



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER'S ORDER

**AN ORDER SECURING THE PERSONAL HEALTHCARE FREEDOM OF ALL MDAC
EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, PROMOTERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS**

I, J. Andrew Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce of the State of Mississippi, do hereby issue this Commissioner's Order Securing the Personal Healthcare Freedom of All MDAC Employees, Contractors, Promoters, Guests and Visitors ("Order") pursuant to the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Mississippi as the public officer having management and control of:

- a) the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce ("MDAC") and its employees and properties under Miss. Code Ann. § 69-1-1, *et. seq.*;
- b) the Mississippi State Fairgrounds under Miss. Code Ann. § 69-5-1, *et. seq.*;
- c) the Mississippi Farmers Market under § 69-7-101 *et. seq.*;
- d) the Jim Buck Ross Agriculture and Forestry Museum under § 69-1-32;
- e) any and all other contractors, properties and locations not listed herein under the control of MDAC by virtue of State or Federal law.

I do hereby make the findings below and issue the following Order expressly securing the personal healthcare freedom for medical decisions of all a) individual MDAC employees, b) individual contractors to MDAC, c) individual promoters of events on MDAC properties, and/or d) individual guests and visitors of events held on MDAC properties at any location or properties under the control of MDAC:

WHEREAS, COVID-19 vaccines are and have been readily available throughout Mississippi for many months to those eligible to receive one, at no cost to the recipient; and

WHEREAS, all Mississippians should have the ability and personal medical freedom to make and exercise whatever medical decisions they deem necessary and appropriate for their personal and family situation, in consultation with their personal physician as to what is best for them, their children and families; and

WHEREAS, any medical procedure including receipt or administration of any vaccination is a personal medical decision and should always remain voluntary for all Mississippians, in consultation with their personal physician and based on FDA-approved vaccination package inserts and fact sheets; and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration has announced a forthcoming federal vaccine mandate and the involuntary mandate of all federal contractors and a large number of private employers, as well as "large venue" mandates causing workplace confusion and disruptions that threaten a large portion of the Mississippi workforce and create ongoing potential to hinder the continued recovery of Mississippi commerce and supply chain disruptions in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, many Mississippians including MDAC employees and promoters of events on MDAC properties are concerned of the risk of losing their livelihoods because they may object to receiving a COVID-19 vaccination for reasons of personal conscience, based on a sincerely held religious belief, or for personal medical reasons, including their prior recovery from COVID-19 and the presence of natural antibodies and natural immunity; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Legislature has the authority under existing state law to grant the availability of exemptions, mandate or prohibit mandates of any particular vaccinations but is not presently in Session:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, J. Andrew Gipson, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce of the State of Mississippi, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Mississippi, do hereby order the following which shall apply to all MDAC employees, contractors to MDAC, promoters of events on MDAC properties, and/or guests and visitors of events held on MDAC properties, effective immediately:

1. No individual person, including any individual MDAC employee, individual contractor to MDAC, individual promoter of events on MDAC properties, or individual guests and visitors of events on MDAC properties may be mandated to receive or produce evidence of any vaccination as a condition of any employment, contract, or attendance of any event(s) on MDAC properties for any reason of a) personal conscience, b) based on a sincerely held religious belief, or c) for personal medical reasons, including prior recovery from COVID-19 or consideration of risks as stated on the FDA-approved vaccination package inserts and/or fact sheets.
2. This Order shall supersede any conflicting rules, guidelines or orders issued by local officials of counties and/or municipalities wherein MDAC properties may be located. Private promoters with pre-existing rental contracts are not prevented from maintaining their private event guidelines.
3. This Order shall remain in effect and in full force unless it is modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded by the Commissioner. This Order may be amended by act of the Mississippi Legislature signed into law by the Governor of the State of Mississippi. This Order may also be amended by duly enacted Act of Congress signed into law by the President of the United States.

Given under my hand this
the 18th day of October 2021



J. Andrew Gipson
Commissioner