



Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan

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PAAM Statement on COVID-19 Enforcement

On behalf of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, we want to thank our state's citizens for their efforts to keep people safe and healthy. We recognize that everyone has made costly and difficult sacrifices.

On Friday, the Court of Claims will hear arguments on the lawsuit the legislature filed against the Governor. Ultimately, this lawsuit will determine the scope of Governor's authority to issue Executive Orders under the Emergency Management and Emergency Powers acts. At this time, the Court has made no ruling regarding the legality of those orders. That means the Executive Orders are still in force.

During this time, prosecuting attorneys are working with their local communities to keep people healthy and safe. In most cases, that is accomplished through community education about the health risks COVID-19 presents. In extreme circumstances, after being warned and educated, prosecutors have had to exercise their discretion and issue criminal charges. This has not been our preferred method on how to handle these alleged violations. We will continue to request that violations of the Executive Orders be investigated by the police and prosecutors will review those on a case-by-case basis to determine if criminal charges are appropriate. It is important for businesses and communities to remember that criminal penalties are not the only, or even primary way to enforce the orders. License sanctions or revocations by state agencies and local health departments are also possible. Likewise, the Attorney General's Office and Michigan State Police can enforce criminal penalties for violations of the Executive Orders.

Like the rest of the State, we hope the court will quickly decide the case brought by the legislature against the Governor. In the meantime, we must continue to work together as a community so that we can overcome the hardships and challenges COVID-19 has presented as quickly as possible, while maintaining the health and safety of our citizens.

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