSAGE ID:** MSHAN-20210815-00528-ALT (Health Alert)

**RECIPIENTS:** All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and  
Healthcare Providers – Statewide

Sunday, August 15, 2021

**SUBJECT:** **Mandatory Hospital Participation in Mississippi  
COVID-19 System of Care Plan and Delay of  
Elective Procedures**

**STATE HEALTH OFFICER'S ORDER**

Pursuant to Mississippi Code Ann. § 41-23-1 et. seq. and the State of Emergency Declaration by the Governor of the State of Mississippi related to the coronavirus COVID-19 issued on March 14, 2020, I, Thomas Dobbs, MD, MPH, State Health Officer, Executive Director of the Mississippi State Department of Health, hereby issue this statewide Order making participation in the Mississippi COVID-19 System of Care Plan mandatory for all licensed hospitals in Mississippi effective **August 15, 2021 until August 31, 2021**, unless revoked prior to that time, as follows:

**Crisis Operations - Critical Care Services**

As Mississippi has reached a point where hospitals can no longer accommodate acute clinical demands, Mississippi ESF-8 will enact a COVID-19 rotation to ensure the proper assignment of patients to the appropriate hospital.

- Transfers for critical care services that cannot be accommodated by the normal referral processes will be routed through ESF-8 Mississippi Med-Com. Sending facility should call Mississippi MedCom at (601) 984-4367.
- All sending facilities must report to Med-Com all transfers requiring ICU level care, both COVID and Non-COVID.
- Mississippi Med-Com will direct patients to available beds, and, when no beds are available, to hospital destinations on a rotating basis based on geography and resource availability.
- Patients in Mississippi at level 4 hospitals in need of a higher level of care and critical care patients at level 2 and 3 hospitals that lack appropriate services to care for patients will be eligible for the rotational transfer process when necessary. Following stabilization patients will be transferred back to the hospital of origin as directed by Med-Com.
- Med-Com will distribute patients from level 1 and 2 facilities to service levels (3 and 4) according to medical necessity and service availability.
- All patients accepted by higher level facilities will be accepted by the ED physician.

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- Provider to provider and nurse to nurse communications shall be maintained by sending facility.
- Mississippi Med-Com will monitor hospital capacity and capability related to providing care to patients with COVID-19.
- Rotation only applies to transfers originating in Mississippi.
- Any refusal or deviation from the COVID-19 System of Care will be investigated by MSDH.

**Inpatient Medical Capacity, Effective 8/15/2021 through 8/31/2021**

To meet the increasing demands of rising COVID-19 hospitalization, all hospitals must delay all:

- Elective surgeries in Tier 1 and 2 (from Appendix) that require overnight hospitalization.
- Given that prolonged delays of some elective surgeries in Tier 2 may lead to adverse consequences, any urgent surgery in Tier 2 that requires overnight hospitalization should have a compelling justification documented in the medical record.

**Appendix:**

Tiers	Action	Definition	Locations	Examples
Tier 1a	Postpone surgery/procedure	<b>Low acuity surgery/healthy patient</b> -outpatient surgery Not life-threatening illness	HOPD* ASC** Hospital with low/no COVID-19 census	-Carpal tunnel release -EGD -Colonoscopy -Cataracts
Tier 1b	Postpone surgery/procedure	<b>Low acuity surgery/unhealthy patient</b>	HOPD ASC Hospital with low/no COVID-19 census	-Endoscopies
Tier 2a	Consider postponing surgery/procedure	<b>Intermediate acuity surgery/healthy patient</b> - Not life threatening but potential for future morbidity and mortality. Requires in-hospital stay	HOPD ASC Hospital with low/no COVID-19 census	-Low risk cancer -Non urgent spine & Ortho: Including hip, knee replacement and elective spine surgery -Stable ureteral colic  -Elective angioplasty
Tier 2b	Postpone surgery/procedure if possible	<b>Intermediate acuity surgery/unhealthy patient</b>	HOPD ASC Hospital with low/no COVID-19 census	
Tier 3a	Do not postpone	<b>High acuity surgery/healthy patient</b>	Hospital	-Most cancers -Neurosurgery  -Highly symptomatic patients



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Tiers 3b	Do not postpone	<b>High acuity surgery/unhealthy patient</b>	Hospital	-Transplants -Trauma -Cardiac w/symptoms -Limb threatening vascular surgery
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\*Hospital Outpatient Department \*\*Ambulatory Surgery Center

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-elective-surgery-recommendations.pdf>

This the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 2021.

Thomas Dobbs, MD, MPH  
State Health Officer



***Alerting Message Specification Settings***

**Originating Agency:** Mississippi State Department of Health  
**Alerting Program:** MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)  
**Message Identifier:** MSHAN-20210815-00528-ALT  
**Program (HAN) Type:** Health Alert  
**Status (Type):** Actual ()  
**Message Type:** Alert  
**Reference:** MSHAN-00528  
**Severity:** Unknown  
**Acknowledgement:** No  
**Sensitive:** Not Sensitive  
**Message Expiration:** Undetermined  
**Urgency:** Undetermined  
**Delivery Time:** 600 minutes

**Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings**

**Originating Agency:** A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

**Alerting Program:** The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

**Message Identifier:** A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

**Program (HAN) Type:** Categories of Health Alert Messages.

**Health Alert:** Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Health Info Service:** Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Status (Type):**

- Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event
- Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
- Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



**Message Type:**

Alert: Indicates an original Alert  
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded  
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled  
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

**Reference:** For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

**Severity:**

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property  
Severe: Significant threat to life or property  
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property  
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property  
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

**Acknowledgement:** Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

**Sensitive:**

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content  
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

**Message Expiration:** Undetermined.

**Urgency:** Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

**Delivery Time:** Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).