


DATE: March 26, 2020

TO: Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Center (ASTC) Providers
Hospital providers

FROM: Vincent Davis, MPH
Director 

SUBJECT: Executive Order 18

The Tennessee Department of Health would like you to review the recently released Executive Order regarding the restriction of all non-emergency medical procedures; effective as of March 24, 2020. <https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/pub/execorders/exec-orders-lee18.pdf>

The specific language (EO-18 Item 2) states:

“All hospitals and surgical outpatient facilities in the State of Tennessee shall not perform non-essential procedures, which include any medical procedure that is not necessary to address a medical emergency or to preserve the health and safety of a patient, as determined by a licensed medical provider. All hospitals and freestanding surgical outpatient facilities must postpone through the expiration of this Order, at a minimum, joint replacement, bariatric surgery, and cosmetic surgery, except for emergency or trauma-related surgery where postponement would significantly impact the health, safety, or welfare of the patient. Medical procedures excluded from postponement include, but are not limited to, surgeries related to advanced cardiovascular disease (including coronary artery disease, heart failure, and arrhythmias) that would prolong life; oncological testing, treatment, and related procedures; pregnancy-related visits and procedures, including labor and delivery; organ transplantation; procedures related to dialysis; and emergency or trauma-related procedures where postponement would significantly impact the health, safety, and welfare of the patient”.

The intent of Executive Order 18 is to protect the licensed medical provider, staff, patients and the community from the transmission of COVID-19 and prevent the unnecessary use of the PPE resources that are in extremely short supply, especially N95 masks.

We appreciate the concerns and feedback expressed by licensed medical providers during this challenging time. We also encourage you to take these actions seriously as not only do our physical and economic health depend on it, but please be advised that failure to comply is a Class A misdemeanor.