



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

GARLIN GILCHRIST II
LT. GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE

No. 2019-1

To: State Department Directors and Autonomous Agency Heads
From: Governor Gretchen Whitmer
Date: January 2, 2019
Re: Protecting Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

When adopting the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the People of the State of Michigan declared the public health and general welfare of the people of this state to be matters of primary public concern. As Governor, one of my principal duties is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Michigan residents. Acting promptly and adequately in response to threats to public health, safety, and welfare therefore must be a paramount concern of all departments and autonomous agencies.

Action to mitigate or prevent threats to public health, safety, and welfare always should take precedence over any ill-advised attempt to protect the reputation of a department or agency, manipulate public perception, avoid political backlash, or engage in defensiveness, self-justification, or insular conduct.

If state government has information about an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare, the People of the State of Michigan have a right to know. State government must be open, transparent, and accountable to Michigan residents, even when a department, agency, or state officer falls short of the duty to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public we serve.

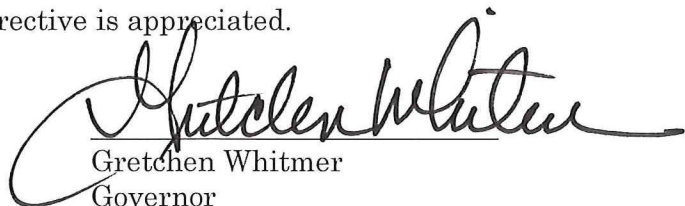
When information relating to a threat to public health, safety, or welfare contradicts an official position or prior action, I expect state departments and agencies to be receptive and open-minded toward that information. Informed opinions based on science and evidence—even when critical of state government—must be viewed as an opportunity for reassessment rather than as a threat.

Acting pursuant to Article 5, § 1 and § 8 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, I therefore direct the following:

1. An employee in the executive branch of Michigan state government who becomes aware of an imminent threat to the public health, safety, or welfare shall immediately report information relating to that threat to the employee's department director or autonomous agency head.

2. A department director or autonomous agency head receiving a report under paragraph 1 shall examine and investigate the information provided. If after an initial assessment the director or agency head determines that an imminent threat to public health, safety, and welfare exists and the department or agency has resources necessary to mitigate or eliminate the threat, the director or agency head shall promptly act to do so and report the action taken to the Governor's Chief Compliance Officer.
3. If after receiving the information under paragraph 1 and making the assessment under paragraph 2, a department director or autonomous agency head determines that an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare exists but that the department or agency lacks sufficient resources to mitigate or eliminate the threat, the director or agency head shall notify the Governor's Chief Compliance Officer and request additional assistance and resources to mitigate or eliminate the threat. The Chief Compliance Officer, in coordination with the Cabinet Secretary and my office, will assist in the identification and deployment of necessary assistance and resources, including assistance and resources from other state departments and agencies.
4. If after receiving the information under paragraph 1 and making the assessment under paragraph 2, a department director or autonomous agency head determines that an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare does not exist, the director or agency head shall report the reasons for that determination to the Governor's Chief Compliance Officer.
5. Information relating to a potential imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare must be reported objectively and promptly to eliminate any attempt to thwart a response or obscure or discolor facts.
6. If a department director or autonomous agency head believes that an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare is not being addressed adequately or promptly, the director or agency head shall share those concerns directly with me.
7. Each department director and autonomous agency head should remind their employees of applicable protections under The Whistleblowers' Protection Act, MCL 15.361 to 15.369, and §§ 2-10 of the rules of the Michigan Civil Service Commission.
8. Each department director shall circulate this directive widely, including to all employees under their direction and supervision and to any autonomous agencies within their department. The vigilance of all state employees, who are both public servants and citizens, is necessary in assuring the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of Michigan residents.

Your cooperation in complying with this directive is appreciated.



Gretchen Whitmer
Governor