



FAQS FOR SAN FRANCISCO HEALTH ORDERS

Updated 2/10/2021

Update: On January 25, 2021, the State terminated its Regional Stay At Home Order for all regions in California including the Bay Area. As a result, San Francisco returned to the State’s Blueprint. San Francisco, like the rest of the Bay Area counties and almost all of California, was assigned by the State to the purple tier (tier 1), which is the most restrictive, due to widespread virus transmission in the community. The State Blueprint sets the baseline for the types of businesses and other activities that counties can open and the required safety modifications for those activities. But counties can be more restrictive. San Francisco has proceeded more carefully than the State framework provides, to help ensure a safer and more sustainable reopening based on local health conditions.

The San Francisco Health Officer and San Francisco’s Department of Public Health emphasize that the decisions to reopen reflected in the current health orders and directives balance the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission with the public health risks of economic and mental health stress.

COVID-19 case rates (i.e. cases per 100,000 population) in San Francisco were about twice as high when reopening resumed on January 28, 2021 than they were the last time businesses and activities were open under the State’s purple tier at the end of November and beginning of December. Case rates remain high now. This high rate means that there is a significant risk that people you may come into contact with when you are outside your residence have COVID-19. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. San Francisco like other places also faces the added risk of new virus variants and mutations in the community, and it is unclear whether these variants may be more contagious or even more deadly.

The opening of sectors does not necessarily signify that these activities are “safe.” The purpose of the required safety protocols contained in the current health orders and directives is to make these activities and sectors safer for workers and the public. Reopening requires that all individuals and businesses use particular care and do their part to make these activities as safe as possible, including, for example, wearing face coverings that cover your mouth and nose especially when talking, avoiding indoor settings to the extent possible, maintaining at least six feet of distance from people who are not in your household, avoiding get-togethers and gatherings to the extent possible, getting tested and isolating if you are ill, and complying with additional health protocols required for open businesses and other activities.

These FAQs are updated as frequently as possible but sometimes the updating lags the issuance of new or amended health orders and directives. Please check frequently the DPH website for updates to those orders and directives. The current



directives may be found [here](#). A chart showing the current status the reopening is also available [here](#). If there is any conflict or inconsistency between the requirements of the actual orders or directives and the information in these FAQs, the orders and directives control.

Overview: More than ten months after San Francisco was one of the first jurisdictions in the country to take the pro-active step of implementing a shelter-in-place order to help protect public health, we remain at a critical point in managing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Even though San Francisco is able to reopen certain sectors, such as outdoor dining and indoor personal services with safety modifications, and increase capacities for retail establishments, we likely have months to go before we resume normal business and other activities safely. To continue reopening schools and to reopen businesses, all of us must do our part by continuing to stay home as much as we can, avoiding all social gatherings with people who are not part of our household, and strictly complying with social distancing and face covering requirements. If we fail to adhere to these precautions, virus transmission rates will increase, the disease will affect more people, our hospital beds will fill up, and our hospital care resources could become overwhelmed. Everyone needs to take individual responsibility and pull together—and together we will get through this.

Our collective effort beginning in March 2020 had a positive impact on limiting the spread of the virus. But we experienced a surge of cases over the summer that required us to pause and, in some cases, roll back the City's reopening, and a third surge in the fall caused us to roll back reopenings again as the entire Bay Area became subject to the State's Regional Stay At Home Order. Through our collective efforts we bent the curve again, for the third time, but community transmission continues to be high. We must stay vigilant. While we can see a path to the end of the pandemic with the arrival of vaccines, we are not out of the woods and we remain at risk of a fourth surge.

San Francisco is the second densest major city in the U.S. and has taken a cautious, incremental approach based on a careful analysis of key local indicators to reopening to provide for a safer, sustained recovery. San Francisco's careful approach to date has helped prevent its hospitals from being overwhelmed and resulted in the lowest COVID-19 death rate of any major city in the country. Still, evidence shows that aerosols—or airborne transmission—is a principal pathway for transmission of COVID-19. A major threat remains the spread of COVID-19 through asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic carriers and through airborne transmission, particularly indoors. The vast majority of the population remains susceptible to infection.

On August 28, 2020 the State adopted a color coded, four-tiered framework to guide reopening statewide. The State has revised that framework several times since its initial implementation. Counties can be more restrictive than the State framework. San Francisco was initially assigned to the red tier (the second most restrictive tier). In September and



October, the County advanced from the moderate (orange) tier to the minimal (yellow) tier. Since then, case rates and hospitalizations have increased. and on November 17, 2020, the State reassigned the County backward to the substantial (red) tier and on November 28, 2020, back to the most restrictive (purple) tier.

On December 3, 2020, the State issued a Regional Stay-at-Home Order in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and avoid overwhelming the State's hospitals. The December 3 order placed each of the State's counties into one of five regions, with San Francisco included in the "Bay Area" region. Under that order, once a region's capacity of adult intensive care unit ("ICU") beds reached a threshold that is less than 15%, the region was subject to shelter-in-place restrictions similar to those enacted by the State in March 2020 during the first surge.

On December 4, San Francisco and a number of other Bay Area jurisdictions issued orders implementing the State's Stay-Safe-At-Home Order. On December 16, 2020, the State notified San Francisco that the Bay Area region's adult ICU bed capacity had dipped below 15%, requiring that San Francisco along with the rest of the Bay Area comply with the Regional Stay-At-Home Order.

On December 16, 2020, to help protect San Francisco from emerging variants including those from other countries and introduction of the virus through travel from areas with higher community transmission, the San Francisco Health Officer issued a travel quarantine order. The order requires that most persons who travel or return to San Francisco from outside the ten Bay Area counties quarantine for 10 days upon entry, with limited specified exceptions. That order remains in effect.

As we had done twice already, the County's and region's residents and businesses yet again bent the curve and saved lives, and on January 25, 2021, the State lifted its Regional Stay-At-Home Order, allowing San Francisco to return to the purple (most restrictive) tier.

We are going to have to live with the threat of the virus for months to come. And for us to be able to keep our schools open and continue to reopen those that are not yet providing in-person education, as well as re-open and expand business and other activities and promote the recovery of our economy, we are all going to have to take responsibility to act safely, including wearing face coverings, keeping at least six feet from others who are not in our household, washing our hands frequently, conducting activities outdoors rather than indoors where possible and avoiding gatherings. We are all in this together, and each of us is going to have to make sacrifices for the good of the community as a whole, including for our most vulnerable members.

The City will continue to strictly apply the Order consistent with its stated intent, and you must strictly follow it. The answers to frequently asked questions below should guide your compliance. The City will keep updating this information on its website to align with the best public health practices and any changes to the Order as circumstances evolve. But again, sometimes these updates lag the issuance of new health orders or directives or



modifications to existing ones and you are urged to check frequently the City's COVID-19 website for updates.

Together, we have a path forward.



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TRAVEL QUARANTINE ORDER EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 18, 2020

Section added 12/16/2020

What does the new travel order do?

It requires anyone traveling, moving, or returning to San Francisco from outside the 10-county Bay Area to quarantine for 10 days to limit the spread of the coronavirus. Some limited exemptions apply. It also strongly discourages any non-essential travel within that Bay Area region.

When does San Francisco's new travel order take effect?

It takes effect on Friday, December 18 at 12:01 a.m.

When does the order end?

The travel quarantine will remain in effect until local health indicators improve and it is rescinded by the San Francisco Health Officer.

(Amended 2/1/2021)

Who is required to quarantine under the new travel order?

Anyone who in the 10 days before arriving in San Francisco spent any time outside of the 10 Bay Area counties and stays in San Francisco for at least 24 hours, including returning residents, people moving to the City, and visitors, unless specifically exempted by the health order.

There are exemptions for medical professionals, first responders, official government purposes, essential infrastructure work, and others, including any travel required by a court order, like transferring custody of children.

Those who began their travel before the travel order was issued are not required to quarantine upon returning to San Francisco, but they are strongly urged to do so.

People transiting through San Francisco International Airport on connecting flights and not staying overnight in San Francisco are not required to quarantine.

What are the 10 Bay Area counties that someone could travel through and not be required to quarantine upon arriving in San Francisco?

San Francisco
San Mateo
Santa Clara
Alameda
Contra Costa
Solano
Sonoma
Napa



Marin
Santa Cruz

Why is San Francisco doing this?

Variants of the virus that are more contagious and may be deadlier have been detected in other countries, states and parts of California. Many areas of the State and the country have much higher rates of transmission than the Bay Area. We need to take steps now to control the spread of the virus and save lives until widespread vaccination can occur. The virus is most easily transmitted when people are in close proximity to each other. Isolating people who have been traveling and in contact with others is one way to help manage the spread of the virus.

(Amended 2/1/2021)

Are quarantines effective?

Yes. Studies have consistently concluded that quarantine can play a role in controlling the spread of this coronavirus. Early implementation of quarantine and its combination with other public health measures helps to ensure effectiveness so that we can bend the curve on virus transmission, restore our hospital capacity, and then ease restrictions.

How long must someone quarantine for?

10 days upon arrival (240 hours), consistent with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that were updated in December 2020.

Where can someone quarantine?

Any living space where they can be isolated from others who had not been traveling with them. That includes in their home, in a hotel, or in a short-term rental where the space is not shared with any other people.

What does quarantine mean? Can I go out and get groceries for example?

Quarantine means to remain inside without physical interaction with others except as needed in emergency or health care situations. Food, groceries or other essentials should be delivered, either through a service, a neighbor or a friend. Deliveries should be left outside the door and then picked up once the deliverer is at least six feet away. Here is [information on food assistance and other services](#), as well as [tips for isolation and quarantine](#).

How will this be enforced?

Violation of or failure to comply with this order is a misdemeanor punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. Most people have done a good job looking out for their neighbors and following the health orders, and we expect businesses and residents will continue to do that with this order. San Francisco will continue its approach of first educating people about what is required under the health orders, but the City will take additional enforcement steps if the situation demands.



Are other Bay Area counties implementing these requirements as well?

Santa Clara County has a pre-existing order that is similar but is based on 150-mile radius rather than the boundaries of 10 Bay Area counties. It's up to other counties if they want to implement similar requirements.

What if I was traveling without other members of my household. Can I quarantine at home?

You should isolate yourself from other members of your household that you were not traveling with. If you cannot do this at home, you should consider other options, such as a staying at a hotel during the quarantine period.

I work at an acute care hospital. If I travel into San Francisco from outside the ten Bay Area counties, do I have to quarantine upon arrival?

No, but if you are able to do so it is strongly recommended. People working at acute care hospitals are exempt from the quarantine requirement in large part because there is a critical need to ensure robust and increased staffing to address COVID-19 hospitalizations.

I am a licensed health care provider. If I travel into San Francisco from outside the ten Bay Area counties, do I have to quarantine upon arrival?

Licensed healthcare providers (as defined by the California Department of Consumer Affairs) are exempt from the quarantine requirement if their travel into our out of San Francisco was solely for the purpose of providing health care.

I'm a government worker, and the government entity I work for has deemed my work to be an essential governmental function. If I travel into San Francisco from outside the ten Bay Area counties, do I have to quarantine upon arrival?

No quarantine is required for essential government or essential infrastructure workers commuting to work from out of the region. Essential governmental functions may include, but are not limited to, law enforcement, fire, health care, and in-person educational instruction.

But if these workers traveled for any other purpose, including for leisure or for anything other than an essential work-related purpose, they *do* need to quarantine for 10 days unless their employer provides them with written notice that they must return to work due to staffing shortages.

I traveled into or returned to San Francisco from outside the 10 Bay Area counties to obtain services from a health care facility. Do I have to quarantine upon arrival?

No, as long as your travel was solely for the purpose of obtaining needed health care, like chemotherapy or heart surgery (not elective plastic surgery, for example). For clarity, if a minor child or other dependent person is traveling to obtain services from a



health care facility, that person's guardian may also accompany the minor child or other dependent person.

I traveled into San Francisco from outside the 10 Bay Area counties. I am subject to a court order or have a court appearance that requires me to leave my home or place of quarantine during my quarantine period. Am I allowed to do so?

Yes. You may leave your home or place of quarantine in order to comply with the court order or make a court appearance, but you must remain in your home or place of quarantine at all other times during your quarantine period.

I'm an Essential Infrastructure worker as defined by San Francisco's Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. If I travel or return to San Francisco from outside the Bay Area, do I have to quarantine upon arrival?

Essential Infrastructure workers and workers carrying out Essential Government Functions are exempt from quarantine for any travel that was solely for the purpose of performing their jobs. If an Essential Infrastructure worker travelled outside the Bay Area for personal reasons, they must quarantine unless their employer notifies them that it would not have sufficient staffing to carry out its essential functions without you working in person.

Do I need to get tested for COVID-19 after traveling? If I test negative, can I shorten my quarantine period?

There is no requirement to get tested for COVID-19 after you travel into San Francisco, but the Department of Public Health recommends that you get tested ideally sometime between 4 and 7 days after you arrive. Testing negative *does not* shorten the mandatory quarantine period. You may leave your home or place of quarantine to get tested.

My home is outside of the 10 Bay Area counties. I traveled to San Francisco for a short trip. Am I allowed to return to my home, or do I have to stay here for a full 10 days to quarantine?

The quarantine requirement does not prohibit you from returning to your home. But when you arrive in San Francisco, you cannot leave the place you are staying in San Francisco during your short trip. Instead, you must stay at that location and quarantine for the duration of your time in San Francisco, or for 10 days, whichever is shorter.

As an employer, should I prohibit employees from traveling outside neighboring counties? Is it my responsibility to do so? Do I have to ask my employees how they are spending their vacation?

The order does not require employers to prohibit employees from travelling, nor does it require employers to ask where employees are going on vacation. But an employer who is aware that their employee is required to quarantine under the order must not allow the employee to return to the workplace during that time. The order also does not



require any employer to approve personal time off, leave, or vacation outside the business's normal policies.

As an employer am I obligated to ask returning employees where they went and enforce quarantine?

Employers must allow employees to quarantine if required by the order. Employers cannot force or knowingly allow employees to violate the quarantine requirements. But the order does not require any employer to approve personal time off, leave, or vacation outside the business's normal policies. Additionally, some employees of essential businesses and government entities may be required to return to work without quarantining upon written notice from their employer that there would otherwise be a staffing shortage.

If a business has staffing shortages, can it grant quarantine exemptions for workers who returned from travel not related to work?

Yes. If an essential business, government entity, or other business currently permitted to operate under the Stay-Safe-At-Home Order notifies an employee that it has staffing shortages, the employee is exempt from the quarantine requirement, even if the employee's travel was not work related.

I'm not a health care worker or first responder, but my place of business is allowed to operate during the surge. Do I still need to quarantine if I commute from outside the Bay Area for my job?

While most people must quarantine when entering San Francisco from outside the Bay Area, if your place of business is currently allowed to operate during the surge, you may be permitted to travel to San Francisco to perform your work. If an employer in certain allowed industries – such as retail, grocery, and food preparation – provides you a written statement that you are needed due to insufficient staffing, then you can travel to the City for work without quarantining.

If my employee who traveled returned and quarantines, do I have to grant them paid time off/vacation time for that quarantine period?

The order also does not require any employer to approve personal time off, leave, or vacation outside the business's normal policies.

What if employees want to use sick leave for their 10 days of quarantine? (Is this a way to convert sick time into "free" 10-day vacation?)

The order also does not require any employer to approve personal time off, leave, or vacation outside the business's normal policies.



STAY SAFER AT HOME EXPLAINED

What does the Order do?

The Stay-Safer-At-Home Order (“Order”) strongly urges people to stay in their place of residence as much as possible, and requires everyone to adhere to physical distancing and other social distancing requirements when they do go out. It also prohibits most gatherings and mandates compliance with a related order (the “Face Coverings Order”), which requires most people to wear face coverings when they leave their residence.

If everyone does their part, we can continue to reopen more businesses and schools. If people fail to adhere to these precautions, transmission rates will continue to increase, and the Health Officer may need to further restrict the businesses and activities that are allowed to occur – or may even be required to do so under the State framework if San Francisco were to move back another tier due to an increase in cases.

A summary of the Order is included on pages 1-5 of the Order itself.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/18/2020, 5/22/2020, 6/1/2020, 6/15/2020, 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020, 11/24/2020)

What business and activities are permitted under the Order?

The following business and activities are currently permitted under the Order (many of these are subject to capacity limits and other requirements):

- Essential Businesses. The complete list of Essential Businesses that are allowed to operate is included in Section 8.a of the Order. Essential Businesses include:
 - Grocery stores and other businesses that sell food;
 - Healthcare operations;
 - Construction projects;
 - Gas stations;
 - Banks and related financial institutions;
 - Hardware stores;
 - Certain childcare establishments;
 - Businesses that provide necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;
 - Businesses that have the primary function of shipping or delivering goods directly to residences or businesses;



- Plumbers, electricians, and other service providers who provide services necessary to maintain the habitability, sanitation, or operations of residences or essential businesses; and
- Other businesses listed in Section 8.a of the Order.
- **Outdoor Businesses.** Outdoor Businesses are those that normally operated primarily outdoors before March 16, 2020, when the County Health Officer issued the first shelter in place order, and where social distancing of at least six feet can be maintained between all people. These include outdoor retail businesses like nurseries, outdoor service providers like landscapers, and agricultural operations. Outdoor businesses do not include outdoor restaurants, cafes, or bars.
- **Additional Businesses.** In May 2020 amendments to the Order, the Health Officer added a new category of businesses that are allowed to reopen—"Additional Businesses." So long as the COVID-19 indicators continue to improve and the Health Officer determines that the situation supports more activity, more businesses will be added to this list over time, based on the health-related risk of those businesses and with appropriate new safety precautions, as part of the City's economic recovery.

The complete list of Additional Businesses that are allowed to operate is included in Appendix C-1 of the Order. Additional Businesses currently include:

- Retail stores, including indoor malls with food courts (**at capacity limits**) (**as of November 14, 2020, indoor food courts are SUSPENDED from operation**);
- Low-contact retail services (like dog grooming and shoe or electronics repair) (**at capacity limits**);
- Businesses that manufacture the goods sold at retail stores;
- Businesses that provide warehousing and logistical support to retail stores;
- Dining (both indoor with capacity limits and outdoor) (**as of November 14, 2020, indoor dining is SUSPENDED from operation**);
- Streaming or broadcasting from entertainment venues (an approved plan may be required);
- Outdoor fitness classes (with capacity limits);
- Outdoor gyms (with capacity limits);
- Indoor gyms and fitness facilities (with capacity limits) (**as of November 29, 2020, indoor gyms are SUSPENDED from operation**);
- Outdoor pools;



- Childcare centers, youth programs, higher education and adult education/vocational training;
- Indoor household services (like house cleaners or cooks);
- Businesses that rent equipment for outdoor activities (with capacity limits);
- Professional sports team practices (with an approved plan);
- Indoor and outdoor museums, aquariums, and zoos (**as of December 7, 2020, indoor museums and zoos SUSPENDED from operation**);
- Outdoor family entertainment centers including outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skate parks, outdoor roller and ice skating, outdoor laser tag, outdoor paintball, batting cages, kart racing, and miniature golf (standalone amusement rides, such as Ferris wheels, train rides, carousels, and rollercoasters remain prohibited) (**as of December 7, 2020, family entertainment centers are SUSPENDED from operation**);
- Lodging facilities for leisure travel (with restrictions);
- Open-air boat operations;
- Open-air tour bus operations;
- Outdoor and indoor personal care services;
- Outdoor/drive-in movies with capacity limits; and
- Indoor movie theaters (with capacity limits and other restrictions) (**as of November 29, 2020, indoor movie theaters are SUSPENDED from operation**).
- Allowed Activities. People may leave their residence to work for or access any business that is allowed to operate under the Order. People may also engage in Essential Activities, Outdoor Activities, and Additional activities as defined in the Order.
 - Essential Activities are defined in Section 8.h of the Order, and include:
 - Activities necessary to care for themselves, a family member, or a pet;
 - Attending a funeral (outdoors only for now); and
 - Moving residences.
 - Outdoor Activities, which are addressed in Section 8.i of the Order, include outdoor recreation that does not encourage gathering or contain high-touch equipment—e.g., walking, hiking, bicycling, and running. People engaged in outdoor activities must follow any restrictions that either state or local authorities impose.



- *Additional Activities*. The Health Officer added categories of activities that are allowed to resume—"Additional Activities." So long as the COVID-19 indicators continue to improve and the Health Officer determines that the situation supports more activity, more permitted activities will be phased in over time based on their health-related risks and with appropriate new safety precautions.

The complete list of Additional Activities is included in Appendix C-2 of the Order. Additional Activities currently include:

- Small outdoor gatherings (with capacity limits);
- Drive-in gatherings with capacity limits (drive-in movies only; live performances suspended);
- Religious services and ceremonies (with capacity limits indoors);
- Political protests (with capacity limits indoors);
- Outdoor museums, outdoor historical sites, and public gardens (e.g., the Botanical Gardens);
- Golf, outdoor tennis and pickleball (with capacity limits);
- Outdoor non-contact recreational and athletic activities (with capacity limits);
- Outdoor public playgrounds (with capacity restrictions); and
- Dog parks.

All of these businesses and activities are subject to safety precautions as provided in the Order and relevant directives.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/18/2020, 5/22/2020, 6/1/2020, 6/15/2020, 7/13/2020, 8/18/2020, 9/17/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020, 12/8/2020, 12/16/2020, 2/1/2021)

Why aren't more businesses allowed to open?

The County's re-openings and rollbacks proceed in a measured way, based on local health indicators and available data and science, and are guided largely by the restrictions that apply to the Bay Area region as a whole. Lifting too many restrictions too soon could easily lead to a further surge in cases and result in avoidable hospitalizations and deaths, and it may also lead to longer-term economic harms.

Because local indicators (including case rates and hospitalizations) have worsened over the past few weeks, and particularly in light of the surge in virus transmission in parts of California and most of the rest of the country, the Health Officer is proceeding with caution by again pausing and, in some cases rolling back, most additional businesses and activities.



(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 5/18/2020, 6/1/2020, 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020)

Will there be more changes to the Order?

The Health Officer will consider easing or expanding restrictions based on health considerations including progress we collectively achieve on a number of key local indicators described in the Order and referred to as the COVID-19 Indicators

The Health Officer will continually review whether modifications to the Order are warranted based on (1) progress on the COVID-19 Indicators; (2) developments in epidemiological and diagnostic methods for tracing, diagnosing, treating, or testing for COVID-19; and (3) scientific understanding of the transmission dynamics and clinical impact of COVID-19.

Information about San Francisco's status under the COVID-19 Indicators is available on the City's website at <https://data.sfgov.org/stories/s/Key-Health-Indicators-on-Containing-COVID-19/epem-wyzb>.

Information about San Francisco's current Plan for Reopening Businesses can be found at: <https://sf.gov/step-by-step/reopening-san-francisco>

(Amended 7/13/2020; 9/17/2020)

How long does the Order last?

The Stay-Safer-At-Home Order will remain in effect until it is extended, rescinded, superseded or amended in writing by the Health Officer. The Health Officer will continually monitor the COVID-19 indicators to determine whether any changes are needed, including allowing more businesses and activities in a planned, incremental way over time, or restricting businesses and activities if need be due to a surge in COVID-19 cases or an adverse change in the COVID-19 indicators. And the Health Officer will ultimately determine when health conditions support terminating the order; while it is anticipated that more business and other activity will be allowed over time, termination of the order is not anticipated for many months.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/18/2020, 5/22/2020, 6/1/2020, 6/15/2020, 2/1/2021)

Is this mandatory or is it just guidance?

It is mandatory. This Order is a legal Order issued under the authority of California law. You are required to comply, and it is a crime (a misdemeanor) not to follow the Order.

Are the responses to these FAQs binding or just guidance?

Answers in the FAQs are a binding, legal interpretation of the Health Order and directives. In the event of any inconsistency between any part of these FAQs and the legal text of the Order or directives, the legal text controls.



I heard that there is a statewide shelter-in-place order. Do I still need to comply with San Francisco's Order?

Yes. In addition to the statewide order, the City Health Officer's Order remains in effect. All residents must comply with the restrictions in both orders. If the restrictions in the two orders are different, you must comply with the stricter of the two orders.

What if I am homeless?

Persons experiencing homelessness are exempt from the Order's requirement that they remain in their residence and its prohibition against all travel other than essential travel. But individuals staying in homeless shelters should stay there, and all shelter guests should wash hands frequently, and practice social distancing. Unsheltered people living in public spaces, tents, in vehicles, or otherwise unsheltered, should use the City's public restrooms and newly expanded hand-washing stations frequently, and should also practice social distancing. The Order also urges the City to keep 12x12-foot spacing around tents and only one person per tent. The order urges the City to provide shelter to people experiencing homelessness, and the City has [put in a place a program that rents hotel](#) rooms to house people affected by the pandemic. Additional resources for persons experiencing homelessness can be found [here](#). Up-to-date information on the number of people provided emergency, temporary housing and shelter options because of the coronavirus can be found [here](#).

(Amended 4/30/2020, 9/17/2020, 12/8/2020)

How do I report a business or organization that might be violating the Order and endangering the public or its employees?

As the City re-opens, businesses are adapting and engaging in new ways of serving the public. But all business must still comply with the Health Officer's orders. Before calling the City, check the City's re-opening plan to see what is permitted. An overview of the reopening plan is available [here](#).

If you see activity that is not allowed, then you may call 311. Your complaint will be referred to the appropriate City agency for investigation and enforcement. When you call, help us by providing the name and address of the business, and do your best to describe exactly what you observed and when.



(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 6/15/2020, 6/17/2020, 6/18/2020)

How do I report individuals whose activity appears to be violating the health orders?

It is best to call police non-emergency dispatch at 415-553-0123 (but if you forget that number, just call 311). You should not confront those individuals and attempt to enforce the order yourself.

(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 6/1/2020, 6/15/2020, 6/18/2020)

DAILY ACTIVITIES

What restrictions and requirements does the Order impose on my daily activities?

Under the Order, all people should stay home as much as possible to prevent the spread of COVID-19. You may leave your residence to engage in any business or activity allowed under the Order, but whenever you go out, you must: (1) comply with the social distancing requirements—including the requirement to maintain at least six feet of physical distance from people outside of your household; (2) wear a face covering as required in the Face Covering Order, unless expressly exempted from the requirement in that order; and (3) avoid gatherings of any size with people from other households except as expressly allowed Appendix C-2 of the Order.

If you have a fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, or other COVID-19 symptoms that are not explained by another known condition, you may have COVID-19 and must avoid all interactions with people outside your household. If you live in the City and have any COVID-19 symptoms, you can schedule a free COVID-19 test at <https://sf.gov/find-out-how-get-tested-coronavirus>.

(Added 7/13/2020)

What if I am older? Or have an underlying medical condition? Are there different requirements or restrictions for me?

The requirements and restrictions are the same for everyone, but older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions—including chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant, obesity, serious heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies), sickle cell disease, and diabetes—are strongly urged to stay home except to access critical necessities such as food, and to seek or provide medical care or Essential Governmental Functions.

Individuals with other medical conditions might be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and are encouraged to minimize activities and interactions with people outside their Household to the extent practicable. The most up to date information about who is at greatest risk of severe illness can be found at



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>.

(Added 7/13/2020)

Can I still get my mail and deliveries?

Yes. Mail and delivery services may continue to operate under the Order.

Can I still order the things I need online from businesses and have them delivered to my home?

Yes. The Order allows you to go online, purchase items, and have them delivered to your home.

Am I allowed to go to a mail drop off/post office to mail packages?

Yes. Businesses that provide mailing and shipping services are essential businesses within the meaning of the Order, and travel to essential businesses is permitted under the Order. But individuals are urged to delay all non-essential shipping and must comply with social distancing requirements during any permitted outings.

(Added 4/2/2020)

Can I go out to do laundry or to have my laundry done?

Yes.

Can I go to the bank?

Yes, you can go to the bank. But individuals are urged to minimize unnecessary trips and must comply with social distancing requirements during any permitted outings.

(Added 4/2/2020)

I need to take out a loan or send cash—what kinds of financial institutions are allowed to be open?

In addition to banks and credit unions, money remittance services, financing services at pawn shops, check cashing services, money lenders, and similar financial institutions can operate. For businesses that mix a financial service component with a retail or other component, only the financial service can be open.

(Added 4/29/2020)

Should I stock up on food, necessities like toilet paper, and on medicines?

No. You will continue to be able to purchase these items. Stores selling necessary items like grocery stores, pharmacies, and hardware stores will stay open. Please continue to buy normal quantities of these items on the same schedule you normally follow. This will ensure that there is enough for everyone.



**Does this order disrupt the fuel supply chain? Should I be stocking up on fuel?
What about other essential supply chains, such as food?**

The Order does not disrupt California's fuel supply and fuel providers are open for business, including:

- Refineries
- Pipeline operators
- Distribution terminals
- Tanker trucks
- Fuel wholesalers

In addition, the Order does not disrupt California's food or hardware supply, and grocery and hardware stores are open for business.

(Added 4/2/2020)

What if I can't get out of the house? How can I get supplies and food?

Please contact friends, family, or others you know who can provide support. They are allowed to pick up the items you need. You can also order food and other supplies and have them delivered to your home.

Can I attend an outdoor political protest or work at a campaign office?

Yes, outdoor political protests are allowed with safety modifications including wearing face coverings and maintaining social distancing between different households. Organizers and participants must follow the health and safety requirements in Directive 2020-19, including any amendments to the Directive. Although outdoor activities remain safer, indoor political protests are permitted at 25% capacity with face coverings and social distancing required at all times.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 10/14/2020, 2/1/2021, 2/10/2021)

I need to vote in person at a consulate for an election in another country. Can I do this?

Yes, voting is an essential activity and is allowed under the Health Order with safety precautions, including social distancing and face coverings. If you can do so, it remains safer from a health perspective to vote by mail rather than in person. If you must travel to San Francisco from outside of the Bay Area in order to vote, you may be subject to a mandatory quarantine. Please review the [travel quarantine order](#) for more details.

(Added 2/1/2021)



Can I leave home to go to my church, synagogue, mosque, or other house of worship?

For your safety as well as the safety of your fellow worshippers, we need to help each other fight the spread of COVID-19 by staying at home as much as possible.

Places of worship are encouraged to continue offering remote access to services, such as by emails, video streaming, or teleconference. While it is better from a health perspective for leaders of congregations to live stream services from their homes, they can live stream services from within their place of worship so long as: (1) the live stream is limited to the fewest number of personnel needed for the live stream of the service (up to a maximum of 12 people) and (2) they comply with all social distancing and sanitation requirements.

Places of worship may hold services outdoors with safety modifications, including wearing face coverings and maintaining social distancing between different households.

Although outdoor options remain safer, places of worship may also offer religious services and cultural ceremonies such as wedding ceremonies and funerals inside at 25% capacity, subject to safety precautions. Places of worship offering indoor services and ceremonies must comply with the requirements of Directive No. 2020-34. Indoor wedding receptions and other similar gatherings remain prohibited at this time.

Seniors and other people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems – and those who live with seniors and people with such conditions- are strongly urged to defer attending indoor religious gatherings at this time and to find safer alternatives to practice their faith, such as participating in outdoor services or remote streaming of services. Houses of worship are also strongly urged to continue supporting options people to participate in services without engaging in in-person attendance.

If a place of worship livestreams a service or ceremony while others are present, the number of personnel needed to livestream (up to a maximum of 12 people) must be included in the capacity limit.

(Amended 4/30/2020; 6/15/2020; 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020, 12/8/2020, 2/1/2021, 2/10/2021)

Can I sing, chant, or shout during an outdoor religious service or political protest?

You should avoid singing, chanting, or shouting during a gathering because of the potential for increasing airborne particulates. One person at a time is permitted to sing, chant, or shout during an outdoor religious service or political protest, but only if they wear a face covering at all times and remain at least 12-feet from anyone else.

(Added 9/17/2020)



Can I use a wind instrument during an outdoor religious service or political protest?

Use of wind instruments at gatherings is discouraged because of the potential for increasing airborne particulates. If you use a wind instrument during an outdoor religious service or political protest, only one person may do so at a time, they must remain at least 12-feet from anyone else and the instrument's bells/opening where the sound exists must be covered with a mask or other fabric. Additional guidance on the use of wind instruments is available at: <https://www.sfcddcp.org/infectious-diseases-a-to-z/coronavirus-2019-novel-coronavirus/>

(Added 9/17/2020)

Can I take communion or participate in another similar religious practice at an outdoor religious service?

Yes. Participants are strongly discouraged from sharing objects with people who are not part of their household. If an object of critical importance is shared, you must take all precautions, such as cleaning and sanitizing objects and/or the hands of participants who share the object. Consider offering communion in the hand instead of on the tongue, providing pre-packaged communion items on chairs prior to the service, or similar measures.

(Added 9/17/2020)

Can I go to a bar, nightclub, or live theater performance?

Generally, no. Indoor live entertainment venues are not allowed to operate except to film, stream, or otherwise broadcast small scale events so long as the venue remains closed to the public and follows other safety requirements.

Some bars may be allowed to serve alcoholic beverages outdoors, if the bar has permitted space, and serves a bona fide meal with the alcoholic beverage. The bar must still comply with all ABC licensing requirements, including a COVID-19 Temporary Catering Authorization. More information on the ABC's COVID-19 Temporary Catering Authorization is available [here](#).

[Outdoor drive-in gatherings may also allow some live performances, such as lectures and theatrical, musical, or other arts performances, by up to six people and subject to face coverings, social distancing requirements, and other safety protocols.] **(Effective December 7, 2020, live performances at drive-in gatherings are SUSPENDED from operation).**

(Amended 6/15/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020, 12/8/2020)

Can I go to a movie theater?

No.



[Yes. As of October 8, 2020, indoor movie theaters were permitted to reopen with capacity limits. No concessions may be sold at this time and theaters must comply with Health Officer Directive 2020-35.] **(Effective November 29, 2020, all indoor movie theaters are SUSPENDED from operation).**

(Added 10/14/2020; Amended 12/8/2020)

Can I host or attend an outdoor drive-in movie? What about a concert or other live performance that allows participants to remain in their cars?

Outdoor drive-in movies and other drive-in gatherings are permitted as described in Directive 2020-28 and any applicable legal or permitting requirements. Some requirements include limiting drive-in gatherings to 100 vehicles or less, ensuring patrons remain in their vehicles at all times except to use the restroom, and ensuring compliance with Face Covering requirements. Gatherings must be designed to ensure that at least six feet of physical distance can be maintained between vehicles, patrons, and employees at all times. Food and non-alcoholic beverage concessions may be sold, but must be served at each vehicle. A single person, such as a speaker or emcee, may speak if they are wearing a Face Covering at all times and maintain 12 feet of physical space from others while speaking.

Effective December 7, 2020, live performances at drive-in gatherings are SUSPENDED. [Live group performances of up to six people are also permitted at drive-in gatherings, subject to face covering, social distancing requirements, and other safety protocols. One performer at a time may sing, chant, shout, or play a wind or brass instrument as long as that person is at least 12 feet away from anyone else while doing so and is wearing a face covering or using a covering over the open end of the instrument.]

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 11/24/2020, 2/1/2021)

Can I go to a restaurant, café, coffee or tea shop, ice cream shop, or other foodservice location?

Yes. You can go to any of these locations for takeout, and outdoor dining. [Restaurants may open for indoor dining at 25% of the indoor dining establishment's maximum occupancy, or 100 people, whichever is less] **(as of November 14, 2020, indoor dining is SUSPENDED from operation).** Restaurants and other food service establishments must follow the applicable legal requirements in directive 2020-16, and are strongly encouraged to continue offering food pickup and delivery and outside dining, all of which remain safer options than indoor activities.

(Amended 6/15/2020; 10/14/2020, 2/1/2021)



Are indoor or outdoor smoking or hookah lounges permitted to operate?

No, smoking and hookah lounges are not permitted to offer service to customers at this time. They are, however, allowed to act like a store and make retail sales.

Can I walk my dog?

Yes, but be sure that you distance yourself at least six feet from all others who are not part of your household. Also note that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released guidance advising that you should treat pets as you would your human family members—do not let pets interact with people or animals outside the household. If a person inside your household becomes sick, isolate that person from everyone else, including pets.

(Amended 4/29/2020; Amended 6/1/2020)

I don't cook—how can I purchase meals?

You can obtain meals via delivery, carryout and outdoor and indoor dining. **(As of November 14, 2020, indoor dining has been SUSPENDED from operation.)** You can also purchase prepared foods at grocery stores, supermarkets, certified farmers' markets, convenience stores, and other such food retailers.

(Amended 6/15/2020; 10/14/2020)

How can I access free or reduced-price meals for myself or my family?

Schools, soup kitchens, food banks, and other entities that provide free or reduced priced food or meals to the public are encouraged to continue providing these services. You must pick up and take away the food or have it brought to you. Do not eat on the premises. City resources for food needs can be found [here](#).

Can I carry out a court-ordered visit with my kids?

Yes. The Order exempts travel by court order or law enforcement.

Can common recreational spaces in apartment buildings (like gyms and roof decks) stay open?

For apartment dwellers, the Order's shelter-in-place requirements for the "household or living unit" means their own apartment unit, not the building or complex as a whole.

If the gym in your apartment building is unattended by staff at any time during hours of operation, it must remain closed at this time. *[Exercising indoors in spaces shared or accessible by others increases the risk of community transmission of the virus. Indoor gyms may operate if they meet strict conditions that include daily screening of patrons, enhanced personal and equipment sanitation measures, enhanced ventilation requirements, and strict rules on face covering, distancing and capacity limits. Gyms without full time staff cannot meet these critical risk-reduction standards, and must stay*



*closed. Other indoor public recreational spaces that contain high-touch equipment or encourage gathering must remain closed.] (Effective November 29, 2020, indoor gyms are **SUSPENDED** from operation).*

Outdoor common recreational spaces, like roof decks, pools, outdoor fitness facilities, dog relief areas, and shared yards may open subject to the following conditions:

- Shared equipment or furniture such as barbecue grills, tables, or chairs must be off-limits, with signage and with physical barriers as appropriate;
- Everybody using the space must wear a face covering;
- Everybody using the space must strictly comply with social distancing requirements including staying at least six feet away from other people; and
- Shared outdoor pools and hot tubs must comply with the requirements of Directive 2020-24.
- Shared outdoor fitness facilities must strictly comply with the requirements of Directive 2020-27, including cleaning and sanitization protocols.

Signage must be posted reminding people of the social distancing and face covering requirements.

(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 5/12/2020, 6/15/2020, 9/17/2020)

What about common areas in apartments, like shared laundry rooms, that residents need to access for sanitation needs?

Apartment residents should be allowed to access facilities that are required for household cleaning and sanitation needs. Owners of apartment buildings must enhance cleaning of high-touch surfaces in these areas, and residents must observe all social distancing requirements in the Order, including maintaining at least six feet of separation from other people who are not part of their own household; washing their hands frequently for at least 20 seconds before and after use of the facilities (or using hand sanitizer); coughing or sneezing into a tissue or sleeve (not their hands); wearing a face covering when out in public; and avoiding using the laundry facility if they are sick.

(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 4/29/2020)



FACE COVERINGS

(Section added 4/20/2020; Amended to include “Outside Businesses” on 4/30/2020; Amended to include “Additional Businesses” on 5/18/2020; Amended 5/28/2020, 8/3/2020)

What is a face covering and why do I have to wear one?

A face covering is a cloth that covers the nose and mouth. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen.

Cloth face coverings help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others. Wearing a cloth face covering will help protect people around you, including those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and workers who frequently come into close contact with other people (e.g., in stores and other establishments). Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings. My face covering protects you and your face covering protects me. If we all wear them consistently, we can slow the spread of the virus together.

(Added 7/13/2020)

What if I can't afford to buy a face covering or can't find one for sale?

You can use many household goods, including a scarf or a bandana, to make a face covering. Really all you need is a t-shirt or fabric and two rubber bands. No sewing required. Here's a how-to video that shows you how to make one:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

How do I clean a face covering?

Normally running a non-disposable face covering through the laundry will work. Follow any care instructions that came with the face covering. More information can be found online here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

The Face Covering Order says masks with one-way valves cannot be used. Why not?

The purpose of requiring Face Coverings be worn in public is to protect others from particles that you exhale when you breathe, talk, cough, or sneeze. One-way valves, which typically look like a raised plastic disk about the size of a quarter on the front or side of the mask, put other people at risk because they allow easy flow of your breath out of the mask when you exhale. This results in an easy route for airborne droplets to be exhaled, potentially even focusing them in a jet directed at someone nearby, and the purpose of the face covering is to limit droplets that you expel. Masks with one-way valves may also give others around you a false sense of security because they appear



(but are not) safer than other types of masks. Because one-way valve masks do not protect others, they are not permitted.

(Amended 5/28/2020)

Why can't I just cover the one-way valve with tape?

One-way valves can be designed differently and are difficult or impossible to fully seal. Tape may not adequately cover the external vents, making it difficult for others to know if the valve poses a risk to them.

(Added 5/28/2020)

When do I have to wear a Face Covering?

With a few limited exceptions, you must wear a Face Covering whenever you are away from home – whether outdoor or indoors – and are within six feet of anyone outside of your own household. You must carry a Face Covering with you at all times and must start putting it on with enough time so that you are properly wearing your Face Covering by the time you are within six feet of others. For example, when you are walking towards another person on the sidewalk, you should start putting on your Face Covering when you are about 30 feet (or two car lengths) from the other person.

(Added 8/3/2020)

Do I have to wear a Face Covering if I am sitting or just standing outside with members of my household?

If you are outdoors alone or with members of your own household and are maintaining at least six feet between you and others from outside your household at all times, you do not need to wear a Face Covering as long as you have one readily available. But if you are stationary or moving in a space where distances between people change frequently – like a popular park or busy side walk – you must wear a Face Covering. For example, if you are picnicking in a public park on a blanket but others frequently pass within six feet of your space, you must wear a Face Covering at all times unless eating or drinking.

You do not need to wear a Face Covering if you are walking or doing other outdoor activities and nobody else (other than members of your own household) is within six feet. But you must be prepared to put on your Face Covering in enough time so that you are wearing it before you come within six feet of others. For example, if you are alone on an empty sidewalk or trail, you do not need to wear a Face Covering, but you must carry an easily-accessible Face Covering and must finish putting it on before you are six feet from others.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)



Why do I need to wear a Face Covering at the beach or park – I see a lot of other people who aren't wearing them?

San Francisco parks and beaches are often crowded, especially during the warm summer and fall months. The space between you and others outside of your household at a busy park or beach is likely to change quickly and without warning as people walk, run, or play nearby. Even if others around you are not wearing a Face Covering, it is important to wear one when you cannot guarantee at least six feet of distance at all times between you and others from outside of your household. Wearing a Face Covering can also help to encourage others to do so. As a community, we are all in this together, and the more of us who wear Face Coverings responsibly, the faster we can reopen.

(Added 8/18/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering if I am eating or drinking outside?

As long as you in a group of six or fewer people and your group is at least six feet away from others, you may remove your Face Covering only while you are eating or drinking outside. You should put your Face Covering back on, though, as soon as you are done eating or drinking, including when talking between courses or before or after the meal. *[Also, if you are receiving food service at a restaurant or bar, you need to put your Face Covering on when the server approaches the table to take your order or clear the table.]* **(Effective December 7, 2020, indoor and outdoor dining are SUSPENDED from operation).**

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 6/15/2020, 7/13/2020, 8/3/2020)

Does the City make Face Coverings available?

The City does not provide Face Coverings to members of the public.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 7/13/2020)

Can I use an N95 mask?

Yes, except that you may not use N95 masks that have a one-way valve unless you also wear a cloth or other non-valve Face Covering that covers entirely the mask containing the one-way valve. These same rules apply to KN95 masks. One-way valves, which typically look like a raised plastic disk about the size of a quarter on the front or side of the mask, put other people at risk because they allow easy flow of your breath out of the mask when you exhale. This results in an easy route for airborne droplets to be exhaled, potentially even focusing them in a jet directed at someone nearby, and the purpose of the face covering is to limit droplets that you expel. Masks with one-way valves may also give others around you a false sense of security because they appear (but are not) safer than other types of masks.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/18/2020)



Why are children younger than two years old not allowed to wear a Face Covering?

In accordance with recent California Department of Public Health and CDC guidance, children younger than two years old cannot safely use a face covering. There could be a risk of suffocation for children so young.

(Amended 7/13/2020, 8/3/2020)

Is a child between two and nine years old required to wear a face covering?

Children from two to nine years are required to wear a face covering to the greatest extent feasible. For example, if after reasonable attempts, a three-year-old refuses to keep a Face Covering on for longer than a few moments, they are not required to wear one. Parents and caregivers of young children who are unable to wear Face Coverings should minimize bringing them into settings with others. Parents and caregivers should not be refused any essential service based on a young child's inability to wear a Face Covering.

Parents and caregivers must supervise use of a face covering by children in this range to ensure safety and avoid misuse. Supervision may look different based on the age and maturity of the child. For some children, having a discussion may be sufficient. For younger children, parents and caretakers should be present during use by the child. Parents and caregivers should use their judgement.

(Amended 7/13/2020, 8/3/2020)

I operate an Essential Business, Outdoor Business, Additional Business, or another business or facility that is permitted by the stay safer at home order to operate. What am I required to do under the Face Covering Order?

Generally, you must ensure that your employees and other staff wear a face covering in any area when working with the public or in areas where customers or the public may be present, even if there are no customers or members of the public present at the time. This is to avoid the spreading of respiratory droplets in areas where customers or the public may be at some point. Employees also must wear masks if co-workers are nearby or when they are in a common area, such as a hallway, stairway, elevator, break room, or parking facility. Face Coverings must be worn in common areas even when you are alone. Employees who share office space or equipment, such as tools or computers, must also wear a Face Covering even when others are not present.

You are also required to post a sign at entrances notifying people that they are not permitted to wait in line or to enter without a face covering and that they will not be served if they are not wearing a face covering. You should also not serve anyone over the age of nine who is not wearing a face covering unless they are excused by the Face Covering Order from wearing a face covering.

If someone is exempt from the face covering requirement, it is important for you to provide services to them, and you may be able to find ways to reduce the risk, such as



meeting with them outside the store or dealing with them from a distance of more than six feet.

(Amended 8/3/2020)

What are the reasons that someone is allowed not to wear a face covering in an Essential Business, Outdoor Business, Additional Business, or when around other people who are not members of their own household?

The following are exceptions to the requirements for wearing a face covering when in essential businesses or outdoor businesses or when other people are around:

- A child nine years old or younger;
- A medical professional has advised that wearing a face covering and may pose a risk to the person's health, and they have documentation of that advice (though as a matter of medical privacy the documentation does not need to reveal the underlying health condition), but anyone exempted from wearing a face covering must still wear an alternative face covering such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge unless a medical professional has also documented they are unable to wear an alternative covering;
- Wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines;
- The person has trouble breathing;
- The person is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance;
- The person has a physical disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering;
- If the person is deaf and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication, the person should wear an alternative face covering (such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom) or can remove their face covering while signing.

(Amended 8/3/2020)

What if my Face Covering gets wet from my sweat or from breathing through it?

You can continue to wear your Face Covering even if it gets wet. Face Coverings help protect others by catching the droplets you expel from your mouth when you breathe, talk, cough or sneeze. Even wet Face Coverings can catch those droplets.

(Added 5/28/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering if I am exercising alone outdoors?

If you are exercising outdoors, have a Face Covering visible and ready to use. If nobody is within six feet of you at all times, then you do not need to wear a Face Covering. But you must start putting on your Face Covering with enough lead time so that you are properly wearing it before you come within six feet of anyone else. When walking



towards another person, you should start putting on your Face Covering when you are about 30 feet (or two car lengths) from them. If you are jogging in an area where you frequently pass within six feet of others, you must wear your Face Covering at all times.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering if I am biking, running, or hiking with someone from my household?

No. But even if you are spending time outside primarily with members of your own household, you are likely to see other people as well. You must therefore have a Face Covering readily available and put your Face Covering on if you come within six feet of anyone else. **(Effective December 7, 2020, gatherings among people in more than one household, even outside, are prohibited).**

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

What if a one-way valve mask helps me when I'm running?

One-way valves, which typically look like a raised plastic disk about the size of a quarter on the front or side of the mask, put other people at risk because they allow easy flow of your breath out of the mask when you exhale. This results in an easy route for airborne droplets to be exhaled, potentially even focusing them in a jet directed at someone nearby, and the purpose of the face covering is to limit droplets that you expel. Masks with one-way valves may also give others around you a false sense of security because they appear (but are not) safer than other types of masks. Because one-way valve masks do not protect others, they are not permitted unless you wear a separate non-valve mask over the mask with a one-way valve. You may also use a looser fitting option like a gaiter or bandana.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/18/2020)

I run an essential business, additional business, or outdoor business. How do I deal with children who are not wearing a face covering?

Children between two and nine years old are required to wear a Face Covering to the extent feasible, but they also should not jeopardize social distancing for others in the area. You may ask a parent or caregiver if they can attempt to have the child wear a Face Covering. If the child is putting other customers or the public at risk through their conduct, you can ask the parent or caregiver to prevent that behavior. You may warn them that they may be told to leave if they cannot prevent the misconduct, but parents or caregivers must not be denied access to essential services because their young child is not wearing a Face Covering

(Added 5/28/2020; updated 6/15/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

Can I use a plastic Halloween mask for myself or my child as a face covering?

No. A face covering should conform with the nose and mouth fairly well, and a rigid plastic mask would not do this.



(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 2/10/2021)

Am I required to wear a face covering when I'm driving my car?

No, so long as you are the only person in your car or you are with members of your own household and nobody else. If you operate a taxi, ride-share vehicle, or private town car, you must always wear a face covering in that vehicle regardless of whether someone else is in the vehicle to avoid breathing droplets that could contaminate areas where guests or customers will sit and touch.

(Added 5/28/2020)

Am I required to wear a face covering on public transit and while waiting for public transit?

Yes. A face covering is required of anyone over nine years old while waiting for or on public transit, including the operator of the vehicle.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering when I am in common areas in my apartment building?

Yes. Face Coverings must be worn when you are in or walking through all common areas such as lobbies, common rooms, laundry facilities, food preparation areas, bathrooms, hallways, elevators, and stairwells.

(Added 8/3/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering when I am in common areas at work?

Yes. Face Coverings must be worn when you are in or walking through common areas at the workplace, such as hallways, stairways, elevators, break rooms, and parking facilities. They are also required in shared offices when someone else will use the same space or same equipment on different days.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

Can I remove my Face Covering to eat while at work?

If you must eat indoors at work, you may remove your Face Covering to eat or drink, but only if nobody else from outside your household is within six feet of you. You should avoid eating indoors at work to the greatest extent possible.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020; Amended 8/18/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering when I am in my private office? What about a cubicle?

You do not need to wear a Face Covering if you are alone in a completely enclosed private office that is not shared with others and is not likely to be visited by others without prior warning, such as an office with floor-to-ceiling walls and a closed door. If



another person enters the area, both of you must immediately put on a Face Covering during the interaction. You must wear a Face Covering while in workspaces that are not completely enclosed, such as cubicles or other open working arrangements.

(Added 5/28/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering at work if someone else uses my workspace on another shift or during a different day of the week?

Yes. You must wear a face covering at work even if you are working alone if you are in a space where others are regularly present. For example, if you share your office or desk with others on an alternating schedule or if you share equipment, such as tools or computers, you must wear a Face Covering while in the office due to the risk of contaminating surfaces that others will soon touch.

(Added 5/28/2020)

Am I required to wear a face covering at home?

No. The Face Covering Order does not require you to wear a face covering at home, but if you or someone at home is sick, a face covering can be used to reduce exposure. You should contact your healthcare provider if you or someone in your home is sick. And if you live with someone who is at higher risk from the virus, you may decide you want to wear a face covering at home to protect that person. A Face Covering must also be worn by someone like a plumber, teacher, care assistant visits your home. You should wear a Face Covering when these visitors are in your home and you should also open windows if you can to increase ventilation.

(Amended 8/3/2020)

I'm going to my doctor or health care provider for an appointment. Am I required to wear a face covering?

Yes. You should wear a face covering when in an environment with other people you do not live with. But your health care provider can allow you to remove the face covering as appropriate in the context for purposes related to your care.

I am unable to wear a Face Covering due to a health condition or physical disability, or because I rely on my mouth and face to help communicate (such as with American Sign Language). Am I required to wear a face covering?

Generally, no. The Face Covering Order contains exceptions for health conditions or for those with difficulty breathing. For someone with a long-term condition that makes it impossible to wear a face covering, you must consult with your healthcare provider and obtain a written exemption to the Face Covering requirements. The written exemption must also include an exemption from wearing an alternative face covering (such as a face shield with drape) if you are unable to wear an alternative face covering. The written exemption does not need to include any description of your medical condition, but should include the contact information and license information of the signing medical professional. Your medical professional should also provide you advice on how to best



protect yourself and others when in public. People exempted from wearing Face Coverings should anticipate accessing some services—particularly indoor services—with accommodations (for example, engaging in curbside pickup of groceries).

People who rely on the visibility of their mouth to help communicate (such as with American Sign Language), may wear a Face Covering that allows their mouth to be seen (such as a transparent mask), wear an alternative face covering, or remove their Face Covering when needed for communicating.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

Doesn't the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) say I don't have to wear a Face Covering if wearing one is uncomfortable or is difficult due to a health condition?

No. The ADA requires reasonable accommodations in many settings, but it does not provide a blanket exemption. Local laws may impose legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation, and the Face Covering Order contains alternatives and exemptions with documentation for health-related concerns. Go to www.ada.gov for more details.

(Added 8/3/2020)

Can I remove my Face Covering if I am alone in a waiting room at my doctor's office?

No. Even if you are alone in a waiting room, you must wear your Face Covering at all times.

(Added 8/18/2020)

Do I need to wear a Face Covering if I'm working out at an outdoor fitness facility or indoors at the gym?

Yes, face coverings are required at all times while working out at an outdoor fitness facility or indoor gym.

(Added 9/17/2020)

Can I wear a full head covering as a Face Covering? What if it is required by my religion?

The Face Covering Order does not interfere with the right to wear clothing, such as a full head covering, for religious purposes. But full head coverings may not provide the same protection against COVID-19 as a tighter fitting Face Covering. Persons wearing full head coverings are strongly encouraged to also wear an appropriate Face Covering in situations where Face Coverings are required. They can, for example, wear a Face Covering under the head covering. Persons wearing full head coverings or other similar religious garments should not be denied access to businesses or services nor should they be required to prove they are wearing a Face Covering that complies with the Health Officer's Face Covering Order by, for example, removing their head covering.



HEALTHCARE OPERATIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

What should I do if I'm sick? If I or a family member need immediate medical attention, can I leave home to go to the doctor or hospital?

Call 911 or go to an emergency room if you are experiencing a medical emergency. If you are feeling sick, first call your doctor, a nurse hotline, or an urgent care center before going to the hospital. Do not go to the emergency room of a hospital unless you are having an actual emergency. But you can and should seek medical advice if you or a family member is sick. If it is not an emergency, please contact your primary care provider to determine next steps. Many kinds of care, including routine appointments, elective surgeries, and dental care, are allowed subject to certain protections and the ability of the health care provider to safely provide care. Also, you can check online resources to help you assess symptoms if you are worried about whether you or a loved one has COVID-19. You should check <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for more information.

Can I get my prescriptions or other healthcare needs? Can I leave home to go to the pharmacy to get my prescription filled?

Yes. Drug stores and other medical supply stores are allowed and encouraged to operate. When possible, you should have prescription medicines and healthcare supplies delivered to your home.

I have a doctor's appointment next week for routine medical care. Can I go to that appointment?

Probably, yes. On June 16, the Health Officer issued a directive permitting resumption of routine, medical out-patient care. Providers are still encouraged to conduct appointments remotely, where possible. Contact your health care provider in advance to find out if there are any special requirements, and you are required to be screened the day of the visit before you enter the provider's office or location.

(Added 4/2/2020; Amended 5/18/2020, 7/13/2020)

Can our hospital or outpatient surgery center start to perform elective surgeries?

Yes. The Health Officer has issued a directive that permits elective surgeries to occur subject to specific safety protocols to avoid putting the patient or the surgical staff at undue risk.

(Added 5/6/2020; Amended 5/18/2020)

Are businesses that offer Healing Arts and that are licensed by the State of California permitted to open?

Yes, but there are some exceptions. The following types of services remain prohibited at this time: (1) any care that involves in-person singing, yelling, or playing of wind or



brass instruments; or (2) in-person group therapy, with limited exceptions. Healing Arts Practitioners are encouraged to offer services outdoors to the greatest extent possible and must comply with all of the requirements set forth in the relevant industry-specific Health Order directive. **(Effective December 7, 2020, indoor and outdoor personal services, including massage in a non-healthcare setting, are SUSPENDED from operation).**

(Added 5/6/2020; Amended 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020)

Can I still go to my mental health or counseling appointments?

Yes, but, to the extent possible, patients and providers are strongly encouraged to continue the use of phone or videoconference encounters. You should contact your mental health provider or counselor to discuss whether your appointment can be held via phone or videoconference, can be postponed, or should proceed in person. For in-person visits, you must follow all requirements, including being screened the day of the visit before you arrive at your appointment.

(Added 4/2/2020; Amended 7/13/2020)

What mental health resources are available for people experiencing distress?

People who may be experiencing distress or heightened anxiety right now can contact the Peer-Run Warm Line for Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 855-845-7415. Additional resources, including online support, are available [here](#). If you are experiencing an emergency please call 911 immediately.

(Added 4/12/2020)

What should I do if I am experiencing domestic violence?

In an emergency, call 911. If it is not safe to call 911, you can text to 911. Other non-emergency resources include:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- W.O.M.A.N., Inc. Crisis Line: 415-864-4722
- La Casa de las Madres Crisis Line (Adult Line): 1-877-503-1850
- La Casa de las Madres Crisis Line (Teen Line): 1-877-923-0700
- Asian Women's Shelter Crisis Line: 1-877-751-0880
- Saint Vincent de Paul Society—Riley Center Crisis Line: 415-255-0165

Additionally, the San Francisco Police Department's Special Victim's Unit has an on-call team 24/7 and is reachable at 415-553-9225.

(Added 4/12/2020)



What should I do if I am experiencing child abuse or suspect that a child is being abused?

In an emergency, call 911. If it is not safe to call 911, you can text to 911. Also, if you are experiencing abuse or suspect that a child is being abused, you should call the SF Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-856-5553.

Parents in need of support should call the 24-Hour crisis line for parents. The TALK Line (415-441-KIDS) is a crisis and counseling line for parents that is answered by a live person 24 hours a day, every day. It is a program of Safe & Sound and offers compassionate support over the phone to parents and caregivers of children under the age of 18 in the Bay Area. The TALK Line operates round-the-clock and is staffed by trained volunteers who provide support through the numerous challenges found in life and parenting.

(Added 5/18/2020)

Can I still go to my substance abuse treatment groups (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous) or other group counseling sessions?

Yes. But all participants in group counseling services should attend meetings remotely if they are equipped to do so. Groups should make accommodations for remote support to the maximum extent feasible. If remote participation is not feasible or advisable under the circumstances, participation may occur in person provided that there is compliance with the social distancing and ventilation requirements set forth in the Order, including maintaining at least six-foot distance between individuals, wearing a face covering, answering screening questions before entry, and capping group size (limit of 12 indoors and 25 outdoors, including any group leaders) to reduce in-person interactions.

(Revised 11/24/2020)

Can and should I donate blood if I am healthy?

Yes, blood banks, blood donation centers, and blood drives are exempt health care operations. If you are healthy and do not have COVID-19 symptoms, you are encouraged to donate. The need for adequate blood donations from healthy people is critical. The blood center should have screening in place and other protocols for your protection.

Should cafeterias in hospitals be closed?

No. Hospital cafeterias fall within the exemption for healthcare facilities and may remain open. Hospital cafeterias must be structured to ensure six-foot minimum distancing between non-related individuals picking up food from or eating in the facility. Hospital cafeterias should increase cleaning and sanitization to minimize risk of exposure and follow other Social Distancing Requirements specified in the Order to the maximum extent feasible. Cafeterias in all other facilities must follow the requirements in the



Order—specifically, food can be carried out or delivered, but cannot be eaten in the cafeteria. In some settings, like skilled nursing facilities, cafeterias may be closed to anyone other than residents.

I work in a hospital or medical clinic, but I'm not sure I'm essential. Should I continue to work? What if I'm over 60?

Yes. All employees of hospitals, clinics, and other organizations that provide health care, provide services to healthcare organizations, provide needed supplies to health care organizations, or otherwise maintain health care operations of all kinds may continue working.

The Health Order does not advise or encourage health care workers over 60 to stop reporting to work.

What if I am diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus or have been exposed to someone who was?

If you have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, you will need to be isolated to protect those around you. You must follow the instructions in the Health Officer's Isolation Directive, available at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/Blanket-Quarantine-Directive-05.2020.pdf>. If you were exposed to someone who was diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, you must quarantine for the recommended time to not expose others if you happen to have the virus yourself. You are required to follow the instructions in the Health Officer's Quarantine Directive, available at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/Blanket-Quarantine-Directive-05.2020.pdf>. Contact your healthcare provider if you have additional questions, or go to the DPH website at www.sfdph.org.

(Added 4/2/2020; Amended 7/13/2020)

CARETAKING AND EDUCATION

Can I visit loved ones in the hospital, nursing home, skilled nursing facility, or other residential care facility?

While visits through telephone or virtual, like videoconference, are the safest way to stay in touch with someone who is in the hospital or a residential facility, in-person visits are permitted subject to some restrictions.

For hospitals, check online or call to find out about visitation policies before you try to visit. In general, hospital visitation is allowed in limited numbers and subject to restrictions on how to visit safely. For example, hospitals may recommend that a patient designate a small number of visitors, rather than having large numbers of people visit



the hospital over time, to minimize the potential exposure risks for the patient and others at the hospital.

For skilled nursing facilities, residential care facilities for the elderly, adult residential facilities, and residential facilities for the chronically ill, in-person visitation is generally limited to alternative types of visits such as outdoor visits with physical distancing, through-window visits, or vehicle visits where the visitor remains in a vehicle and the resident is nearby but outside the vehicle. You should contact the facility for details about what visitation they allow.

There are also *limited exceptions* for hospitals and other facilities, where “Necessary Visitation” allows in-person, indoor visits when a patient or resident has specific clinical needs, situations when the patient is under 18 years of age need the presence of a support person, or for certain pressing or end-of-life situations. The Hospital or Facility Administrator determines if a visit meets the criteria of “Necessary Visitation.”

In all instances listed above, visits may be temporarily limited by the facility based on safety considerations, including outbreaks of COVID-19 or staffing limitations.

These temporary restrictions are aimed at protecting all patients and residents as well as essential health care staff during this health emergency.

(Amended 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020, 11/24/2020)

Can I leave home to care for my elderly parents or friends who require assistance to care for themselves? Or a friend or family member who has disabilities?

Yes. But be extremely cautious when providing care to vulnerable people and ensure that you protect them and yourself by following social distancing guidelines such as washing hands before and after, using hand sanitizer, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance when possible, wearing a face covering, and coughing or sneezing into a tissue. And don't visit if you are not feeling well.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 7/13/2020)

Are childcare facilities for young children allowed to operate?

Group care facilities for children who are not yet in elementary school – including, for example, licensed childcare centers, daycares, family daycares, and preschools (including cooperative preschools) – can provide care or supervision for children, subject to the following conditions:

1. Childcare Programs must limit group size to 16 people (including children, youth, and caregivers) per room or space, or the number of children allowed by the childcare's license – whichever is lower. (California no longer requires groups to be capped at 10 children in state-licensed childcare programs. So all childcare programs may now have up to 16 people in a group, subject to space constraints and social distancing requirements.)



2. Childcare Program sessions must be at least three weeks long, and childcare programs without set sessions may not enroll children for fewer than three weeks.
3. Childcare Programs must comply with all of the requirements set forth in the relevant industry-specific Health Order directive, including the requirements to have the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any child attending the program sign an acknowledgement of health risks, and to prepare and implement a written health and safety plan to mitigate the risk of virus transmission to the greatest extent feasible.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 4/30/2020, 5/1/2020; 5/4/2020; 5/19/2020, 5/22/2020, 6/15/2020, 7/13/2020, 8/18/2020, 9/17/2020)

Can my childcare program have more than one group or cohort of children?

Yes, but each group or cohort must be kept in a separate room or space. Additional requirements can be found [here](#).

Can a preschool or daycare teacher work with more than one cohort?

Yes, staff who work with children 0-5 years of age may be assigned to up to two cohorts. Programs where staff work with two cohorts must place staff in groups of up to 4 staff members. Everyone in a staff group must work with the same two cohorts. Staff must work only with other staff in their staff group, and can only be in 1 staff group. Additional information may be found in SFDPH's guidance [here](#).

Can summer camps operate?

Summer camps were permitted to operate from June 15 through August 14, 2020. Although there are other childcare programs available during the academic year, no programs are authorized to continue operating as a summer camp. Childcare or other out-of-school time programs must follow the applicable guidance and directives applicable to those programs.

(Added 5/22/2020, Amended 6/15/2020, 9/17/2020)

Are one-week Spring Break camps for children allowed to operate?

No, Spring Break camps for one week will not be allowed this year because they are too short in duration to allow the necessary safety measures.

(Added 2/1/2021)

Are TK-12 schools allowed to open?

TK-6 schools and school districts may open for in-person instruction, but only upon advance written approval by the Health Officer. More information about how to request approval will be available at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/covid-19/schools-education.asp>. Middle and high schools that are already open may continue to operate, but no new schools may open at this time.



(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020, 12/8/2020)

What is the process for obtaining pre-approval to open TK-6 schools?

A district superintendent, private school principal/head of school, or executive director of a charter school can apply for approval from the Health Officer to open a school (TK-12) for in-person instruction. The application must comply with state and local requirements, including:

- Applications must be submitted to the Health Officer at least 14 days before the requested reopening date.
- Before applying for a waiver, the school or district must consult with labor, parent, and community organizations, and publish reopening plans on the school's or district's website.
- Reopening plans must address various topics related to health and safety, including, but not limited to, cleaning/disinfection; face coverings; health screenings for students and staff; healthy hygiene practices; identification and tracing of contacts; physical distancing; staff training and family education; testing of students and staff; and triggers for switching to distance learning.
- Representatives of the Health Officer will do an on-site assessment as part of the process of reviewing applications.

More information about the school reopening process can be found at:
<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/covid-19/schools-education.asp>.

(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020)

Can I enroll my school-aged child in a childcare or educational program during the school year?

Yes. With the exception of schools, educational or recreational institutions that provide care or supervision for school-aged children and youth – including, for example, learning hubs, programs that support and supplement distance learning in schools, school-aged childcare programs, youth sports programs, and afterschool programs – may operate under the following conditions:

1. The out-of-school time youth programs must limit the group size to a maximum of 16 people (including children or youth and caregivers), subject to space constraints and social distancing requirements.
2. The out-of-school time youth program must have a minimum of two staff persons per group.



3. The program must be at least three weeks long, and programs without set sessions may not enroll children for fewer than three weeks.
4. The program must comply with all of the requirements set forth in the relevant industry-specific Health Order directive, including the requirements to have the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any child attending the program sign an acknowledgement of health risks, and to prepare and implement a written health and safety plan to mitigate the risk of virus transmission to the greatest extent feasible.

Additionally, beginning on September 8, 2020, TK-12 schools may operate to provide in-person specialized and targeted support services to vulnerable children and youth. Schools providing specialized targeted support services do not need to obtain a waiver or advance written approval of the Health Officer, but must comply with Directive 2020-26b. Additional information about what qualifies as specialized targeted support services and which students may be served in these specialized programs is available at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/covid-19/schools-education.asp>.

(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020)

Can I enroll my child in more than one out-of-school time program during the same period?

No, a child may only be enrolled in one out-of-school time program at a time. For example, you may not enroll your child in one program that operates on Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays and a separate program with different children that operates on Tuesday and Thursdays.

(Added 9/17/2020)

Can I have someone (e.g., a nanny or a relative) come to my house to provide childcare?

Yes. Home-based care for children is allowed under the Order.

(Amended 7/13/2020)

Can I have a tutor come to my home to work with my child?

Yes. A tutor may come to your home to work with your child, subject to the following conditions:

- Everybody in the home must wear a face covering, unless exempt from the face covering requirement under Health Order No. C19-12c;
- The tutor should stay at least six feet away from the child to the greatest extent feasible; and
- Windows and doors should be left open to the greatest extent feasible to increase ventilation.



(Added 6/15/2020)

Can music schools, dance studios, job skills classes, and other youth and adult education programs remain open to provide distance learning?

Yes, these programs can still provide distance learning to their students, meaning that they may live stream or record sessions that are available to students on their devices. Staff may go to work for the purpose of providing distance learning to their students, but they must comply with social distancing requirements while at work including requirements that may limit the type of instruction that can be given (e.g., a video demonstration of couple dancing may not be given if the couple are not in the same household). And staff must limit the number of people needed to perform the video stream, and no more than 12 people total.

(Added 5/4/2020)

Can I attend my college, university, vocational program, or other adult career pathway class in-person?

Effective December 7, 2020, higher education programs may only offer indoor or outdoor instruction in-person for Core Essential Classes. Please refer to Directive 2020-22 for more details.

(Amended 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020; 12/8/2020)

Can I use specialized facilities offered by my college, university, vocational program, or other adult career pathway class?

Higher Education Programs may permit individual students to use specialized facilities as long as: (1) the student requires access to the facility due to the need for access to specialized equipment or space that is not available outside or at the student's home (such as a music practice room or fine arts studio); (2) only one person is permitted access to the facility at a time, by appointment; (3) a Face Covering is worn in the facility at all times unless it must be removed to perform a specific task, such as eating, drinking, or playing a wind instrument; (4) the facility is cleaned and disinfected between each use; (5) where feasible, facility is aired out between each use, such as by opening windows or doors; and (6) use of the facility must be staggered to permit at least one hour between uses. Students may be connected to an instructor or other students via remote technology while using the specialized facilities.

If a Higher Education Program has more than one specialized facility in the same building (such as multiple, individual music practice rooms or art studios), it may offer those spaces to students to use at the same time provided that: (1) only one person is permitted in each, separate specialized facility at a time; (2) each specialized facility is entirely enclosed and separate from other occupied spaces in the building; (3) the Higher Education Program staggers appointment times to avoid congestion in the common areas of the building; and (4) the Higher Education Program prohibits students congregating outside of their individual facilities.



(Added 9/17/2020)

Can I move into my college dorm?

Housing controlled or operated by an institution of higher education may reopen and operate for students as long as all relevant health and safety requirements are followed. Except for family housing, students must be housed in single rooms (i.e., without a roommate) unless the student specifically requests to be housed with a roommate. Institutions of higher education may not discriminate against students who choose not to have a roommate, such as by requiring they pay a higher rental fee for the room. Students who self-identify as members the vulnerable population (i.e., over age 60 or with a preexisting medical condition) must be housed in single rooms. Institutions of higher education may also not require students to live in student housing if they are able to complete their coursework remotely.

(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020)

Can my school require me to live in the dorm or other housing they control?

Higher Education Programs must require students who are able to complete their coursework remotely from their place of residence not to travel to the San Francisco Bay Area for the sole purpose of living in housing under the control of the Higher Education Program. Students cannot be required to live in Higher Education Program-controlled housing unless their coursework requires them to be physically present.

(Added 9/17/2020)

I play on a sports team for my college. Can we hold team practices or play games against other teams?

Collegiate athletics teams are currently not allowed to conduct team practices, games, or tournaments in San Francisco unless they obtain prior, written authorization from the San Francisco Department of Public Health. The plan must detail the sanitation, social distancing, health screening, and other procedures that will be implemented to minimize the risk of transmission among players, staff, and anyone else who will be in the facility. The plan must also include a proposal for interval testing that will not use City resources. No in-person spectators will be allowed under any circumstances. Plans must be submitted to HealthPlan@sfcityatty.org.

(Added 8/18/2020)

I am enrolled in a career pathway program. Can my school or vocational training program operate under the Order?

Effective December 7, 2020, higher education programs may only offer indoor or outdoor instruction in-person for Core Essential Classes. Please refer to Directive 2020-22 for more details.



(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020; 12/8/2020)

BUSINESSES GENERALLY

Do I need to shut down my business facility if it is not an Essential Business, Outdoor Business, or Additional Business?

Yes. Businesses that do not fall within one of these three allowed categories must temporarily close except for “Minimum Basic Operations,” which are defined as follows:

- i. The minimum necessary activities to maintain and protect the value of the business’s inventory and facilities; ensure security, safety, and sanitation; process payroll and employee benefits; provide for the delivery of existing inventory directly to residences or businesses; and related functions. For clarity, this section does not permit businesses to provide curbside pickup to customers.
- ii. The minimum necessary activities to facilitate owners, employees, and contractors of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences, and to ensure that the business can deliver its service remotely.

Essential Businesses, Outdoor Businesses, and Additional Businesses are identified and defined in Section 8 of the Health Officer’s Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.

Any employees who are onsite must strictly follow the Order’s social distancing requirements, including maintaining a distance of six feet from one another (unless incompatible with the job duty), frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an effective hand sanitizer, covering coughs and sneezes, wearing a face covering, and avoiding all social interaction outside the household when sick with a fever or cough.

(Amended 4/29/2020; 5/18/2020; 7/13/2020)

Are there general requirements for businesses that reopen under the Order?

Yes:

- (1) All Businesses must continue to maximize the number of Personnel who work remotely from their place of Residence;
- (2) All Businesses are strongly urged to move as many operations as possible outdoors, to the extent permitted by local law and permitting requirements;
- (3) All business facilities operating in the County, including businesses carrying out minimum basic operations, must comply with the requirements of the Social Distancing Protocol attached to the Order as Appendix A and must complete a Social Distancing



Protocol checklist for each of their facilities in the County frequented by Personnel or members of the public;

(4) In addition to the Social Distancing Protocol, all Businesses must follow any industry or activity-specific guidance issued by the Health Officer related to COVID-19, which may include the requirement to create and implement a site-specific Health and Safety Plan;

(5) Businesses must implement screening for Personnel and customers in a manner that complies with Attachments A-1 and A-2 to the Social Distancing Protocol. Businesses are required to allow Personnel to stay home if they have symptoms associated with COVID-19, and are prohibited from taking any adverse action against any Personnel for staying home in the circumstances listed in the Social Distancing Protocol;

(6) All Businesses must require Personnel to immediately alert the Business if they test positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms or the date on which they were tested—and must call the Department of Public Health at 415-554-2830 immediately if three or more Personnel test positive for COVID-19 within a two-week period; and

(7) All Businesses must comply with all case investigation and contact tracing measures by the County, including by providing any information requested.

(8) For all Business sectors use by Personnel of breakrooms must meet certain safety requirements, including signage, staggered schedules, 25% capacity limits and encouragement to eat outdoors or away from other people.

For more detail on these requirements, see Appendix A of the Order.

(Added 7/13/2020; Amended 9/17/2020 and 2/1/2021)

My business is allowed under the State’s order, but not under San Francisco’s Order. Can I open?

No. Where a conflict exists between this Order and any state public health order related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the most restrictive provision (i.e., the more protective of public health) controls. If your business is allowed to open under one, but not the other, you must remain temporarily closed. The State’s order expressly provides that counties like San Francisco may be more restrictive. San Francisco has continued to be guided by its local health indicators and to move more carefully and incrementally than the general State framework provides.

(Added 7/13/2020; Amended 9/17/2020)

Does my business have to accept cash or can we require touchless payment?

Under San Francisco law, businesses are required to accept cash. Nothing in the Health Order changes or impacts this requirement. Businesses should encourage



customers to use touchless payment options, but must accept cash as well. Businesses should create sufficient space to enable the customer to stand at least six feet away from the cashier while paying, or provide a physical barrier (e.g., Plexiglas of sufficient height and width to prevent transmission of respiratory droplets) between the customer and the cashier.

(Added 7/13/2020)

Is a building that has Essential Businesses as tenants required to create and post a social distancing protocol? Or is it the responsibility of the business tenants themselves?

It is the responsibility of tenant essential businesses to comply with the social distancing requirements, including creating and posting a social distancing protocol. But if your essential business is located within an enclosed mall or office building, the building's management may also be required to undertake additional planning measures to reopen and protect tenants and members of the public; you should consult with the building management to determine if there are additional requirements.

(Added 4/7/2020; Amended 6/15/20)

I run an Essential Business, Outdoor Business, or Additional Business as defined by the Order. Do I need to get an official letter of authorization from the City to operate a facility in the City?

No. If your business is covered in the list of "Essential Businesses," "Outdoor Businesses," or "Additional Businesses" in the Order, then you may operate your business from a facility in San Francisco so long as you create, post, and implement a Social Distancing Protocol for each facility using the template attached to the Order. You do not need to obtain any specific authorization from the City to run your business. The City does not issue written determinations or authorizations.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/18/2020)

I work for a business that is allowed to operate under the Order. Do I need to have a letter from my employer or other documentation to travel?

No. You do not need to carry official documentation (and the City does not issue any) demonstrating that you are exempt under the Order. But be prepared to explain if requested by law enforcement why your travel is allowed under the Order.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

Are all offices required to close?

(Effective November 17, 2020, non-essential offices are SUSPENDED from operation.) *[As of October 27, non-essential offices were permitted to reopen, but are strongly encouraged to continue allowing telework to the greatest extent possible. Non-*



essential offices with fewer than 20 employees are permitted to bring back the number of employees who can maintain six-feet of distance at all times. Those with 20 or more employees are permitted up to 25% capacity.] Offices of essential businesses may remain open, but must strictly comply with all Social Distancing Requirements and create, post, and implement a Social Distancing Protocol. Also, all businesses should continue to maximize the number of personnel who work from home. Only those individuals who cannot perform their jobs from home should come into the office.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/18/2020, 6/15/2020, 8/13/2020, 9/17/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020)

Can coworking spaces reopen?

Coworking spaces can operate subject to the following conditions:

- Only individuals who work for an essential business or essential government function may use a co-working space;
- The business must limit the number of people in the facility so that everyone can comply with Social Distancing Requirements;
- Everybody in the facility must wear a face covering at all times subject to limited exceptions for health reasons or while eating or drinking away from other as further provided in the Face Covering Orders;
- The business must create, post and implement a Social Distancing Protocol (Appendix A of the Order) and implement all of the requirements set forth there; and
- The business must comply with the relevant provisions of the Health Officer Directive No. 2020-18 regarding office facilities.

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 8/3/2020)

Can I allow customers to use their own, reusable bags?

Yes. As of July 13, reusable shopping bags are allowed with certain limitations, including that the customer must bag their own items after checkout because Personnel are not allowed to handle bags brought by a customer and the customer's bag must remain on them or in the shopping cart or basket, not placed on the counter or cashier conveyor belt.

(Added 7/13/2020)

Can I allow customers to use their own, reusable coffee mug?

No. Other than reusable shopping bags, reusable items that must be touched by personnel, including at checkout, are still prohibited at this time.

(Added 7/13/2020; Amended 2/1/2021)



I have been told by City officials that my business has to temporarily shut down or change its operations under the Order. Can I request reconsideration of this decision?

A business can request reconsideration of a directive to temporarily shut down or change its operations by emailing HealthOrderAppeals@sfcityattys.org. You may also seek reconsideration if you think your business is entitled to open under changes made to the order under, but you have been told you may not reopen. The email should include: the name of the business and its street address; the business's manager/contact (along with a direct telephone number and email address); the directive the business was given and the name of the City official who communicated it to the business; and an explanation of why the business believes the directive was mistaken, with reference(s) to the relevant provision(s) of the San Francisco Health Officer Order.

(Added 4/24/2020)

Does the Order require that businesses stop work that is necessary to our healthcare system?

No. The Order exempts any business that is performing work related to the delivery of health care, including hospitals, clinics, COVID-19 testing locations, dentists, pharmacies, blood banks and blood drives, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, other healthcare facilities, healthcare suppliers, home healthcare services providers, mental health providers, and veterinary care and all healthcare services provided to animals.

Are non-profit organizations allowed to continue operating?

Yes, non-profit organizations are treated like other businesses under the Order. They may continue to operate if they provide essential services or run an Outdoor Business, Additional Business, or other non-essential Office Business, as described in the Order. **(Effective November 17, 2020, non-essential offices are SUSPENDED from operating.)**

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/19/2020, 7/13/2020)

Can employees use a communal water cooler or microwave in the office?

Microwaves in break rooms or other communal areas may be used if they are disinfected by wiping the interior and exterior with an approved disinfectant after each use. Water coolers may also be used if: (1) touch surfaces are wiped down with an approved disinfectant after each use, and (2) any persons changing a container-type water cooler must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to handling/replacing the water container.

(Added 8/18/2020)



Can I host or attend a job fair?

Job fairs are allowed provided they comply with health directives regarding outdoor gatherings, which can be found [here](#). Indoor job fairs are not allowed at this time.

(Added 2/1/2021)

OUTDOOR BUSINESSES

What is an outdoor business? What requirements apply to them?

An outdoor business is a business that was primarily operating outdoors before March 16, 2020, and that has the ability to fully maintain social distancing of at least six feet between all persons. The Order provides some examples of common outdoor businesses, such as agricultural operations and landscaping and gardening services.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 6/15/20)

Are car washes allowed to continue operating under the Order?

Car washes that qualify as outdoor businesses under the Order may operate.

(Added 4/29/2020, 5/4/2020)

Can flea markets open?

Outdoor markets—like flea markets and art markets—that normally operated primarily outdoors before March 16, 2020 may operate under the Order as Outdoor Businesses. But they must comply with the relevant requirements for Farmers’ Markets set forth in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-07, available at www.sfdph.org/directives. Any vendor who does not abide by these requirements may not continue to sell product. Indoor flea markets are not permitted at this time.

(Added 5/4/2020; Amended 5/7/2020; 7/13/2020; 12/8/2020)

Can gardening and landscaping services continue?

Yes, arborists, landscapers, gardeners, and similar service professionals can operate as outdoor businesses, as that term is defined in the Order. Like all businesses, they must strictly comply with social distancing requirements.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 5/4/2020)

GROCERY STORES AND FARMERS MARKETS

Can grocery stores, farmers markets, and other food retailers remain open?

Effective January 28, 2021, total indoor capacity limits for all retail except stand-alone grocery stores are limited to 25%. Stand-alone grocery stores are limited to 50% capacity. Businesses must take affirmative steps to meter entry and control indoor capacity. Eating and drinking by patrons inside the stores is prohibited.



Yes. Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other food retail establishments selling food items and non-alcoholic drinks are encouraged to stay open to provide food items and pet supplies to the public. When visiting these places, you must help the retailer maintain Social Distancing Requirements, including while you are shopping and standing in line. They are also required to prepare, post and implement a Social Distancing Protocol and to comply with Health Officer Directive 2020-07, available at www.sfdph.org/directives.

(Amended 7/13/2020)

I am in the business of manufacturing food that I supply to grocery stores and other food retailers. Am I required to shut down?

No. Businesses that supply food goods and prepared meals to grocery stores and other food retailers are essential and may continue operating.

FITNESS BUSINESSES

Can outdoor fitness classes operate?

Yes, outdoor fitness classes (e.g., outdoor boot camps, non-contact dance classes, tai chi, Pilates, and yoga classes) can operate subject to certain conditions. Outdoor fitness classes may operate in up to one group of 25 people (including instructors). The instructor must ask each participant if they have certain medical symptoms, and everyone must wear a face covering and stay at least six feet apart, among other requirements.

(Added 5/4/2020, Amended 6/15/2020; 7/13/2020; 10/14/2020; 12/8/2020; 2/1/2021)

Can gyms or fitness centers operate?

Effective November 29, 2020, indoor gyms are SUSPENDED from operating. Outdoor gyms may continue to operate with restrictions. Refer to Directive 2020-27 for more details.

[Yes, both outdoor and indoor gyms may operate under the specific guidelines of Directives 2020-27 (Outdoor Gyms) and 2020-31 (Indoor Gyms).]

(Added 9/17/2020)

I run a small fitness studio that offers 1:1 personal training. Am I allowed to re-open my facility?

Effective December 6, 2020, indoor one-on-one personal training is SUSPENDED.

[Yes. Indoor gyms and fitness facilities may operate under the specific guidelines of Directive 2020-31. One-on-one personal training is allowed if all standards for indoor fitness are met, including wearing a face covering at all times, conducting daily



screening of staff and patrons, maintaining at least six feet of physical distance at all times, engaging in enhanced sanitation measures, and more. Also, outdoor fitness classes—including 1:1 personal training sessions and small group sessions of up to two groups of 12 people—can now resume, subject to certain conditions and limitations.]

(Added 6/8/2020, Amended 6/15/2020; 7/13/2020; 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020)

I operate an outdoor fitness business. Can I host multiple outdoor fitness classes or separate my outdoor space into separate gym areas that operate at the same time?

Yes, but only if your business can operate them as physically distinct outdoor classes or gym areas in compliance with the safety protocols that apply to all outdoor fitness classes or gyms (as applicable) and with all of the following additional conditions:

- Each outdoor class or gym area must be separated by a physical barrier that keeps them at least six feet apart or, if a physical barrier is not feasible, the classes or gyms must be kept at least 12 feet apart;
- Each outdoor class remains limited to 25 people total, including any instructors; and
- Participants and instructors must not move between or participate in classes that occur all or at part at the same time (i.e., before, during or after the classes, while on the business' premises). Participants and instructors also must not move between or participate in separate gym areas while those areas are in use by separate groups of up to 25 people.

Your business must provide participants and instructors with a clear path to a restroom and exit without requiring they travel through the space occupied by another class or gym space.

(Added 12/18/2020; Amended 1/21/2021)

Do the same rules apply to City gyms for employees?

Yes.

Can indoor fitness classes operate?

Effective November 29, 2020, indoor gyms, including group fitness classes, are SUSPENDED from operation.

[Yes, but indoor group cardio/aerobic classes such as spinning, kickboxing, or similar classes are not allowed at this time.]

(Added 9/17/2020)

Are running or biking clubs allowed to operate at this time?

No, only group athletics that allow participants to remain in a stationary location with proper social distancing and subject to the supervision of an instructor are allowed at this time, in compliance capacity limits and other required health protocols. Running and



biking clubs are not allowed at this time because it is difficult to maintain the required social distance among participants and a host or instructor cannot monitor compliance with health and safety rules while the group is mobile.

(Added 2/1/2021)

Can I attend a hot yoga or hot Pilates class?

No. Indoor gatherings of people from different Households increase risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. Gatherings in hot indoor spaces with limited or no ventilation such as hot yoga or hot Pilates (including but not limited to Bikram yoga, Inferno hot Pilates, and any other forms of exercise performed with studio temperatures raised above 75°F) significantly increase these risks. Elevated heat levels also raise our rate of respiration and with it the amount of aerosols we breathe into the air. Finally, elevated temperatures are likely to cause reduced compliance with Face Covering requirements.

Can kids' sports classes reopen as Outdoor Fitness Classes?

No. Outdoor Fitness Classes that are allowed to reopen under the Order do not include classes directed to children under 18 years old, which are governed by separate rules and orders. But they may be allowed to operate as other out-of-school time youth programs. Such recreational programs for children must be carried out in stable cohorts of 14 or fewer children (and no more than 16 people total, including children, youth, and adults) by providers or instructors that remain solely with a cohort of children—i.e., who do not interact with more than one stable cohort of children in any given three-week period. See Stay-Safer-at-Home Order Section 5.c.

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 8/18/2020, 12/8/2020)

Are indoor swimming classes allowed? Doesn't the state permit them?

Although the State has allowed certain indoor swimming classes to resume, they are not yet allowed in San Francisco.

(Added 2/1/2021)

HOUSEHOLD SERVICES

Are housekeeping/house cleaning services permitted?

As of June 15, 2020, housekeeping and housecleaning and other indoor household services like cooking services and non-essential maintenance may resume, subject to conditions set forth in Appendix C-1 of the Order. If others are present while the home is being cleaned, they must strictly comply with social distancing requirements.

(Added 5/7/2020; Amended 6/15/2020)



Is an in-home massage allowed as an indoor household service?

Indoor personal services are not considered a household service and are subject to the health and safety requirements of Directive 2020-30.

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 9/17/2020)

Can my pool maintenance company come to my house or business?

Yes.

(Added 4/3/2020; Amended 7/13/2020)

CANNABIS DISPENSARIES

Are cannabis dispensaries allowed to operate?

Yes. Because cannabis has several medicinal purposes and is an essential medical treatment for many City residents, cannabis dispensaries are permitted to remain open, but only for delivery or takeaway. Cannabis dispensaries shall not permit products to be used or consumed on-site. Dispensaries and patrons must comply with social distancing requirements, including by maintaining at least six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public, including any customers standing in line.

(Amended 7/13/2020)

Can recreational cannabis be purchased on a “take-out” basis?

Yes, although dispensary patrons are encouraged to have cannabis products delivered to their home to the extent possible.

(Amended 7/13/2020)

Can I have cannabis delivered to my home?

Yes. The Order allows businesses to deliver products to people’s residences, and a separate Health Order encourages people to obtain those products by delivery.

REAL ESTATE

Can real estate agents show residences or commercial properties in person?

Generally, no. Real estate agents, escrow agents, and other service providers that facilitate real estate transactions like home sales, apartment rentals, and commercial properties are essential workers, but all appointments and viewings must happen virtually (via video or livestream). If a virtual viewing is not possible, then a single photographer or videographer is permitted to visit the property once to take photographs and/or video. This should be done at a time when the occupant is not present in the residence. If these options are not possible, then in-person showings can occur by appointment with no more than two visitors at a time from the same household, and only



one agent showing the property. In-person showings or walk-throughs are not allowed when the occupant is present in the residence. Commercial viewings should be limited to the minimum number of persons possible.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/4/2020)

What types of service providers are permitted to operate under the Order to enable residential transactions?

- **Real estate inspectors and appraisers?**

Yes, inspectors and appraisers are necessary to enable residential real estate transactions to occur.

- **Real estate photographers?**

Yes, real estate photographers are necessary to enable virtual viewings and marketing to occur.

- **Real estate stagers?**

Yes, given the modification to the San Francisco Health Order on May 4th allowing all real estate transactions and people to move residences, real estate staging may resume operations when no occupants are present at the home.

(Added 4/24/2020; Amended 5/6/2020)

Can I move into a new house/apartment?

Yes, residential moves are allowed under the Order.

If moving into or out of the Bay Area region, you are strongly urged to quarantine for 14 days, especially if you engaged in activities that would put you at higher risk of contracting the virus that causes COVID-19. These higher risk activities include those in which you were:

- Interacting within six feet of individuals outside your Household, especially if you or those around you were not wearing Face Coverings at all times;
- Interacting with individuals outside your Household in indoor settings;
- Attending large gatherings, particularly ones where people were unmasked, people did not stay at least six feet apart, or gatherings that were held indoors; or
- Sharing items, including food, with people outside your Household.

To quarantine, individuals should follow the guidance of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 4/29/2020, 5/14/2020, 7/13/2020)

I live in communal housing (e.g., I have roommates or rent a room in a larger unit). Can my landlord move someone with symptoms or a diagnosis of COVID-19 into the residence over the existing residents' objection?

No. Individuals must not move into communal housing if the existing residents object and the individual:

- has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 10 days
- had "Close Contact" with a person who has confirmed COVID-19 while they were *contagious in the last 10 days (for more information on who is considered a "Close Contact" and when the *contagious period is, see: <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/C19-07-Non-Personnel-Screening-Attachment-A-2.pdf>)

These individuals must follow the isolation and/or quarantine steps mandated by Health Directive 2020-03c and explained at: www.sfdcp.org/home-isolation-quarantine-guidelines. Once they have completed the required isolation or quarantine duration, they may then move into communal housing. Information for individuals who need services or assistance to isolate or quarantine is available at <http://www.sf.gov/file/after-your-covid-19-test-booklet>.

Also, individuals who have had one or more COVID-19 symptoms in the prior 24 hours that are new or not explained by another reason must not be moved in to communal housing if the existing residents object until:

- They have a negative COVID-19 virus test –OR–
- If they don't get a COVID-19 virus test, they cannot be moved in to communal housing until it has been at least 10 days from when their symptoms began, their symptoms have improved, and they have not had a fever in over 24 hours

COVID-19 symptoms include fever, chills, or repeated shaking or shivering; cough; sore throat; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; feeling unusually weak or fatigued; loss of taste or smell; muscle or body aches; headache; runny or congested nose; nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, or who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and who do not have an alternate safe place to isolate or quarantine may contact San Francisco Department of Public Health I&Q Support Team at (415) 613-0336.



Those who wish to take extra precautions in the home, including those who are higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease, can find more information at www.sfgdcp.org/additionalcovid19precautions.

(Added 12/18/2020)

Can movers move non-essential offices or businesses during the SIP Order?

Yes, like residential moves commercial moves are permitted—and movers can be employed—as long as all social distancing requirements are followed, including minimizing close contact to the greatest extent feasible.

(Added 5/4/2020)

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Can notaries public continue to operate?

Yes.

Can I meet with a lawyer to prepare a will?

Yes, legal and notary services related to planning for death or incapacity, such as preparation and execution of wills, trusts, financial powers of attorney, and advance health care directives are allowed under the Order.

(Added 4/30/2020)

FUNERALS

I work in a cemetery—can I go to work?

Yes, cemeteries are essential businesses.

Are funeral home providers and mortuaries allowed to continue operating?

Yes, funeral home providers and mortuaries may continue operating to the extent necessary to the transport, preparation, or processing of remains. This means that any employee necessary for the transport, preparation and/or processing of a body may continue to report to these facilities to conduct their work. Funeral home providers and mortuaries may also continue to hold funerals.

The size of indoor funerals is limited to 25% of the funeral home or mortuary's capacity. Provided there is sufficient space to ensure proper social distancing, funeral homes and mortuaries may host outdoor funerals. Outdoor funerals are strongly encouraged over indoors. Indoor funerals must comply with the requirements of Directive 2020-34.

(Amended 7/13/2020; 8/18/2020; 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020, 2/10/2021)



Can I attend a funeral indoors at a house of worship?

Yes, a house of worship, such as a church, synagogue, or mosque, may host an indoor funeral provided face coverings are worn and participants maintain at least six-feet of distance from those outside their households at all times. The size of indoor funerals is limited to 25% of the house of worship's indoor capacity. Provided there is sufficient space to ensure proper social distancing, houses of worship may also host outdoor funerals. Outdoor funerals continue to be a safer alternative to indoor gatherings. Indoor funerals must comply with the requirements of Directive 2020-34.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 10/14/2020, 2/10/2021)

FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Can small scale film productions operate?

Yes, small scale film and media production may operate, subject to the following conditions:

- Any indoor sites must remain closed to the public;
- The cast and crew are limited to the fewest number of personnel needed up to a maximum of 12 people indoors or 25 outdoors;
- If indoors, doors and windows must be left open to the extent possible, or mechanical ventilation systems must be run, to increase ventilation;
- The production must comply with the Social Distancing Requirements set forth in Section 8.o of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order and prepare a Social Distancing Protocol as required in Section 5.d of the Order;
- Face coverings must be worn at all times, except (1) as specifically exempted from the face covering requirements in Health Officer Order No. C19-12c, issued on July 22, 2020, as that order may be amended from time to time, (2) while filming outdoors as long as each person without a face covering being filmed remains at least six feet from other talent, crew, personnel, and the public at all times, or (3) with an approved health and safety plan and use of at least one additional ventilation measure; and
- Because singing, shouting, chanting and playing wind or brass instruments can transmit particles farther in the air than breathing or speaking quietly, people must be in an isolation booth or in a separate room from others if singing, shouting, chanting or playing wind or brass instruments indoors; singing, shouting, chanting and playing wind or brass instruments is also strongly discouraged outdoors, even with face coverings.

(Added 6/30/2020; Amended 11/24/2020)



Can photographers work?

Yes, still photography can operate under the same conditions described above for small scale film and media productions.

(Added 6/30/2020)

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

May I serve a customer their drink while they wait to be seated or for their take-out order?

Effective December 6, 2020, all indoor dining is SUSPENDED.

No. Even if your business's liquor license permits your establishment to sell poured beer, wine, and cocktails, customers cannot be given their alcoholic beverages until they have been seated.

If an alcoholic beverage is ordered for take-out, the alcoholic beverage must be packaged in a container with a secure lid or cap and in a manner designed to prevent consumption without removal of the lid or cap (e.g., no lids with sipping holes or openings for straws). Failing to do so may subject your customers to criminal citation for violating open container laws, and may subject your business to criminal citation for causing gatherings of people from different households in violation of the Health Order and for causing a public health hazard. Such violations will be reported to the Alcoholic Beverage Commission for investigation and potential suspension or revocation of your license or to-go privileges. Finally, you also must follow all regulatory guidance on the ABC's website, <https://www.abc.ca.gov/law-and-policy/coronavirus19/>, including posting signage warning your customers of the consequences of violating open container laws, <https://www.abc.ca.gov/notice-of-regulatory-relief/>, and advising your customers that they may not consume their food or drink until they are home.

(Added 5/22/2020; Amended 5/28/2020, 6/15/2020, 10/14/2020)

Can Dining Establishments serve alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption?

Yes, but at this time only if the alcoholic beverage is ordered with a bona fide meal. A bona fide meal does not include snack items or appetizers, or prepackaged items like a sandwich or salad. Alcoholic beverages may not be served to any customer who has not ordered a bona fide meal.

If the Dining Establishment does not serve bona fide meals, then the business must operate pursuant to the limitations established for "Bars, Breweries, and Distilleries." The state department of Alcohol Beverage Control has stated that it will look at the totality of a licensed business' operations in determining whether it is serving legitimate



meals in a bona fide manner or if the food offered is mere pretext for opening under the state Blueprint for a Safer Economy.

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 10/14/2020)

What permits are necessary for my restaurant or bar to serve food outside?

When seating customers outside, Dining Establishments must comply with all permit and zoning requirements. Relevant permits include those necessary for use of outdoor space (e.g. Shared Spaces program and zoning approvals), and ABC regulations. More information on the Shared Spaces program is available [here](#).

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 10/14/2020)

Can my restaurant seat customers inside?

As of November 14, 2020, indoor dining has been SUSPENDED from operation.

[Yes, on September 30, the Health Order was amended to allow indoor dining for restaurants and bars with bona fide meals to resume indoor service under the requirements of Directive 2020-16c. Indoor dining is currently limited at 25% of the establishment's maximum occupancy, or up to 100 people, whichever is less. This occupancy limit does not include personnel or patrons seated outside. Restaurants are strongly encouraged to continue maximizing outdoor spaces.]

(Added 10/14/2020)

Can my bar serve food prepared elsewhere and open under the Health Order?

Yes, but you may only sell an alcoholic beverage to a customer who orders a bona fide meal. Dining Establishments offering bona fide meals prepared and served by another person or business must receive or coordinate all orders for food and alcoholic beverages. Orders and payment from patrons for alcohol and food must be received by the Dining Establishment, which may then pass on the food order and a portion of the payment to the meal provider. You must also strictly follow all of the requirements imposed by the ABC's Fourth and Fifth Notices of Regulatory Relief, <https://www.abc.ca.gov/fifth-notice-of-regulatory-relief/>, and all of the requirements listed in the previous FAQ. Also, you must abide by Directive 2020-16.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 6/15/2020; 10/14/2020)

With the Health Order allowing curbside retail, can my bar offer curbside/out-the-door sales of sealed bottles?

As permitted by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control's First Notice of Regulatory Relief, <https://www.abc.ca.gov/notice-of-regulatory-relief/>, a bar with an on-sale license is now temporarily allowed to act like a store and make retail sales to go



(at the doorway or curbside) of manufacturer-sealed bottles and cans of the same alcoholic beverages that their ABC license allows them to sell (a bar licensed to serve beer and wine only can sell bottles of beer and wine, not liquor). This exception does not allow a bar to pour beer, wine, liquor, or mixed drinks. You must strictly follow all requirements imposed by the ABC. Furthermore, you must abide by any Health Officer Directive that applies to curbside retail, currently Directive No. 2020-10b. Finally, you must also advise your customers that they may not consume their purchases until they are home.

(Added 6/15/2020.)

Can I allow a customer to host a party for 60 people if the guests are seated at ten tables of six people?

No, meal gatherings are limited to six people who must be seated together. A group dining together must not exceed this limit unless they are members of the same household. The proposed party is also not permitted as an outdoor gathering. Outdoor social gatherings at restaurants are not currently permitted. A restaurant may offer reservations with common seating times, but may not accept reservations for more than one table of six per customer (unless they are members of the same household). People must remain seated at a table while eating and drinking; when away from the table people must wear face coverings as required by the face covering order.

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 10/14/2020)

Do I need to screen customers?

Yes. Starting on September 30, 2020, all Dining Establishments are required to screen guests before seating the guests. Because dining requires individuals to take their face coverings off, screening guests is a way to minimize potential transmission of COVID. Dining Establishments can use the guidance available online at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/covid-guidance/covid-screening.pdf> for determining how best to conduct screening.

RETAIL AND ASSOCIATED BUSINESSES

(Section added for 4/20/2020 and amended to incorporate in-store retail 6/15/2020)

Effective January 28, 2021, all indoor retail (except stand-alone grocery stores) is limited to 25% capacity. Retail businesses must meter customer entry so as not



to exceed the 25% capacity. Additionally, non-essential retail must close between the hours of 10pm and 5am.

My retail store had been offering curbside pickup. Can I open up for customers to come inside?

Yes. As of May 18, 2020, retail stores were allowed to reopen for curbside/outside pickup of goods as long as the store has direct access to immediately adjacent sidewalk, street, alley, or parking area for pickup by customers. As of June 15, customers may enter the store as long as you follow specific limitations and restrictions. These include:

- Putting in place a social distancing protocol
- Putting in place a health and safety plan
- Ensuring all personnel have face coverings
- Limiting the number people in the store (customers and personnel) to no more than 50% of the facility's normal maximum occupancy, or even less if necessary for people to stay at least six feet apart from each other at all times (**effective January 28, 2021, capacity is limited to 25%**)

The full list of requirements and additional details can be found in the in-store retail directive at: <http://www.sfdph.org/directives>.

To minimize the number of customers entering the facility, retail businesses that open for in-store operations are strongly encouraged to continue offering alternatives to in-store shopping. For example, retail businesses should consider offering or enhancing policies permitting outdoor curbside pickup and drop-off of goods, scheduling of appointments, delivery, and e-commerce. Retail businesses offering curbside pickup or drop-off must continue following the best practices for curbside retail contained in Directive 2020-10b (and any future amendment to that directive) for those operations.

(Amended 7/13/2020)

My retail store is located in an enclosed shopping center. Can I open for in-store shopping? What about curbside pickup?

Retail stores in an enclosed indoor shopping center that do not have direct access to adjacent sidewalk, street, parking lot, or alley area, may reopen if the indoor shopping center obtains approval from the Health Officer. [*Indoor malls may only operate at up to 50% capacity at this time, and may not open common area gathering places. Indoor shopping centers that previously received written approval to reopen in June and would like to increase their occupancy from 25% to 50% must submit an updated plan to SFDPH.*] (**Effective January 28, 2021, capacity is limited to 25%**)

[*Indoor shopping centers who amend and resubmit their plans may also reopen food courts at 25% of maximum occupancy, up to 100 people and comply with Directive*



*2020-16c. The updated health plan must include a plan for cordoning off or otherwise physically separating the food court area to limit entry.] (Effective November 14, 2020, all indoor food courts are **SUSPENDED** from operation).*

If your store has an entrance that opens directly to an adjacent sidewalk, street, parking lot, or alley, it may open for curbside pickup or in-store shopping subject to limitations and safety requirements.

If your store does not have an entrance that opens directly to the outside—i.e., if the only way to enter the store is by going through an indoor space—it may not open for curbside pickup until the shopping center obtains permission from the Health Officer. A shopping center that would like to reopen for its indoor retailers to do curbside pickup or in-store shopping may submit a proposed plan to the Health Officer that includes:

- the number of retail stores that would be resuming operation;
- the number of employees who would be returning to work at those stores; and
- the specific social distancing/sanitation measures the shopping center would employ to prevent congestion at the doorways and streets, and to protect customers and employees.

Subject to the written approval of the Health Officer or the Health Officer's designee, the shopping center may then operate for curbside pickup or in store shopping consistent with the approved plan, including any conditions of approval for that plan.

Plans should be submitted to HealthPlan@sfcityatt.org. Indoor retailers that previously received written permission to offer curbside retail are not required to seek re-approval.

(Amended 6/15/2020, 8/3/2020, 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020)

There's a metered parking space immediately outside the entrance to my store. How can I provide for use of that space for curbside pickup?

You can request that the adjacent street parking be converted to temporary loading zone to help encourage physical distancing and reduce crowding. To do so, you can submit an online application [here](#).

Can my business move its inventory outside to the sidewalk for sale?

Yes, a store can display merchandise for sale on tables or otherwise outside the store, subject to the following conditions:

- The store must obtain any necessary permits from the City;
- Customers must either use hand sanitizer before touching items or ask the vendor to hand items to them;
- Only the number of customers that can maintain social distancing may approach the table at a time;



- Chalk demarcations must be placed on the ground to indicate where shoppers should stand behind others, while waiting to purchase items; and
- The store must take measures to help ensure against congestion and blocking passage by pedestrians, including people with disabilities.

Stores may apply for a free temporary permit to use the sidewalk or parking lane for retail operations at <https://sf.gov/use-sidewalk-or-parking-lane-yourbusiness>.

(Amended 6/17/2020)

Can I pass goods through an open window for curbside pickup or through an open door if I block entrance to the store with a table inside the doorway?

Yes. You may do both.

What safety protocols do I need to follow for me to begin operating my store for in-store shopping or curbside pickup?

You need to complete, post at your store, and implement a Social Distancing Protocol, which is a form attached to the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order and available [here](#). You also need to develop and implement a Health and Safety Plan under the best practices directive that the Health Officer has issued—a template for that plan is available [here](#). Operators of retail stores should read carefully the requirements for the Protocol and Plan. Implementation includes training your personnel about the requirements and providing for adequate social distancing and sanitation and wearing of face coverings.

PERSONAL SERVICES

Added 9/17/2020

May I reopen my hair salon, barbershop, or other personal service business?

Yes, personal service businesses are permitted to open indoors and outdoors subject to the requirements of Directives 2020-23 (outdoors) and 2020-30 (indoors).

What types of personal services may be offered outdoors?

Personal service providers may offer services that can be completed outdoors and that are approved by the provider's applicable licensing agency. For example, they may offer massage, haircuts, waxing, and nail services. Services that require a customer to remove their Face Covering, such as full facials, lip waxing, and beard trims, are not permitted at this time.

Consistent with the limitations under the State health order, the following services may not be offered outdoors: electrology, tattooing, piercing, microblading, permanent make-



up, and other forms of invasive body art that require a controlled hygienic environment. The California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology also prohibits shampooing and chemical hair treatments outdoors.

Do I need a special license from the State or the County to perform personal services outdoors as opposed to inside my salon or shop?

No, if you hold a valid a valid license from the State or County that permits you to perform personal services, you are not required to obtain a separate license to perform services outdoors. The California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology does, however, prohibit certain types of services outdoors. You should contact your licensing agency for any questions.

Can my clients use the restroom indoors even if I am offering outdoor services only?

Yes.

Where can outdoor personal services be offered?

Service providers regulated by the California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology should follow state guidance and regulations regarding the location of outdoor services. Massage services may be conducted in any outdoors space that otherwise meets the requirements of the applicable Directive No. 2020-23.

What types of personal services may reopen indoors?

Personal service providers are encouraged to provide services outdoors to the greatest extent possible. Businesses offering indoor personal services may reopen, including those providing hair, barber, nail, body art, skin care, massage, and cosmetology services. Services that require a customer to remove their Face Covering, such as full facials, lip waxing, and beard trims, are not permitted at this time.

OUTDOOR TENTS AND OTHER SHELTERS FOR RETAIL AND PERSONAL SERVICES

Added 9/17/2020

If my business is operating outdoors, can I use a shelter to provide shade?

Businesses and service providers that are permitted to operate outdoors may, subject to any applicable permit requirements, conduct their business operations under a tent, canopy, or other sun or weather shelter, but must do so consistent with DPH's guidance on outdoor shelters, available at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/ig/Guidance-Shared-Outdoor-Spaces.pdf>.



When operating outdoors, establishments must be sure to consider and address risks associated with local streets, sidewalks, traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists. For example, you should not operate in a space that blocks traffic, bike lanes, or public access to sidewalks. All businesses must comply with state and local laws, regulations, and permitting requirements, including the placement of outdoor shelters and stations.

May I build a weather protection structure outside of my business?

Generally, no. Structures that are affixed to the sidewalk or street or that do not allow for the free flow of air in the breathing zone are not permitted. You may instead use appropriate shelters, as described above. Businesses may be permitted to use barriers or platforms provided they have obtained appropriate permitting to do so.

CONSTRUCTION AND ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Are commercial, residential, and mixed-use construction projects allowed to proceed?

Yes. The Order allows all construction projects, including public works, public facilities, commercial, residential, and mixed-use projects, as well as remodel and renovation work, to proceed, as long as the projects comply with the Construction Safety Protocols listed in Appendices [B-1](#) and [B-2](#) of the Order. This range of construction projects is consistent with those that are permitted under the March 19, 2020 Order of the California State Public Health Officer (the "State Shelter Order"). The State Shelter Order allows workers to leave home who support the construction, operation, inspection, and maintenance of construction sites and construction projects, workers who support the supply chain of building materials, and workers who provide services that enable repair materials and equipment for essential functions.

May public works construction projects, such as schools, public buildings, street improvements, and transportation infrastructure, continue?

Yes, as long as the projects comply with the Construction Safety Protocols listed in Appendices B-1 and B-2 of the Order, or other safety protocol that the Health Officer specifies for public works construction projects.

May I get building permits or site inspections from the City for my construction project?

Yes. You may contact the relevant agency to determine how to arrange the service you need.

Can the abatement work be done while the Stay Safer at Home Order is in effect?

Yes. For example, if you have a code violation on your property and have been ordered to correct the violations, you may proceed with abatement work. This work must comply



with the Construction Project Safety Protocols in Appendices B-1 and B-2 of the Order, or the Social Distancing Protocols in Appendix A, as applicable.

May I conduct site assessment, remediation, or mitigation work that I have been directed to perform?

Yes. This work must comply with the Construction Project Safety Protocols in Appendices B-1 and B-2 of the Order or the Social Distancing Protocols in Appendix A, as applicable.

My business installs distributed solar, storage, and/or electric vehicle charging systems – may it continue to operate?

Yes, this is permissible construction activity and must comply with the Construction Project Safety Protocols in Appendix B-1 or B-2 of the Order. Businesses may also operate to manufacture distributed energy resource components, like solar panels.

Will private and public construction projects that are already underway be required to stop work if they cannot meet the safety protocols?

Yes. To proceed the projects must comply with the new protocols. In San Francisco, a Public Works Protocol will be issued, which must be followed for projects to proceed. The Public Works Protocol will be substantially similar to protocols currently in place, which the City developed in collaboration with industry and labor representatives.

Will all project have to stop work or delay start of construction until they have a trained third-party supervisor on site?

The third-party supervisor does not need to be on site for the project to start, but must be ready to make site visits shortly thereafter. A company may use an outside consultant or contractor, or train one of their existing employees as needed. Projects may continue, and should make steps to have such a supervisor shortly. San Francisco does not have a training program for this supervisor, but industry groups may be able to help identify and train so that the industry can proceed safely.

How will the definition of a large construction project that contains five or more workers at a construction site be applied?

This definition only applies to construction of Essential Infrastructure, as defined in Section 8.1 of the Order. Essential Infrastructure includes airports, utilities (including water, sewer, gas, and electrical), oil refining, roads and highways, public transportation, solid waste facilities (including collection, removal, disposal, recycling, and processing facilities), cemeteries, mortuaries, crematoriums, and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for internet, computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services). In San Francisco, many of those are public



works projects, which will be governed by the Public Works Protocol. The health officers made this determination in maximize safety for workers and the community.

How will the staggering requirements for construction projects be applied?

The requirements to stagger trade-specific work and work schedules are intended to minimize the number of workers at the jobsite at any one time. It is not an absolute requirement to stagger all trades and workers at all times, because in some instances more than one trade will be necessary to be on site. In those instances, the direction is to minimize as much as possible. For smaller projects, Appendix B-1 provides that construction sites should stagger trades as necessary to reduce density and allow for easy maintenance of minimum six-foot separation. For larger construction projects, Appendix B-2 provides for 2 kinds of staggering. First, construction sites should stagger stop- and start-times for shift schedules to reduce the quantity of workers at the jobsite at any one time to the extent feasible. Second, construction sites should stagger trade-specific work to minimize the quantity of workers at the jobsite at any one time. The focus of this second requirement is to minimize the number of workers on the site and is not a prohibition against combining trades on-site.

Does the Order allow for state-mandated testing, operator inspections, and repairs of underground storage tanks?

Yes. State-mandated tests and operator inspections of underground storage tanks are essential activities and should continue under the Order. Repairs necessary to maintain the safety of underground storage tank systems and activities to respond to alarms and address unauthorized releases are also essential and should continue. All such work must be conducted in accordance with the Order, including adhering to social distancing requirements.

(Amended 5/1/2020)

HOTELS AND OTHER SHARED RENTALS

Can I rent a hotel room or short-term shared rental?

Effective January 28, 2021, lodging facilities may not accept or honor reservations for people from outside the Bay Area for non-essential travel, unless: (i) the reservation is for at least the minimum time period required for quarantine (i.e. 10 days) and (ii) the persons identified in the reservation confirm that they will quarantine in the hotel or lodging entity until after that time period has expired.

Yes, lodging facilities like hotels, motels, and short-term rentals are open in San Francisco, subject to the requirements of Directive 2020-29. Hosted short term rentals, where an individual rents a room within a home already occupied by the host or other



guests, are not permitted. To avoid unnecessary mixing and transmission of the virus, individuals are strongly encouraged to stay in rooms or rentals with only members of their Household.

Before travelling, you should remember screen yourself for symptoms of COVID-19 and any potential close contacts. If you answer yes, to any screening question, you are encouraged to remain home, unless you purposefully isolating or quarantining from other members of your household.

(Added 6/17/2020; Amended 8/24/2020, 9/17/2020, 2/1/2021)

Can I use the fitness center at my hotel?

Effective November 29, 2020, indoor gyms and fitness centers are SUSPENDED from operation.

[As of September 30, hotels may open gyms and fitness centers at 10% capacity subject to the same minimum safety precautions that apply to indoor gyms and fitness centers generally.]

(Added 10/14/2020)

Can I eat at the restaurant in my hotel?

Effective November 29, 2020 indoor dining is SUSPENDED.

Yes. Hotel restaurants may operate under the same terms as other dining establishments provided they comply with the terms of Directive 2020-16.

(Added 10/14/2020)

Are short-term rentals such as AirBnB allowed?

Yes, short-term rentals such as AirBnB are permitted subject to the requirements of Directive 2020-29.

(Added 5/4/2020; Amended 6/17/2020, 9/17/2020)

Can hostels, or hotels with shared bathrooms, rent beds and/or rooms under the Stay Safer at Home Order?

Hostels, or hotels with shared bathrooms, may not rent out beds in a shared dormitory style-room with people already staying in that room. (Guests who have been sharing a room since March 16, 2020 may continue to share a room as they are considered one household.) However, if a hostel or hotel with shared bathrooms has empty rooms, it may rent out those empty rooms to Essential Workers, workers at Outdoor Businesses, workers at Additional Businesses, people in San Francisco for Essential Activities, or to



those who would otherwise be without housing. No more than one person may stay in a room at any one time unless the person is also residing in the room with his or her pre-existing household. Common areas must be cleaned according to SFDPH's COVID-19 Minimum Environmental Cleaning Standards, available at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/COVID%E2%80%9019-Minimum-Environmental-Cleaning-Standards.pdf>. Facial coverings and all other social distancing protocols must be observed in all other common areas such as hallways and entry points.

(Added 5/28/2020)

Can I check into a hotel if I have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19? What if I need a place to isolate away from my roommates or family?

Yes, guests are permitted to isolate or quarantine at a hotel. If you are staying in a hotel because you have recently been tested positive, are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or had a close contact within the 14 days, you may want to ask your lodging facility for a room in their isolation area. If you are experiencing serious symptoms of COVID-19, you should consult with your physician or seek other medical attention.

(Added 9/17/2020)

If I get sick while I'm in San Francisco, can I isolate or quarantine at my hotel?

Yes. If you get sick while visiting San Francisco, you may isolate or quarantine at your Lodging Facility. If you are experiencing serious symptoms of COVID-19, you should seek medical attention. A Lodging facility may not remove you from your accommodations because you are isolating or quarantining due to COVID-19.

(Added 9/17/2020)

Do I need to have my hotel room cleaned every day?

No, but hotels may offer daily cleaning.

(Added 9/17/2020)

Can I have friends visit me at my hotel room or AirBnB?

No. Guests staying in Lodging Facilities must not entertain visitors from outside their household inside their accommodations. A member of a household staying at the Lodging Facility may visit the guests who are staying at the Lodging Facility.

(Added 9/17/2020)



PET SERVICES

Can I go to a vet or pet hospital if my pet is sick?

Yes. Please call first to determine if the vet has any restrictions in place.

Are dog walkers allowed?

Yes, dog walkers are allowed and, as of June 8, 2020, the limitation that they may only walk one dog at a time (or multiple dogs that live in the same household) no longer applies. Subject to applicable permit requirements for commercial dog walkers in San Francisco, dog walkers can walk multiple dogs, but they must walk the dog(s) on a leash and maintain at least six feet distance from other people and animals, per [CDC recommendations](#). Also, if a dog guardian has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or has had close contact with someone else who has within the past 14 days, a dog walker may not walk that individual's dog in a group with dogs from other households and should use extra precautions to protect themselves from the risk of transmission.

(Amended 5/7/2020, 6/8/2020)

Can I take my dog to a groomer?

Yes, but you must drop off and/or pick up your dog curbside/outside. Customers must not to enter dog grooming facilities at this time. Also, per [CDC recommendations](#) not to let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household, dog grooming personnel should prevent dogs from interacting with other people or dogs to the greatest extent feasible.

(Added 4/3/2020; Amended 4/20/2020, 4/29/2020, 4/30/2020, 6/1/2020, 6/15/2020)

Can I take my pet to a kennel?

Yes, but you are encouraged to drop off and/or pick up your pet curbside/outside. Customers are not allowed to enter kennel facilities at this time. Also, per [CDC recommendations](#) not to let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household, kennel personnel should prevent pets from interacting with other people or animals to the greatest extent feasible.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 6/1/2020, 6/15/2020)

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER BUSINESSES

Can bike repair shops continue to operate?

Yes, bike repair shops are treated as an essential business (the same as auto repair shops) because they are necessary to facilitate essential travel.



Can my company continue to provide janitorial services to businesses?

Yes, janitorial services are allowed because they are necessary for health and sanitation.

How should laundromats, and especially self-service laundromats, enforce the social distancing protocol?

Laundromats, like other essential businesses, are responsible for enforcing all the requirements in the social distancing protocol, including ensuring social distancing between customers, use of facial coverings at all times, and regularly sanitation of high touch surfaces such as coin machines, detergent machines, washer and dryer dials, folding tables, and chairs. Where possible, curbside drop-off is recommended.

It is recommended that self-service laundromats employ an attendant to ensure the health and safety of customers in their facility. If a laundromat cannot employ an attendant, it should, at minimum ensure regular cleaning (no less than once every two hours) by dropping by the facility to inspect and clean. Alternatively, a laundromat may also provide cleaning supplies and/or wipes to customers to clean high touch surfaces before each use. These supplies must be properly secured to prevent theft and must be kept well supplied and located by high-touch surfaces. If the laundromat provides self-service cleaning supplies, it must still clean the facility thoroughly at least once per day.

(Added 5/19/2020)

Can I still access necessary items in my self-storage unit?

Self-storage facilities are not essential businesses, but they can maintain minimum business operations and allow people to access their units to the extent they are accessing them for medical or related needs, or in furtherance of a pre-scheduled move permitted by the Order.

(Added 4/2/2020)

Can pawn shops continue to operate?

Pawn shops may continue to operate under the following conditions:

1. All facilities and stores entrances must remain locked at all times, except to allow employees and customers to enter and exit the facility;
2. The facility or store must be closed to the general public, except for customers who have made an appointment;
3. Operations must be limited to financial and lending services (e.g. issuing loans, modifying existing loans, or redemption of items in loan) unless the conditions and restrictions for retail sales are met;
4. All employees must wear gloves and masks during operations, except as required to examine items and comply with California Pawn & Secondhand Dealer Systems (CAPSS) reporting requirements;



5. All facilities and stores must make reasonable efforts to provide for contactless transactions or, if not feasible to do so, must the providing of employees and customers hand sanitizers and disinfecting all countertops, bins, payment portals, pens, and pawnd items after each interaction with a client.
6. The facility or store must comply with all social distancing requirements, including creating and posting a social distancing protocol.

(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 4/29/2020, 6/15/2020)

My business manufactures, supplies, or repairs cell phones. Can it stay open?

Yes. If your business is primarily engaged in supply or repair of cell phones or other telecommunications devices, then it is essential and may continue to operate under the Order for that purpose.

(Added 4/29/2020)

Are garages allowed to operate?

Yes, garages are permitted to operate for parking under the following conditions:

- Garages must provide Face Coverings (as provided in Health Order No. C19-12c issued on July 22, 2020, and any future amendment to that order), hand sanitizer or handwashing stations, or both, and disinfectant and related supplies to all personnel.
- Face coverings must be worn at all times, except (1) as specifically exempted from the face covering requirements in Health Officer Order No. C19-12c, issued on July 22, 2020, as that order may be amended from time to time.
- Garages must comply with the Social Distancing Requirements set forth in Section 15.o of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order and prepare a Social Distancing Protocol as required in Section 5.d of the Order.
- Garages should encourage customers to use touchless payment options. When touchless payment is not used, sanitize any pens, counters, trays, or point of sale systems between each use by a customer. Create sufficient space to enable the customer to stand at least six feet away from the cashier while paying, or provide a physical barrier (e.g., Plexiglas of sufficient height and width to prevent transmission of respiratory droplets) between the customer and the cashier.

(Added 6/30/2020)

Can my business offer valet service?

Yes, valet services may operate under the same terms of commercial garages. In addition, valet employees must wear Face Coverings and, weather permitting, keep all windows open while inside a customer's vehicle.

(Added 11/24/2020)



MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS

(Added 10/14/2020)

Effective December 7, 2020, indoor museums, zoos, and aquariums are SUSPENDED from public operation.

Are indoor museums, zoos, and aquariums open?

Effective December 7, 2020, indoor and outdoor museums, zoos, and aquariums are SUSPENDED from operation.

[Yes. As of September 18, 2020, museums, zoos, and aquariums are permitted to open their indoor exhibits once they have developed a health and safety plan that conforms to the requirements of the template posted at <http://www.sfdph.org/directives>. The museum, zoo, or aquarium must also post the plan online so that guests may review the plan elements before visiting the institution. Indoor museums, zoos, and aquariums must limit the number of people, including personnel, who are present in the facility to the lesser of: (1) 25% of the facility's normal maximum occupancy or (2) the number of people who can maintain at least six feet of physical distance from each other in the facility at all times.]

Museums, zoos, and aquariums are not yet permitted to open for indoor dining. Outdoor dining is permitted under the terms of Directive 2020-16.]

Outdoor museums are open and outdoor zoos, and aquariums are open 15 50% capacity subject to an approved health and safety plan.

Will I be able to rent an equipment (e.g. audio tour or strollers)?

Possibly. Each institution must set forth procedures in their health and safety plan for offering equipment rental such as audio tours or strollers. If the institution offers equipment rental, it must have procedures for cleaning and disinfecting each item between users. Institutions are encouraged to make audio tours available to guests using smart phones.

Will I be able to leave stuff at coat check?

No. Coat and bag check must remain closed at this time.

Some interactive exhibits that requiring touching are provided for translation accessibility purposes. Do these need to be closed?

No. Passive interactive exhibits that have a touchable element for foreign language presentation, or accessibility purposes such as initiating audio/video are permitted. Other high touch exhibits like sensory tables must remain closed. Institutions should



frequent clean all touchable areas, whether these types of passive exhibits, or the typically touched elements such as door handles, handrails and elevator buttons.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Is the local government shutting down?

No. Essential governmental functions will continue, including first responders, emergency management personnel, emergency dispatchers, and law enforcement. Other governmental functions or offices may be subject to reduced schedules or may be closed as part of the effort to fight the spread of COVID-19. Each government agency identifies the services that qualify as Essential Governmental Functions, and designates the personnel who will continue providing those functions.

I work for the government—can I continue to go to work?

As a government employee, you can continue to go to work if your employer designates you as an essential employee. Each governmental agency is responsible for determining which of its workers are essential workers.

Can I access all City services?

Contact the relevant city agency to determine if it is still providing the service you need as an essential governmental function.

TRAVEL

I don't have a car. Can I ride the bus or train, or can I get a ride in my favorite ride-share/on-demand car service or a taxi?

Yes. When you are on public transit, you must follow the Order's social distancing requirements to the greatest extent feasible, including maintaining a distance of six feet from everyone outside your household or living unit, frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an effective hand sanitizer, covering coughs and sneezes, wearing a face covering, and avoiding all social interaction outside the household when sick with a fever or cough.

When you use ride-share services, keep in mind that you should avoid as much as possible being in close quarters in a vehicle that has been used by a lot of other people.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020)

Can I use a bike from a bike-share service?

Yes, you can use shared bikes and scooters. But keep in mind that shared bikes and scooters are not routinely sanitized. Take precautions, including bringing sanitization



wipes, not touching your face while on the bike or scooter, and washing your hands for at least 20 seconds immediately after.

Am I allowed to commute into or out of the City for work or daily activities?

Yes.

I'm staying overnight here but live elsewhere. Can I go home?

Yes, you can leave the City to return home, but you are strongly urged to quarantine for 14 days upon returning home, particularly if you engaged in activities that place you at a higher risk of contracting the virus that causes COVID-19.

(Amended 8/18/2020)

Can I ride a ferry to Angel Island or Alcatraz? How about a water taxi?

Yes, the Order allows transportation providers to provide transportation for purposes authorized in the Order. Accordingly, vessels that are used exclusively for transportation services are permitted to operate, subject to the following conditions:

- The number of people aboard the boat must be limited such that at least six feet of spacing can be maintained;
- All passengers must maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from each other, from the captain, and from personnel at all times;
- Before boarding, passengers must wait on the dock at least six feet apart and must not board the vessel until the captain or crew allow boarding;
- Passengers shall disembark one at a time as instructed by the crew or captain;
- Bathrooms (if any) must be cleaned and sanitized regularly—at least every 3-4 hours;
- The vessel must be cleaned and sanitized regularly—at least daily;
- Vessels must encourage contactless means of payment;
- Passengers should remain in the open-air parts of the boat to the greatest extent possible;
- All passengers and Personnel must wear a face covering at all times while waiting to board, while on board, and when disembarking from the vessel, unless they are specifically exempted from the face covering requirements in Health



Officer Order No. C19-12c, issued on July 22, 2020, as that order may be amended from time to time; and

- o No food or unsealed beverages may be sold on board.

(Added 6/29/2020)

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Am I allowed to go on a hike? Can I go to a park or open space?

Yes, you may go on a hike or to a park by yourself or with members of your household. Gatherings, even outside, with people from other households is currently prohibited. Spending time outside improves mood and well-being, and is particularly beneficial to children. You can go for walks, go to the park, and enjoy other outdoor activities. But operators of parks, beaches, and other open spaces may restrict entry, close certain areas, or close the whole facility altogether if the Health Officer orders those measures to reduce crowding and limit risk of COVID-19 exposure.

While you're on a hike or enjoying an open space area, you must strictly follow social distancing requirements, including maintaining a distance of at least six feet from everyone outside your household or living unit.

Can I leave home to work out?

Yes, if you will not in close contact with other people. Outdoor pools are permitted to open, with conditions. Indoor and outdoor gyms and fitness centers may also reopen, with conditions including that everyone must wear Face Coverings and maintain at least six-feet of distance from people outside their households at all times. Indoor climbing walls, basketball courts, swimming pools, and other shared sports facilities remain closed. **(Effective November 29, 2020, indoor gyms and one-on-one personal training are SUSPENDED from operation and outdoor gyms have 12-person capacity limits at any one time).**

(Amended 4/29/2020, 6/1/2020, 9/17/2020)

Can golf courses operate under the Order?

Yes. Golf courses are allowed to operate subject to compliance with Health Officer Directive No. 2020-15, available [here](#).

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020, 5/1/2020, 6/1/2020, 7/13/2020, 12/8/2020)

What are the requirements for engaging in outdoor activities under the Order?

The general requirements for outdoor activities are:

- No physical contact with individuals from outside your household.



- Members of no more than three households (up to 12 people total) may participate in outdoor, non-contact recreational and athletic activities.
- No shared equipment except for balls, Frisbees, or other similar recreational projectiles.
- No use of common high touch surfaces in facilities.
- No team sports or spectating at any sporting event or recreation activity.
- Must abide by Social Distancing Requirements.
- Follow recommendations in Face Covering Order.
- Must separately confirm the activity is permitted under the State's stay at home and related orders.
- If the activity is performed at a facility, the facility must adopt and post a Social Distancing Protocol including appropriate signage.
- Outdoor recreation activities permitted under the order must conform to any restrictions on access and use established by the Health Officer, government, or other entity that manages such area to reduce crowding and risk of transmission of COVID-19. Such restrictions may include, but are not limited to, restricting the number of entrants, closing the area to vehicular access and parking, or closure to all public access. In the event that too many people engage in permitted activities in close proximity, they may be directed to spread out or leave to avoid high-risk situations.

Outdoor activities that include close physical contact or the use of shared equipment solely by members of the same household or living unit are permitted.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 5/4/2020, 6/1/2020, 9/17/2020)

What outdoor recreation activities are permitted under the Order?

Examples of outdoor activities that are permitted under the Order include:

- Walking, jogging, or running;
- Hiking;
- Walking dogs on leash;
- Sunbathing or picnicking (but not at picnic benches or tables) when sufficient distance is maintained at all times between members of a household and others not in the same household;
- Bicycling;
- Golf (subject to compliance with Health Officer Directive No. 2020-15, available [here](#));
- Tennis and pickleball (subject to compliance with Health Officer Directive No. 2020-15, available [here](#));



- Lawn bowling, bocce ball, and Frisbee;
- Outdoor pools (subject to compliance with Health Officer Directive No. 2020-24);
- Swimming, surfing, or paddling in the ocean or lakes;
- Exploring rock pools;
- Gardening;
- Meditation;
- Picnics (with members of your household);
- Kayaking and sculling (but only in craft used solely by individuals or if by more than one individual, only by members of one household);
- Open-air bus tours;
- Paddle boarding, kitesurfing and windsurfing;
- Skateboarding, including at a skate-park;
- Roller-skating and roller-blading;
- Archery ranges;
- Tai Chi (individually, not in groups),
- Yoga (individually, not in groups);
- Bird watching;
- Kite flying;
- Outdoor photography;
- Fishing, including fly casting (as long as social distancing can be maintained at all times, and there is no sharing of equipment, including rods, reels, tackle or bait); and
- Individual equestrian activities.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020, 5/1/2020; 5/4/2020, 9/17/2020)

Are charter fishing boats allowed? What about open-air sightseeing cruises or tours?

Yes, individuals or businesses that offer open-air bareboat, skippered charters, or outdoor excursions with air-flow and continual movement to individuals wanting to engage in boating activities, including without limitation, fishing and sightseeing (“Charter Boat Operators”) may operate, subject to the following limitations and conditions:



- Each passenger must be assigned to a group of no more than 12 people. More than one group may be permitted on the boat provided that the operator complies with Directive 2020-19c;
- All passengers must maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from each other, from the captain, and from Personnel, at all times;
- Before boarding, passengers must wait on the dock at least six feet apart and must not board the vessel until the captain or crew allow boarding;
- For fishing, rod holders must be spaced at least six feet apart from each other;
- Bathrooms (if any) must be sanitized after each use following EPA guidelines;
- Passengers must stay in the open-air portion of the boat except for brief periods, such as to use the bathroom;
- Charter Boat Operators should ask passengers to voluntarily provide their name and phone number for potential contact tracing purposes—the business/captain should keep this information on file for at least three weeks;
- Charter Boat Operators must create, post and implement a Social Distancing Protocol;
- Charter Boat Operators must screen passengers and Personnel as required by Attachments A-1 and A-2 of the Social Distancing Protocol;
- All passengers and Personnel must wear a face covering at all times while waiting to board, at all times while on board—except when eating or drinking, and at all times when disembarking from the vessel, unless they are specifically exempted from the face covering requirements in Health Officer Order No. C19-12c, issued on July 22, 2020, as that order may be amended from time to time;
- Passengers from different households should not shake hands, share food or drinks, or engage in any unnecessary physical contact—the captain and crew must instruct passengers about these requirements;
- Charter Boat Operators must make hand sanitizer available throughout the boat and at each rod station (if any);
- Equipment (e.g., fishing equipment) may not be shared by people outside of a single household, and the boat and all equipment belonging to the Charter Boat Operator or otherwise provided by the Charter Boat Operator must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each trip with procedures effective against the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).

For clarity, this FAQ does not cover vessels used exclusively for transportation purposes or other Essential Travel (such as ferries and water taxis). Such vessels should refer to the relevant question in the Travel Section above for information about their operations.



(Added 5/18/2020; Amended 6/29/2020, 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020)

Can I use or operate a tennis court? How about basketball courts?

Tennis courts may reopen subject to compliance with Health Officer Directive No. 2020-15, available [here](#), and the December 4, 2020 Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. Basketball courts may remain open. Under the December 4 Order, you may play tennis or basketball with members of your own household only.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020, 6/1/2020)

Can outdoor swimming pools, wading pools and hot tubs open?

Yes, subject to certain conditions contained in Directive 2020-24. For example, lap swimming is permitted with one person per a lane, except that members of the same household may occupy the same lane. No more than two swimmers from different households for every 300 square feet of shared pool space are permitted in the pool or hot tub at any time. Members of different households must keep at least six feet of distance from each other.

Can my building or gym operate its indoor pool or hot tub?

No. Only outdoor pools and hot tubs may operate at this time.

Are walking tours allowed? How about Segway tours or open-air bus tours?

Yes, walking, Segway, and open-air bus tours are allowed, subject to the following conditions:

- Each participant must be assigned to a group of no more than 12 people. More than one group may be permitted on the tour provided that the organizer/operator complies with Directive 2020-19c;
- The organizer(s)/leader(s) should ask participants to voluntarily provide their name and phone number for potential contact tracing purposes;
- The organizer(s)/leader(s) must screen passengers and Personnel as required by Appendix A-1 and A-2 of the Order.
- All participants and organizer(s)/leader(s) must maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from other people at all times;
- All participants and organizer(s)/leader(s) must wear a face covering at all times, unless they are specifically exempted from the face covering requirements in Health Officer Order No. C19-12c, issued on July 22, 2020, as that order may be amended from time to time; and
- Equipment (e.g., Segways) may not be shared among participants and must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between each use with procedures effective



against the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. See [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Recommendations](#).

(Added 6/23/2020; Amended 9/17/2020)

Can I rent a Go-Cart?

Yes, businesses that rent equipment for outdoor recreational activities may operate, subject to conditions set forth in the [Order](#). And people can rent and use go-carts with members of their household—people from different households should not share a single go-cart.

(Added 6/23/2020)

Can I take my dog to a dog park?

Yes, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised that “[u]ntil we learn more about how this virus affects animals,” owners should “treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection.” Specifically, the CDC recommends that pet owners: “Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household,” “Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least six feet (2 meters) from other people and animals,” and “Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.” Accordingly, pet owners are urged to use on-leash dog parks or keep their dogs on a leash, particularly if the dog is not under voice control—pet owners who choose to let their dogs be off leash in an off-leash dog park should prevent their dog from interacting with other people or animals to the greatest extent feasible.

Also, you must wear a face covering at all times (subject to the limited exceptions in the Face Covering Order—e.g., for young children and people with a medical conditions), maintain at least six feet of physical distance from people and dogs from other households, bring your own water and bags for disposing of waste, and use your sleeve or a disposable cloth to touch high-touch surfaces like gates.

(Added 7/13/2020)

Can I throw a birthday party in the park? How about in my home?

Indoor gatherings of any size with people from outside of your household are still prohibited, so you may not host a birthday part—or any other gathering—in your home.

All people are strongly encouraged to continue staying safe at home and minimizing unnecessary interactions with others to the maximum extent possible. But you may host or attend outdoor gatherings subject to the following conditions:



1. No more than six people from up to two households may participate in an outdoor gathering that involves eating or drinking within six feet of each other, unless all are members of the same Household;
2. Groups consisting of members of up to three different households up to a maximum of 12 people in total between all households, may participate in any other outdoor gathering (where they wear face coverings and comply with Social Distancing Requirements between households as mentioned below), except that outdoor religious services and political protests are exempt from this cap.
3. Unless eating or drinking in a group of six people or fewer, participants outside of the same household must remain at least six feet apart from each other. Participants must otherwise follow all Social Distancing Requirements, and wear face coverings unless eating, drinking, or exempted from wearing a face covering under the Face Covering Order;
4. Simultaneous gatherings consisting of multiple groups may in the same outdoor area are not permitted; and
5. Participants and hosts of outdoor gatherings must comply with Directive 2020-19d regarding required best practices for outdoor gatherings and with the health guidelines [here](#).

(Added 7/13/2020; Amended 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020; 10/21/2020; 2/1/2021)

What other activities and facilities are not allowed under the Order?

Listed below are examples of activities not permitted to be done and facilities not permitted to be open under the order (both indoors and outdoors). Also, areas and facilities for such activities must be closed to public access including by signage and, as appropriate, by physical barriers facilities for such activities, but may be repurposed and open for other activities that are otherwise allowed under order. The prohibited activities and facilities include, by way of example:

- Indoor swimming in pools;
- Indoor pas, saunas and steam rooms;
- Indoor basketball and outdoor basketball with members of other households (unless it is non-contact and social distancing is maintained);
- Contact sports among members of different households, including football, rugby, wrestling, martial arts, volleyball, soccer, field hockey baseball, and softball (except among members of a single household);
- Indoor playgrounds;
- Barbeque areas;



- Indoor ice sports;
- Indoor ice skating;
- Roller skating indoors;
- Team crew;
- Water polo or other team water sports;
- Indoor bowling;
- Indoor gymnastic or trampoline activities with shared equipment; and
- Track and field or other competition events involving group of people or where equipment used by an individual is not disinfected between each user.

These activities are allowed by members of the same household or living unit.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020, 5/7/2020, 5/18/2020, 6/1/2020, 9/17/2020, 10/14/2020, 12/8/2020, 12/16/2020)

Can I take my kids to the playground?

City-owned and operated outdoor playgrounds were permitted to open on October 14. Guidance on reopening is available as part of Directive 2020-36. You may also continue to take your children to the park or other areas to run around in open spaces, or bring your own sports equipment to an open space as long as it is used only by members of your own household and not shared with other people.