

Introduction to Public Services

Pandemic Response: Political Science Pathway

Lesson #3: Wednesday, April 8

Learning Target / Daily Objective:

Students will be able to identify and explain the role of government, elected officials and/or city/county planners/managers in a pandemic response.

Background Information

One pathway in the Public Services Academy is Political Science. Careers in this pathway include government, elected official, city/county planner, research/policy analyst, attorney and lobbyist. Today, we will examine the role that government, elected officials and city managers play in a pandemic response.

Let's Get Started

Using what you've seen or heard about the COVID-19 pandemic, think about the answers to these questions:

1. Which public officials have been giving reliable information about the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What different role does each person play in sending information to the public?

Lesson/Activity #1

1. Watch the first 2:26 of this [video](#) from the city of Independence from March 12, 2020, where the emergency operation plans are activated.



Lesson/Activity #1 (continued)

After watching the first two minutes and 26 seconds of the video, you should know this information:

1. The mayor of Independence is an elected official. What is her name?
2. How many cities in Missouri are bigger than Independence?
3. How many square miles does Independence cover?

ANSWERS/Check for Understanding

Did you catch all of these answers?

1. The mayor of Independence is an elected official. What is her name? **Eileen Weir**
2. How many cities in Missouri are bigger than Independence? **Four (Independence is the 5th largest city in the state.)**
3. How many square miles does Independence cover? **78**

Lesson/Activity #2

Now, watch this video from 12:50 to 13:50 where the city manager speaks.



Lesson/Activity #2 (continued)

1. What information did the city manager present that mayor Eileen Weir didn't?
2. What is the difference in the role that the mayor and the city manager play in Independence?
3. Think about this: *How would this press conference have been different without the mayor and city manager speaking? Are those two people reliable sources of information? Why do people trust what they say? SHOULD people trust what they say? Why or why not?*

ANSWERS/Check for Understanding

1. What information did the city manager present that mayor Eileen Weir didn't? **The city manager talked about the school districts.**
2. What is the difference in the role that the mayor and the city manager play in Independence? **The mayor is in charge of the city as a whole. The city manager focuses more on individual businesses in the community.**

Share your opinions about whether public officials should be trusted as reliable sources of information with a member of your family.

Lesson/Activity #3

Now, watch the first 2:43 of this [video](#) from Monday, March 30, 2020, where Missouri Governor Mike Parson speaks.

1. In the first 21 seconds, what does Governor Parson try to do for Missouri residents?
2. Governor Parson is a government elected official. What powers does he have in this position?
3. What people does he collaborate with to get the information that he shares with the public?

ANSWERS/Check for Understanding

1. In the first 21 seconds, what does Governor Parson try to do for Missouri residents? He tries to provide reassurance that we will get through this difficult time.
2. Governor Parson is a government elected official. What powers does he have in this position? He can approve things that affect the whole state (like funding for medical supplies and regulations for physicians and surgeons) and remove things (like regulatory barriers).
3. What people does he collaborate with to get the information that he shares with the public? He says he communicated with medical experts, mayors, faith leaders, emergency personnel and other local officials.

Additional Practice/Resources

Watch more of the March 30, 2020 press conference [video](#) from 15:59 to 22:23 where the governor answers questions from the media. Pay attention to these details:

1. How many days away from lifting restrictions does Governor Parsons think we are in the state of Missouri?
2. Is he planning to shut down state parks?
3. Is he planning to shut down the interstates in Missouri?