



**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health

**M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO: PAUL A. SALLES, CEO**  
**LOUISIANA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION**

**FROM: CECILE CASTELLO, RN**  
**LDH- HEALTH STANDARDS, DEPUTY ASSISTANT**  
**SECRETARY**

**RE: COVID-19 RESPONSE EFFORTS- INCREASED**  
**HOSPITAL BED CAPACITY**

**DATE: MARCH 19, 2020**

*Cecile Castello*

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The state of Louisiana confirmed its first positive case of the COVID-19 virus on March 9, 2020. The number of positive cases rapidly multiplied to over 170 confirmed positive cases and four deaths in Louisiana in just over one (1) week. Considering the impacts and effects of this potentially fatal virus on the capacities of Louisiana licensed hospitals, and the need to coordinate care and treatment for COVID-19 patients, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) will allow for the following current relief to licensed Louisiana hospitals:

**A. LICENSED HOSPITAL BED CAPACITY:**

A-1. In the event that a licensed hospital receives an influx of patients as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the hospital will be allowed to exceed its licensed bed capacity until April 13, 2020 OR until a later expiration date determined by LDH in a subsequent memorandum. This waiver to a hospital's licensed bed capacity shall only be extended to

provide for the essential care and treatment to patients resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and to ensure that the needs of the patients are met.

A-2. A hospital may request one extension beyond the expiration date of April 13, 2020 (or a later expiration date determined by LDH in subsequent memorandum), not to exceed fifteen (15) days, to continue to exceed its licensed bed capacity.

a. A hospital shall submit the extension request in writing to the LDH Health Standards Section (Attn: Cecile Castello, Email: Cecile.Castello@La.Gov or Fax Number: 225-342-5073) prior to April 13, 2020 (or later expiration date determined by LDH in subsequent memorandum).

b. The extension request shall be based upon current information pertaining to the state of the COVID-19 crisis at the time of the extension request.

c. The extension shall only be granted for good cause shown and for circumstances beyond the control of the hospital.

d. The extension shall be granted only if essential care and services to patients are ensured at the hospital, and only if the hospital has the ability to meet the level of care and needs of the patients.

A-3. The hospital shall immediately return to its licensed bed capacity by 11:59pm on April 13, 2020 (or a later expiration date determined by LDH in subsequent memorandum) or upon the expiration of the one-time written extension granted to the hospital.

A-4. In the event that a patient(s) cannot be discharged from the hospital or cannot reasonably be placed in another facility with an available licensed bed after April 13, 2020 (or later expiration date determined by LDH in subsequent memorandum) or upon expiration of the one-time written extension granted to the hospital, the hospital may apply for a temporary hardship exception to the licensed bed capacity.

a. The hospital shall submit a written temporary hardship exception request to the LDH Health Standards Section (Attn: Cecile Castello, Email: Cecile.Castello@La.Gov or Fax Number: 225-342-5073) prior to April 13, 2020 (or later expiration date determined by LDH in subsequent memorandum) or prior to the expiration of any extension granted.

b. The temporary hardship exception may be granted by LDH for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days from the date of granting of the temporary hardship exception.

- c. The temporary hardship exception shall be granted only if essential care and services to the patient(s) are ensured at the hospital, and only if the hospital has the ability to meet the level of care and needs of all patients.

If additional information is required regarding licensed bed capacity, extensions or hardships, please contact Health Standards Section at (225) 342-4997.