

The Louisiana Department of Health Issues Revised Order for Medical and Surgical Procedures

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Today, the Louisiana Department of Health issued a revised order for medical and surgical procedures. This guidance is necessary during a public health emergency to preserve personal protective equipment, to properly utilize hospital staffing and to ensure adequate hospital bed capacity.

“Health care facilities play a critical role in responding to COVID-19 and helping people be their healthiest,” Gov. John Bel Edwards said. “We are quite some time away from returning to normal but this is a step in the right direction.”

The revised guidance, which goes into effect April 27, states medical and surgical procedures shall only be performed under the following conditions:

- in order to treat an emergency medical condition;
- to avoid further harms from an underlying condition or disease;
- and for time sensitive conditions.

Additionally, the order states dental visits, procedures and surgeries shall only be performed under the following conditions:

- in order to treat an emergency medical condition;
- to avoid further harms from an underlying condition or disease;
- and for time sensitive dental conditions.

Before facilities perform any procedure, each must have a plan in place to monitor for COVID-19 symptoms or test if possible; to ensure adequate physical distance between patients; must have a five-day minimum supply of PPE available; and must follow additional guidance outlined in the order.

The previous order allowed surgeries only for emergency medical conditions.

This order does not mean that all containment measures can be lifted across all facilities and specialties.

Healthcare services other than medical and surgical procedures should continue to happen via telehealth when medically appropriate.

Click [here](#) to read the order from the Louisiana Department of Health.