



These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were last updated on March 29, 2021 and are no longer being updated. A summary of what is open and closed in San Francisco under the COVID-19 health orders and directives is contained in the current reopening chart, which can be found here. Please refer to the existing Health Orders and Directives for further guidance.

FAQS FOR SAN FRANCISCO HEALTH ORDERS

Updated 3/29/2021

Overview: On March 23, 2021, the State reassigned San Francisco from the red tier (tier 2) under the State’s Blueprint to the orange tier (tier 3) based on declining COVID-19 case and hospitalization rates. 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.

San Francisco revised its order to allow most businesses and activities that the State authorizes under its Blueprint framework in the orange tier to resume beginning March 24, subject to State and additional local safety protocols. The reopening includes the opening and expansion of a number of indoor and outdoor businesses and recreation activities and the opening of some additional indoor sectors, including indoor family entertain centers, like bowling and mini golf, on a limited basis. San Francisco’s reopening nearly aligns with what the State allows under the orange tier, with some exceptions, such as additional limits on indoor dining. A summary of what is open and closed in San Francisco under the COVID-19 health orders and directives is contained in the current reopening chart, which can be found here.

The San Francisco Health Officer and San Francisco’s Department of Public Health emphasize that the decisions to reopen and expand 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.

Even though case rates have come down significantly and more people are vaccinated, people who you come into contact with when you are outside of your residence may have COVID-19. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. Due to the limited supply of vaccine, only a minority of San Franciscans are fully vaccinated. We also have confirmed there are new, more contagious virus variants in the San Francisco Bay Area and that some of these variants are more likely to cause serious illness and death in unvaccinated people.



The opening and expansion 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 and expansion requires that all individuals and businesses use particular care and do their part to make these activities as safe as possible by strictly and consistently wearing face coverings, and following social distancing requirements and all other safety protocols.

People at risk for severe illness with COVID-19 – such as unvaccinated older adults and unvaccinated individuals with health risks – and members of their household are urged to defer participating at this time in activities with other people outside their household where taking protective measures of wearing face masks and social distancing may be difficult, especially indoors or in crowded spaces.

Also, you are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated as soon as you can once you are eligible. Vaccines will protect you and reduce the likelihood you will transmit the virus to others, who may be at risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19.

Currently, COVID-19 health rules apply equally to those people who have been vaccinated for COVID-19 as to those who have not, with some limited exceptions. For example, there is a limited exception from quarantine requirements for some people who have been fully vaccinated. See details at www.sfcddcp.org/quarantineaftervaccination.

These FAQs are updated periodically 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.

NOTE: ONCE SAN FRANCISCO ADVANCES TO THE YELLOW TIER AND FOR AS LONG AS SAN FRANCISCO REMAINS IN THE YELLOW TIER OR ANY LESS RESTRICTIVE TIER UNDER THE CALIFORNIA BLUEPRINT FOR A SAFER ECONOMY, THESE FAQs WILL CEASE TO BE UPDATED.

Background: More than a year 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 now able to reopen and expand more sectors, 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 of 2020 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. Much 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 a number of 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 increased, and on November 17, 2020, with the third surge 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 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.

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. 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. On March 2, 2021, the State reassigned San Francisco to the red (second most restrictive) tier, allowing for additional businesses, such as indoor dining and gyms, to reopen with restrictions. Three weeks later, on March 23, the State reassigned San Francisco to the orange (third most restrictive) tier, allowing even more indoor businesses and outdoor activities to resume. Although though case rates have come down significantly and people are getting vaccinated, there remains a risk of a fourth surge if individuals and businesses do not continue to remain vigilant and take safety precautions.

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 continuing to 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

On February 23, 2021, the San Francisco Health Officer rescinded the travel quarantine order. But the San Francisco and the California Departments of Public Health continue to strongly discourage non-essential travel to any part of California that is more than 120 miles from your place of residence. If you engage in non-essential travel to San Francisco from another county or return to San Francisco after traveling for any non-essential reason, you are still strongly urged to self-quarantine for 10 days after arrival, except as necessary to meet urgent critical healthcare staffing needs or otherwise engage in emergency response. For more information, see the State's travel advisory [here](#). For more information on what essential travel is, see the definition in the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order.

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 to the extent possible, and requires everyone to adhere to physical distancing and other social distancing requirements when they do go out. It also prohibits most large 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, which can be found [here](#).

(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, 3/29/2021)

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, which can be found [here](#).

- **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; 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, which can be found [here](#).

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, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

Why aren't more businesses allowed to open?

As a threshold matter San Francisco may only open what the State allows under its Blueprint framework. Also, 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 in part 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.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 5/18/2020, 6/1/2020, 7/13/2020, 9/17/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020, 3/5/2021)

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 to the extent 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 generally :

- (1) comply with the social distancing requirements—including the requirement generally 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 under 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; Amended 3/5/2021 and 3/29/2021)

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 people at risk for severe illness with COVID-19 – such as unvaccinated older adults and individuals with health risks – and members of their household are strongly urged to defer participating in activities with other people outside their household where taking protective measures of wearing face coverings and social distancing may be difficult, especially indoors or in crowded spaces.

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; Amended 3/29/2021)

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 face covering 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. 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 a 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 No. 2 Section 10 of Appendix C-2 to the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order, which can be found [here](#). Although outdoor activities remain safer, indoor political protests are permitted with capacity limits and face coverings and social distancing required at all times. Details regarding the current limitations for indoor political protests are also contained in Section 10 of Appendix C-2.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 10/14/2020, 2/1/2021, 2/10/2021, 3/29/2021)

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.

(Added 2/1/2021; Amended 3/29/2021)

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 25 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 50% 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.

People at risk for severe illness with COVID-19 – such as unvaccinated older adults, and unvaccinated individuals with health risks – and members of their households 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.

(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, 3/29/2021)

Can I sing, chant, or shout during an indoor or outdoor event, such as a religious service or political protest? What about playing a wind or brass instrument?

The rules for singing, shouting, cheering, etc. are contained in Section 3.i of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order. Currently, the rules are as follows:

Outdoors:

- People may sing, shout, cheer, etc. as long as they wear a face covering and remain at least six feet from other households;
- People may play a wind or brass instrument with an instrument cover as long as they remain at least six feet away from other households;
- Performers and event leaders may remove face coverings or instrument covers to speak, cheer, sing, play a wind or brass instrument, etc., but they must remain at least 12 feet way from other households;
- Performers and event leaders are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings and use instrument covers – as applicable – even if they are more than 12 feet away and even if only speaking; and
- There is no cap on the number of performers, event leaders, or other people who can speak, cheer, sing, etc. or play a wind or brass instrument at a time, subject to any specified limits for that activity.

Indoors:

Due to the ongoing, increased risk of COVID-19 transmission, singing, chanting, shouting, cheering, etc. and playing wind or brass instruments are strongly discouraged in indoor settings. But these activities are allowed indoors as follows:

- Subject to State restrictions, people may cheer, sing, etc. as long as they wear a face covering and remain at least 12-feet away from other households. Nobody may cheer, sing, etc. indoors without a face covering on; and



- People may play wind or brass instruments with an instrument cover as long as they remain at least 12 feet away from other households. Performers may wear a face covering with a mouth-slit in addition to, but not in place of, an instrument cover.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 3/29/2021)

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. Face coverings may be removed briefly to eat or drink but only when essential to a ritual or ceremony and in those instances, religious leaders must – to the greatest extent feasible – limit the number of people who remove a Face Covering to one individual at a time.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 3/5/2021)

Can I go to an indoor nightclub or live theater performance?

Generally, no. Indoor live entertainment venues are not allowed to operate with in-person audiences 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. You may refer to the current reopening chart for any updates to this rule. The reopening chart may be found [here](#)

Outdoor drive-in gatherings may also allow some live performances, such as lectures and theatrical, musical, or other arts performances subject to face coverings, social distancing requirements, and other safety protocols contained in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-28, which can be found [here](#).

(Amended 6/15/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020, 12/8/2020; 3/29/2021)

Can I go to a bar?

Indoor bars that serve alcoholic beverages without a bona fide meal remain closed. This includes wineries, breweries and distilleries that do not serve meals.

Outdoor bars that serve alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises without a bona fide meal are now permitted to operate under the same safety rules that apply to outdoor dining.

(Added 3/29/2021)



Can karaoke establishments open?

Yes, provided they follow certain conditions. Karaoke establishments that are structured like restaurants or bars that serve food and beverages and that have an indoor stage or performance may open if they are able to comply with the rules applicable to dining establishments (Health Officer Directive No. 2020-16) and Section 3.i. of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order that contains rules about singing, chanting, shouting, etc. Karaoke establishments that have individual, indoor karaoke rooms may also open, but must: (1) follow the rules in Section 3.i. of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order regarding singing, chanting, shouting, etc., (2) require patrons to wear Face Coverings at all times, and (3) not permit eating or drinking. If rooms are too small for the required 12 feet of physical distance between performers of different households, then only one household is allowed per room.

(Added 3/29/2021)

Can I go to a movie theater?

Yes. Indoor movie theaters are open with capacity limits and other restrictions related to the sale and consumption of concessions. Details are contained in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-35.

(Added 10/14/2020; Amended 12/8/2020, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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 No. 2020-28 and any applicable legal or permitting requirements. Some requirements include limiting drive-in gatherings to 100 vehicles or less and only one household per car, 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, and it is strongly recommended they be sold through an online or remote ordering system with concessions delivered directly to ordering vehicles. Drive-in gatherings that offer in-person purchase and pickup of concessions must comply with additional requirements contained in Directive No. 2020-28. Alcohol may not be sold at drive-in gathering events. A single person, such as a speaker or emcee, may speak if they are wearing a Face Covering at all times and maintain 6 feet of physical space from others while speaking.

Live group performances are also permitted at drive-in gatherings, subject to face covering, social distancing requirements, and other safety protocols. Performers are subject to the general safety rules contained at section 3.i of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order for singing, shouting, etc. and playing brass or wind instruments.



(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 11/24/2020, 2/1/2021, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

Can I go to an outdoor festival?

As of April 1, outdoor arts, music and theater performances and festivals are permitted for organized, supervised events with up to 50 patrons. Face coverings must be worn at all times, and members of different households must maintain at least six-foot distancing at all times. No assigned seating is required. Food and beverage service and concessions are allowed, but patrons must remain seated while consuming food and drinks. Additional details may be found in Health Officer Directive No. 2021-02.

(Added 3/29/2021)

Can I go to an outdoor concert or other event?

As of April 1 – and for so long as case rates remain generally flat or decline – outdoor permanent facilities with fixed seating may operate at up to 22% capacity (patrons only) with an approved health plan and other restrictions. Reservations and assigned seating are required. Additional details for operating live, outdoor events, including professional sports, can be found at Section 6 of Appendix C-1 of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order.

(Added 3/29/2021)

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 50% of the indoor dining establishment's maximum occupancy, or 200 people, whichever is less. Table size and number of households are limited for outdoor and indoor dining. Restaurants and other food service establishments must follow the applicable legal requirements in Directive No. 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. Also, dining outdoors is generally safer than dining indoors. Seating arrangements outdoors with at least six feet distance between seated patrons is generally safer than seating arrangements using a barrier with less than six feet distance. Unvaccinated older adults and other unvaccinated people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems – and those who live with them – are urged to defer dining out at this time.

(Amended 6/15/2020; 10/14/2020, 2/1/2021, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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. 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 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 must remain closed.

Outdoor and indoor common spaces may remain open for gatherings among members of the same household or as otherwise permitted by the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order.

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

- 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 outside their household;
- Shared outdoor pools and hot tubs must comply with the requirements of Directive No. 2020-24; and
- Shared outdoor fitness facilities must strictly comply with the requirements of Directive No. 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, 3/29/2021)

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, 3/5/2021)

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. Guidance regarding well-fitted masks may be found [here](#).

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). There are various types and ways to properly wear a face covering and to maximize effectiveness:

Mask Effectiveness (Fit + Filtration)

Good		Better				Best
2-3-Ply, Tightly Woven, Cloth Mask	Surgical Mask (ASTM Level 2/3 > 1)	Double Masks (Surgical + Cloth Mask)	Adjustment of Straps for Procedure Mask	Mask-Fitter or Brace	KN95 Respirators	NIOSH-approved N95 Respirators

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; Amended 3/5/2021)

Should I wear more than one mask (“double mask”) for more protection?

Double masking – wearing two masks of different material at the same time – can provide better protection to the wearer and those around them. But double masking may not be better than single masking, especially if you have a very high-quality single mask



or N95 respirator. Double masking may also be more uncomfortable and make it harder to breathe. The most important factor is that you consistently wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose. If a mask becomes uncomfortable and leads you to take it off periodically, it cannot protect you or those around you and is much more harmful than wearing a single mask consistently. SFPDPH has guidance [here](#) about how to properly double mask and other ways to ensure you are wearing your face covering properly.

(Added 3/5/2021)

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.

(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.

(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. Under federal rules, there are additional restrictions on required face coverings while people are riding public transit or in public transportation facilities (including, but not limited to, buses, streetcars, ferries, bus stations, ferry terminals, and airports). When you are on public transit or in a public transportation facility, you must wear a properly fitted face covering that covers your



nose and mouth. Bandanas, scarves and other loosely woven masks are not allowed in these settings.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 8/3/2020, 3/5/2021)

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.

(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 No. 2020-03. 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, unless you qualify under the specific conditions for a special exemption for those who have been fully vaccinated. You are required to follow the instructions in the Health Officer's Quarantine Directive No. 2020-02. Guidance on how to properly isolate or quarantine can be found [here](#). 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 may operate at the capacity permitted by their State licensing. The 16-person cap has been lifted per changes to State rules.
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, 3/29/2021)

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 more than one cohort. 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. Overnight summer camps will be allowed during Summer 2021 beginning on June 1 per State guidance and possible forthcoming additional local guidance.

(Added 5/22/2020, Amended 6/15/2020, 9/17/2020, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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-12 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>.

(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020, 12/8/2020, 3/5/2021)

What is the process for obtaining pre-approval to open TK-12 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 tracking 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, 3/5/2021)

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. Most out-of-school time youth programs (indoors and outdoors) must limit the group size to a maximum of 27 people (including children or youth and caregivers), subject to space constraints and social distancing requirements. Indoor sports programs are limited to 16 children or youth (including adults and staff).
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, 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 No. 2020-26. 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, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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

Yes, a child may be enrolled in up to two out-of-school time programs at a time. The two out-of-school time programs are in addition to any in-person TK-12 school a child is also enrolled in. If case rates remain low, the Health Officer may increase the number of out-of-school time programs a child is permitted to participate in at the same time. For current information regarding out-of-school time programs, refer to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-21.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 3/29/2021)

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. C19-12](#);
- 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 25 people total.

(Added 5/4/2020)

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

Yes, educational programs for adults, including those offered by colleges, universities, and vocational schools, are permitted to operate for in-person learning. Outdoor classes are limited to a maximum of 25 students, plus instructional staff. Indoor classes are limited to the lesser of 50% capacity (excluding instructors) or the number of people who can safely operate in the space while maintaining six feet of distance at all times. Indoor lectures are also capped at the lesser of 50% capacity or 200 people. Certain courses involving core essential healthcare or government services may not be subject to the 50% capacity limit. For more information, refer to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-22.

(Amended 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020; 12/8/2020, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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 sports, including practices, games and tournaments, are allowed without indoor spectators and with a safety plan for moderate-contact and high-contact sports. Details concerning the required safety plan may be found in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-22.

(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 3/29/2021)

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

Yes, vocational training and career pathway programs may operate under the terms of Directive No. 2020-22.

(Added 8/18/2020; Amended 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020; 12/8/2020; 3/5/2021)

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, 50% 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, 3/29/2021)



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?

Non-essential offices are permitted to reopen with capacity limits and other safety precautions, 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. For general rules and limits regarding office, refer to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-18.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/18/2020, 6/15/2020, 8/13/2020, 9/17/2020, 10/14/2020, 11/24/2020, 3/29/2021)

Can coworking spaces reopen?

Coworking spaces can operate subject to the following conditions:

- 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, 3/29/2021)



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

Yes. Reusable shopping bags and containers are allowed.

(Added 7/13/2020; Amended 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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

Yes, businesses may allow customers to use their own reusable mugs or other containers.

(Added 7/13/2020; Amended 2/1/2021, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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.

(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) high-touch surfaces are wiped down with an approved disinfectant at least once daily, 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; Amended 3/29/2021)

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?

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 No. 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. 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, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

Can gyms or fitness centers operate?

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)



Do the same rules apply to City gyms for employees?

Yes.

Can indoor fitness classes operate?

Yes, indoor fitness classes may operate subject to certain limitations contained in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-31, including capacity limits, ventilation, and face covering requirements. Participants must also maintain at least 12 feet of distance between households at all times.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 3/29/2021)

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

Yes, but only if the club can operate in compliance with the Health Officer's directive regarding youth and adult recreational sports, Directive No. 2021-01, including that all participants maintain at least six feet of physical distance and wear Face Coverings at all times.

(Added 2/1/2021; Amended 3/5/2021)

Can I attend a hot yoga or hot Pilates class?

Yes, hot yoga and indoor Pilates classes must follow the same rules required for other indoor fitness classes and contained in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-31.

(Amended 3/29/2021)

Can kids' sports classes reopen?

Yes, indoor and outdoor youth athletics programs are permitted if they comply with Health Officer Directive No. 2021-01, which can be found [here](#).

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 8/18/2020, 12/8/2020, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

Are swimming classes allowed?

Indoor and outdoor swimming and drowning-prevention classes for children may operate under the terms of Health Officer Directive No. 2020-24, which can be found [here](#).

(Added 2/1/2021; Amended 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

HOUSEHOLD SERVICES

Are housekeeping/house cleaning services permitted?

Yes. If others are present while the home is being cleaned, they must strictly comply with social distancing and face covering requirements.



(Added 5/7/2020; Amended 6/15/2020, 3/29/2021)

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 No. 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?

Yes, under certain conditions. 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 should happen virtually (via video or livestream). If a virtual viewing is not possible, then in-



person showings can occur by appointment. Commercial viewings should be limited to the minimum number of persons possible. No open houses are allowed.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 5/4/2020, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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 10 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 from the San Francisco Department of Public Health, which can be found [here](#).



(Added 4/6/2020; Amended 4/29/2020, 5/14/2020, 7/13/2020, 3/5/2021)

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 No. 2020-03 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 50% 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 No. 2020-34.

(Amended 7/13/2020; 8/18/2020; 9/17/2020; 10/14/2020, 2/10/2021, 3/29/2021)



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 50% 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 No. 2020-34.

(Added 9/17/2020; Amended 10/14/2020, 2/10/2021, 3/29/2021)

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 25 people indoors or 50 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. C19-12, 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
- The production must comply with the rules for singing, chanting, etc. and use of brass or wind instruments contained at Section 3.i of the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order.

(Added 6/30/2020; Amended 11/24/2020, 3/29/2021)



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?

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. At this time, an alcoholic beverage may only be served indoors if it 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 indoors who has not ordered a bona fide meal. Bars and restaurants may serve alcoholic beverages outdoors even if the customer has not ordered a bona fide meal, subject to the safety protocols for outdoor dining.

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, 3/29/2021)

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?

Yes, on March 2, 2021, 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 No. 2020-16. Indoor dining is currently limited at 50% of the establishment's maximum occupancy, or up to 200 people, whichever is less, and three households up to six people per table. The occupancy limit does not include personnel or patrons seated outside. Restaurants are strongly encouraged to continue maximizing use of outdoor spaces.

(Added 10/14/2020; Amended 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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

Yes, but you may only sell an alcoholic beverage indoors 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 No. 2020-16.

(Added 5/28/2020; Amended 6/15/2020, 10/14/2020, 3/29/2021)

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, large group reservations are not permitted. Group reservations for up to two tables of six people are permitted, but only for outdoor dining and only if there will not be mingling between patrons at the different tables (regardless of whether they are from the same household). No other social gatherings at restaurants are currently permitted.

(Added 6/15/2020; Amended 10/14/2020, 3/29/2021)

Do I need to screen customers?

Yes. 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)

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

Yes. Retail stores are 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. 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



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 No. 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. Indoor shopping centers that previously received written approval to reopen are not required to submit a new plan to SFDPH.

Indoor shopping may also reopen food courts at 50% of maximum occupancy, up to 200 people and comply with Directive No. 2020-16. The indoor shopping center must have a plan for cordoning off or otherwise physically separating the food court area to limit entry.

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 ay 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@sfcityattt.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; 3/5/2021; 3/29/2021)

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 also now permitted with certain additional safety precautions.

Consistent with the limitations under the State health order, the following services may not be offered outdoors: electrolysis, 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 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, at 50% capacity. Services that require a customer to remove their Face Covering, such as full facials, lip waxing, and beard trims, are permitted with limitations, including that the service provider must wear eye protection and a well-fitted mask and are strongly recommended to wear an N-95 respirator. Personal service providers should refer to Health Officer Directives 2020-23 and 2020-30 for additional details.

(Amended 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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?

Yes, lodging facilities like hotels, motels, and short-term rentals are open in San Francisco, subject to the requirements of Directive No. 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, 3/5/2021)

Can I use the fitness center at my hotel?

Hotels may open gyms and fitness centers subject to the same minimum safety precautions that apply to indoor gyms and fitness centers generally. Hotels with gyms and fitness centers must also comply with Health Officer Directive Nos. 2020-27 (outdoor fitness) and 2020-31 (indoor fitness).



(Added 10/14/2020; Amended 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

Can I eat at the restaurant in my hotel?

Yes. Hotel restaurants may operate under the same terms as other dining establishments provided they comply with the terms of Directive No. 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 No. 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 10 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; Amended 3/5/2021)



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?

Yes, subject to the same rules that apply to small indoor gatherings.

(Added 9/17/2020 and revised 3/29/2021)

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 10 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, 3/5/2021)

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 pawned 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. C19-12 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. C19-12, 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)

Are indoor museums, zoos, and aquariums open?

Yes. 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, (excluding personnel) who are present in the facility to the lesser of: (1) 50% 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 may also reopen for outdoor and indoor dining as permitted under the terms of Directive No. 2020-16.

(Amended 3/29/2021)

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?

Possibly. Each institution may determine whether to allow coat or bag checks. SFPD's health rules no longer prohibit them from doing so.

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. Distancing between passengers on public transit may be reduced to three feet in accordance with a health and safety plan. At least six feet of distance is still required between the driver and all passengers at all times.

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, 3/29/2021)

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 10 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, 3/5/2021)

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. C19-12, as that order may be amended from time to time; and
- 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 and indoor 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. Many other indoor and outdoor recreational activities are also now permitted, as detailed in Health Officer Directive No. 2021-01.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 6/1/2020, 9/17/2020, 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

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)



Can I participate in organized adult or youth sports?

Yes, adults and children may participate in outdoor and indoor organized sports under the terms of Health Officer Directive No. 2021-01. Businesses or individuals that host organized sports must be able to comply with the requirements of Directive No. 2021-01, including preparation of a health and safety plan. Participants in organized sports may only participate in one organized sports program in any three-week period.

(Added 3/5/2021, 3/29/2021)

What other types of non-organized, outdoor sports can I participate in?

Individuals from up to three households (no more than 25 people total) may engage in any of the following recreational activities together **outdoors**:

- Outdoor activities that involve sharing projectiles (e.g., throwing a ball or a frisbee);
- Outdoor low-contact sports that the State allows in the purple tier, such as bocce ball, lawn bowling, walking, running, hiking, biking, and dance and martial arts without contact;
- Outdoor moderate sports such as baseball, softball, field hockey, gymnastics, cheerleading, and – per State guidelines because sport rules prohibit contact – girl’s or women’s lacrosse;
- Outdoor high-contact sports such as football, basketball, soccer, rugby, crew and boy’s or men’s lacrosse;
- Outdoor shared exercise equipment available to members of the public, such as pull-up bars and parcourses (users are urged to disinfect before and after their own use); and
- Outdoor recreational activities with members from different households as otherwise expressly provided for specific facilities, such as outdoor pools, tennis and pickleball courts, and golf courses.

Participants in outdoor recreational activities must generally try to maintain at least six feet of distance from members of other households to the greatest extent feasible (subject to contact that is part of the necessary play in moderate-contact and high-contact sports) and wear Face Coverings at all times, including while playing.

Individuals from up to three households (no more than 12 people total) may engage in any of the following recreational activities together **indoors**:

- indoor low-contact sports with face coverings and 12-feet of distancing from others outside their household when engaging in aerobic activities;
- indoor recreation allowed under other sector guidance, such as gyms and fitness classes; and



- indoor recreation activities with members from different households expressly allowed for specific facilities, such as indoor swimming pools, tennis, and pickleball.

For an illustrative list of outdoor low-contact, moderate-contact, and high-contact sports, see CDPH's guidance available [here](#).

Adults and youth may also participate in organized and supervised leagues or clubs, but must comply with the requirements of Health Officer Directive No. 2021-01.

(Added 3/5/2021; Amended 3/29/2021)

Can I use public barbeques or picnic benches?

Yes, public outdoor recreation facilities such as benches, picnic tables and barbeques may be used as long as members from other households maintain at least six-feet of distance. Users are also urged to clean and disinfect equipment before and after their own use.

(Added 3/29/2021)

What other outdoor activities are permitted under the Order?

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

- Hiking;
- Walking dogs on leash;
- Sunbathing or picnicking when sufficient distance is maintained at all times between members of a household and others not in the same household;
- Swimming, surfing, or paddling in the ocean or lakes;
- Exploring rock pools;
- Gardening;
- Meditation;
- Kayaking and sculling;
- Paddle boarding, kitesurfing and windsurfing;
- Skateboarding, including at a skate-park;
- Roller-skating and roller-blading;
- Archery ranges;
- Tai Chi,
- Yoga;



- Bird watching;
- Kite flying;
- Outdoor photography;
- Fishing, including fly casting; and
- Equestrian activities.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020, 5/1/2020; 5/4/2020, 9/17/2020, 3/5/2021)

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 25 people. More than one group may be permitted on the boat provided that the operator complies with Directive No. 2020-19;
- 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 regularly 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. C19-12, 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, 3/29/2021)

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](#). Outdoor basketball courts may remain open and their use is subject to the terms of Health Officer Directive No. 2021-01 concerning youth and adult recreational sports.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020, 6/1/2020, 3/5/2021)

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

Yes, subject to certain conditions contained in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-24. (Amended 3/29/2021)

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

Yes, indoor pools and hot tubs may operate subject to the conditions contained in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-24.

(Amended 3/29/2021)

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 25 people. More than one group may be permitted on the tour provided that the organizer/operator complies with Directive No. 2 Directive No. 2020-19;
- 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. C19-12, as that order may be amended from time to time; and
- High-touch equipment (e.g., Segways) should 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, 3/29/2021)

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?

Small indoor gatherings in residences of up to three households and no more than 12 people are now permitted so long as all participants wear face coverings at all time, no food or beverages are consumed, and participants maintain at least six-feet of distance from those outside of their own households. Indoor gatherings – except for fully vaccinated individuals – are still strongly discouraged at this time. Small gatherings in residences with fully vaccinated individuals where individuals who have been vaccinated or are low risk for COVID-19 may remove face coverings to the extent allowed under State rules and in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Outdoor gatherings subject to the following conditions:

1. No more than six people from up to three 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 25 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 No. 2020-19 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; 3/29/2021)

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 No. 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.