

GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO  
LA FORTALEZA  
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Administrative Bulletin Number: OE-2020-020

EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO, HON. WANDA  
VÁZQUEZ-GARCED, TO DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN VIEW OF THE  
IMMINENT IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) ON THE ISLAND.

**WHEREAS:** The Government of Puerto Rico has the constitutional responsibility to safeguard the public order and protect the lives and security of the people.

**WHEREAS:** Section 6.10 of Act No. 20-2017, as amended, better known as the “The Puerto Rico Department of Public Safety Act,” empowers the Governor to declare a state of emergency on our Island. To such effects, Section 6.03 of Act No. 20-2017 defines an emergency as “[...] any situation or circumstance that warrants the necessary state and municipal efforts geared towards saving lives and protecting property, health, and public safety or minimizing or avoiding the risk of a disaster.”

**WHEREAS:** It is common knowledge that the coronavirus or COVID-19 has been spreading across Asia and most European countries for a few months now. The symptoms shown by persons infected with COVID-19 may range from mild symptoms to severe respiratory illnesses that endanger their lives. The World Health Organization has recently declared the COVID outbreak a “pandemic,” due to the global risk of transmission and the level of impact that this virus may have on the people worldwide, as well as on public health institutions of all governments and societies.

**WHEREAS:** Time must not be wasted, however, in determining whether COVID-19 shall become a large-scale epidemic on our island, but rather, it is critical that we know how to use all measures available to address this emergency situation. Every Government Branch, municipality, federal agency, and citizen in Puerto Rico has the obligation to address face COVID-19.

Wanda Vázquez-Garced

**WHEREAS:** This reality requires all components of society to join efforts in order to mainly prevent the transmission and spreading of coronavirus or COVID-19. Likewise, given the imminent impact of COVID-19 on our island, the Government of Puerto Rico is compelled to implement measures as are necessary to prevent and control the spreading of this virus and protect the wellbeing of our people.

**WHEREAS:** For such purposes, it is necessary to devise an action plan in conjunction with all the agencies in order to address this emergency as promptly and efficiently as required.

**THEREFORE:** I, WANDA VÁZQUEZ-GARCED, Governor of Puerto Rico, by virtue of the powers inherent to my office and the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of Puerto Rico, hereby DECLARE and ORDER the following:

**Section 1:** A state of emergency is hereby declared across Puerto Rico regarding the coronavirus or COVID-19 outbreak that is currently threatening people around the world to make all efforts and implement all measures as are necessary to safeguard the health, wellbeing, and public security of our people to minimize the risk or avoid any situation that may pose or constitute a threat to public health or safety as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Section 2:** The Secretary of the Treasury and the Executive Director of the Office of Management and Budget are hereby empowered to establish from any funds available, including the Emergency Fund, a special budget to defray any expenditures necessary to prevent the spreading of the virus on the Island and to share information with the municipal entities.

**Section 3:** DEFINITION OF THE TERM AGENCY: For purposes of this Executive Order, the term “Agency” refers to every agency, instrumentality, office, bureau, commission, board, administration, authority, or entity of the Executive Branch of the Government of Puerto Rico, including public corporations, regardless of their name.

**Section 4:** REPEAL. This Executive Order supersedes any other executive order that may be inconsistent, in whole or in part, with the provisions herein, to the extent of such inconsistency.

**Section 5:** EFFECTIVENESS. This Executive Order shall take effect

immediately.

**Section 6:** NO CREATION OF RIGHTS. This Executive Order is not intended to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by any person or entity, in any matter, civil, criminal, or administrative, against the Government of Puerto Rico, or its agencies, officials, employees, or any other person.

**Section 7:** SEVERABILITY: The provisions of this Executive Order are independent of and severable from one another, and if any part, section, provision, or sentence of this Executive Order is held to be unconstitutional, void, or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions herein, which shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 7:** PUBLICATION. This Executive Order must be filed immediately with the Department of State and the widest possible publication is hereby directed.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** this Executive Order is given under my hand and the Great Seal of the Government of Puerto Rico, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of March of 2020.

**WANDA VÁZQUEZ-GARCED**  
GOVERNOR

Promulgated in accordance with the law on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of March of 2020.

**ELMER L. ROMÁN-GONZÁLEZ**  
SECRETARY OF STATE