

FAQS FOR SAN FRANCISCO HEALTH ORDERS

Updated 5/6/2020

We are at a critical point in managing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. According to health experts, our collective actions have had a positive impact. Hospitalizations for COVID-19 infected patients in San Francisco have been stable for several weeks. However, the vast majority of the population remains susceptible to infection, and there is not yet an effective treatment or cure for the disease. San Francisco is working on building up its testing, case finding, case investigation and contact tracing capacity. While that happens, it is imperative that the City extend the duration of its stay-at-home order. At the same time, we can ease restrictions on some activities with a lower risk of spreading the virus. 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 to align with the best public health practices and any changes to the Order as circumstances evolve. We have a path forward. Everyone needs to continue to pull together—and together we will get through this.

STAY SAFE AT HOME EXPLAINED

What does the Order do?

As of May 4, 2020, there will be a new Order that replaces the existing stay-at-home order (“May 4 Order”). The May 4 Order requires that most people continue sheltering in their place of residence through May 31, 2020. However, the new Order makes a number of significant changes, which are highlighted below:

Essential Businesses:

- Under the new May 4 Order, all construction projects can resume, provided they comply with the Construction Project Safety Protocols issued as part of the Order.
- Commercial as well as residential real estate transactions are allowed to fully resume, but with continued restrictions on in-person viewings and appointments.
- Under the new Order, childcare establishments, and other educational and recreational programs can operate to provide care and supervision for children to allow all persons who are working in essential businesses or outdoor businesses or performing minimum basic operations to access childcare. All of these operations must comply, to the greatest extent possible, with restrictions specified in the Order, including that they be carried out in stable groups of 12 or fewer children. This category is also subject to the State’s Shelter in Place Order,

but the Health Officer will assess whether to ease childcare restrictions further in coordination with the State and as the spread of COVID-19 is further contained.

Outdoor Businesses:

- Outdoor Businesses (as defined in the Order and described below) are now allowed to operate, and people are allowed to visit them to perform work or to obtain goods, services, or supplies.
- Outdoor Businesses are those that normally operated primarily outdoors prior to the Shelter in Place Orders, 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.

Social Distancing Protocols for Businesses:

- All business facilities operating in the County, including businesses carrying out minimum basic operations, must comply with the requirement to create a Social Distancing Protocol. (Note: construction activities must instead comply with the Construction Project Safety Protocols.)
- In their Social Distancing Protocols, businesses must now ensure that personnel and customers wear face coverings when entering their facilities (except those customers for whom face coverings are not recommended, like young children).
- All existing Social Distancing Protocols must be updated to reflect the new requirements.
- We encourage businesses that are not yet allowed to operate to focus on planning to effectively implement social distancing and related measures in their facilities so they are ready to safely reopen when allowed.

Essential Activities and Travel:

- All residential moves are now allowed to proceed.

Recreation:

- The new Order allows use of shared outdoor recreational facilities that do not encourage gathering or contain high-touch equipment. However, everyone must follow any restrictions that either state or local authorities impose.

COVID-19 Indicators:

- The Health Officer will consider easing or expanding restrictions based on progress we collectively achieve on several key indicators described in the new Order and referred to as the COVID-19 Indicators.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

When does the new Order go into effect?

The new Order is in effect starting at 11:59 p.m. on May 3, 2020.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

How long does the new Order last?

The new Order is currently set to last until May 31, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. The City's Health Officer may choose to shorten or extend the time period based on what the health situation demands. How long the restrictions are in place will depend on what the Health Officer decides is necessary to protect public health.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

Can the new Order be changed?

Yes. The Health Officer may make changes to the new Order as more information emerges about the public health situation and may issue new orders and directives as conditions warrant.

Why aren't more businesses allowed to open?

Thanks to the collective effort and sacrifice of the 7 million residents across the Bay Area, we have made progress in slowing the spread of the novel coronavirus, ensuring our hospitals are not overwhelmed with COVID-19 cases and saving lives. This progress allows us to ease some restrictions to allow lower-risk outdoor businesses and outdoor activities to resume, so long as they strictly comply with social distancing requirements and other protections in the Order.

The Order also adds certain business activities to the essential business list, including construction and commercial real estate transactions—that have become critical as we gradually head into a period of expanded economic activity in which more space to accommodate increased social distancing will be necessary.

However, at this stage of the pandemic, we need to maintain most of the restrictions of shelter-in-place so that we do not lose the progress we have achieved. Lifting too many restrictions too soon could easily lead to a large surge in cases and result in avoidable hospitalizations and deaths, and it may also lead to longer-term economic harms.

(Added 4/29/2020)

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.

I run an “Essential Business” or “Outdoor Business” as defined by the new May 4 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” or “Outdoor 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)

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.

(Added 4/7/2020)

I work for an “Essential Business” or “Outdoor Business” as defined by the new 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 new Order. But be prepared to explain if requested by law enforcement why your travel is allowed under the Order.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

What does it mean to “shelter in place?”

The term “shelter in place” means to stay safe in your home and not leave unless necessary for one of the exceptions listed in the Order (discussed more below).

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 is the difference between “sheltering in place” and “social distancing”?

Sheltering in place is a more rigorous form of social distancing.

Sheltering in place means you:

- Must stay at home

- Can only leave your home for “essential activities” or “outdoor activities,” to work for an “essential business” or “outdoor businesses,” to provide or access “essential governmental functions,” to perform “minimum basic operations” for your employer, or for “essential travel,” as those terms are defined in the new Order (you can also see the FAQs for details)
- Cannot host or attend any gatherings

In addition, you should also maintain at least 6 feet of separation from other people who are not in your household; wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds each time (or use hand sanitizer); cough or sneeze into a tissue or your sleeve (not into your hands); wear a face covering when out in public; and stay home if you are sick.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

What if I am homeless?

Persons experiencing homelessness are exempt from the Order’s requirement that they shelter in place in their residence and its prohibition against all travel other than essential travel. However, 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. 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)

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

Call 311, except for the specific complaints listed below. 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.

If you observe one of the following specific situations, it is best to call police non-emergency dispatch at 415-553-0123. Don’t call 911 for these situations. If you forget the non-emergency dispatch number, just call 311:

- Any of the following businesses is open or appears to be serving customers:
 - bars, taverns, nightclubs, arcades and other entertainment venues
 - theaters and concert halls
 - movie theaters

- gyms, athletic clubs and fitness studios
- barbershops, salons, manicurists and health spas
- smoke shops
- Any small corner or convenience store that sells alcoholic beverages is open after 8 p.m. or before 6 a.m.
- Any restaurant, café, or coffee shop is allowing seating or consumption of food or drink on the premises. (Only take-out and delivery are allowed.)

(Added 4/6/2020)

How do I report gatherings outside where people in different households don't seem to be practicing social distancing, or the use of outdoor recreation facilities (like playgrounds, tennis courts, and basketball courts) that have been closed?

It is best to call police non-emergency dispatch at 415-553-0123 (but if you forget that number, just call 311).

(Added 4/6/2020)

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Can I leave home to visit friends or family members in another household or living unit if there is no urgent need or I am not performing an essential activity?

No. For your safety as well as their safety, you are not allowed to visit friends or family members outside your own household. We need to help each other fight the spread of COVID-19 by staying at home.

Can I still get my mail and deliveries?

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

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

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

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

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

(Added 4/2/2020)

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

Yes.

Can I go to the bank?

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

(Added 4/2/2020)

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

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

(Added 4/29/2020)

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Added 4/2/2020)

What if I can't get out of the home? 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 leave home to go to my church, synagogue, or mosque?

No. 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. Places of worship may offer 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 building remains closed to the public; (2) the live stream is limited to the fewest number of personnel needed for the live stream of the service (up to a maximum of 10 people) and (3) they comply with all social distancing and sanitation requirements.

(Amended 4/30/2020)

How can I buy non-essential products if stores are closed?

Most items can be ordered online and delivered to your home, and many other non-essential items may be available from retailers who primarily sell essential items.

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

No. Entertainment venues are not allowed to operate.

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

Yes, but only to pick up food. You cannot dine, eat, or drink in or around the facility. These facilities can also deliver.

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. Use of enclosed dog parks is prohibited, while open spaces that allow dogs are still open. 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)

Are dog walkers allowed?

If nobody is at home to walk the dog because they work for essential businesses or provide essential services, or if the dog's guardians are incapable of walking the dog for medical reasons, then dog walkers are permitted to walk the dog. Otherwise, dog walkers are not permitted. Dog walkers should comply with social distancing requirements—with respect to themselves and the dogs in their care—to the greatest extent feasible, which may require reducing the number of dogs walked at a time.

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.

Can I take my dog to a groomer?

Veterinary clinics may provide grooming services, and you may use these services as necessary to maintain the health of your animals. In addition, in-home care for pets is permitted to continue under the Order. Other grooming services/facilities may provide grooming services to animals only if the owner provides a written statement from a veterinarian that the particular animal requires grooming for health reasons, and that the grooming cannot be reasonably delayed.

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

Can I take my pet to a kennel?

Maybe. Pet kennels (day care and overnight) may operate, but only to provide care to pets of people who work for an essential business or outdoor businesses, perform minimum basic operations for a business, work as an essential governmental employee, or are subject to isolation or quarantine as a result of COVID-19 diagnosis or exposure. Facilities must comply with all social distancing requirements, including preparation and posting of a social distancing protocol.

(Added 4/29/2020)

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

Restaurants, cafes, food trucks, and similar establishments are encouraged to remain open to supply meals to the public via delivery and carryout. You can also purchase prepared foods at grocery stores, supermarkets, certified farmers' markets, convenience stores, and other such food retailers.

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.

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

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

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

No. For apartment dwellers, the Order’s shelter-in-place requirements for the “household or living unit” means their own apartment unit, not the building or complex as a whole. Common recreational spaces shared with others in the apartment building or complex, like apartment gyms, roof decks, barbecue areas, and roof decks, must be closed like any other public recreational space that contains high-touch equipment or encourages gathering.

(Added 4/6/2020)

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

Apartment residents should be allowed to access facilities that are required for household cleaning and sanitation needs. Owners of apartment buildings must enhance cleaning of high-touch surfaces in these areas, and residents must observe all social distancing requirements in the Order, including maintaining at least 6 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))

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

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

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

How do I clean a face covering?

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

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

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, 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, but the purpose of the face covering is to limit droplets that you expel. For that reason, masks with one-way valves are not allowed under the Face Covering Order.

The Face Covering Order talks about children 2 years old and under not being allowed to wear a face covering. Why is that?

Children 2 years old and under cannot safely use a face covering. There could be a risk of suffocation for children so young.

Is a child between 3 and 12 years old required to wear a face covering?

No. Children from 3 to 12 years old may wear a face covering, but it is not required. Parents and caregivers must supervise use of a face covering by children in this range in order to 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.

I operate an essential business, outdoor business, or another business or facility that is permitted by the shelter in place order to engage in minimum basic operations or to provide essential infrastructure. 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 in order 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.

You are also required to post a sign at entrances notifying people that they are not permitted in 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 12 who is not wearing a face covering unless they are excused by the Face Covering Order from wearing a face covering.

What are the reasons that someone is allowed not to wear a face covering in an essential business, outdoor 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 12 years old or younger;
- A medical professional has advised you that wearing a face covering may pose a risk to your health, and you have documentation of that advisement;
- Wearing a face covering would create a risk to you related to your work as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines;
- You have trouble breathing;
- You are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance;
- You have a physical disability that prevents you from wearing a face covering;
- If you are deaf and use facial and mouth movements as part of communication, you can remove your mask while signing.

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

Children between 2 and 12 years old are not required by the Face Covering Order to wear a face covering, but they also should not jeopardize social distancing for others in the area. You may ask a parent or caregiver if they have a face covering they can use for a child. 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.

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

No. Face coverings cannot cover the eyes or forehead. Also, a face covering should conform with the nose and mouth fairly well, and a rigid plastic mask would not do this.

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 in order to avoid breathing droplets that could contaminate areas where guests or customers will sit and touch.

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 12 years old while waiting for or on public transit, including the operator of the vehicle.

Am I allowed to take my face covering off when I am at work doing an activity authorized by the stay-at-home order and nobody else is around?

Sometimes. When you are in a private office or other room where members of the public, customers, or others are not present or are unlikely to be present, you may remove the face covering. You must wear a face covering when interacting in person in the same space as others in your office or facility. You must also wear a face covering in any area where customers or members of the public are likely to be present, even if they are not there at the time. Employees must wear masks if co-workers are nearby.

Do I need to wear a face covering when walking down the street or hiking?

Generally, no, but sometimes you should if you cannot maintain six feet or more of distance between you and others on the sidewalk or the hiking area. When social distancing is not possible, you should put on your face covering.

Do I need to wear a face covering when running or bicycling outside?

The Order recommends that you take steps to limit the droplets that you spread when exercising. When running, biking, or doing other activities outside, you may spread droplets farther than normal. This makes the 6-foot physical distance less adequate. You should avoid running or riding directly in front of or behind people or through groups of people so you don't expose yourself or others to droplets. You should have a face covering on you and wear it when you may be too close to others while engaged in these activities.

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.

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 who relies on the visibility of their mouth to help communicate (such as with American Sign Language), a face covering should be used when not communicating. For someone with a long-term condition that makes it impossible to wear a face covering, you should consult with your healthcare provider for

advice on how to best protect yourself and others when in public. You should also get documentation from a medical professional showing they have advised you to not wear a face covering.

HEALTHCARE OPERATIONS

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. 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 or an elective procedure. Can I go to that appointment?

Probably not. Under a separate order (Order No. C19-08), the Health Officer has ordered all medical providers (such as doctors, dentists, and ophthalmologists) and healing arts practitioners (such as massage therapists, chiropractors, and acupuncturists) to postpone routine appointments and elective surgeries except in certain situations. You should contact your healthcare provider to discuss whether your appointment or procedure can be postponed without a negative medical or health impact on you. If so, it should be postponed or conducted remotely. Even if your appointment is essential and cannot be postponed, your appointment should occur remotely if possible. Medical providers and healing arts practitioners can only permit an essential, in-person appointment after doing a screening of you by phone in advance for symptoms and following protective Social Distancing Requirements.

(Added 4/2/2020)

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

A: No, not yet. San Francisco Health Officer Order No. C19-08 (available online [here](#)) prohibits most elective surgeries from occurring. The Health Officer is working on a revision to that order that will permit elective surgeries to occur subject to specific safety protocols to avoid putting the patient or the surgical staff at undue risk. The new order is expected to be issued before May 11, 2020. By contrast, UCSF has different rules that apply because it is a state institution. It has recently begun performing elective surgeries according to its own safety protocols under the state health order.

(Added 5/6/2020)

Q: I work at a doctor's office, health clinic, dental office, talking therapy office, physical therapy office, acupuncture studio, or other licensed provider of Healing Arts that is licensed by the State of California. I know the state is starting to re-open certain activities. Can my office start providing care to clients or patients in person?

A: No, not yet, with a few exceptions. San Francisco Health Officer Order No. C19-08 (available online [here](#)) currently allows certain doctors, dentists, counselors, and other Healing Arts practitioners to meet with patients or clients in person for essential care where a patient or client would suffer a negative medical or health impact without the care and where certain infection control practices are in place. That order also permits all tele-medicine or remote visits to occur. Other clinical visits are not yet allowed. The Health Officer is working on a revision to that order that will permit clinical visits to occur subject to specific safety protocols to avoid putting the patient/client or the office staff at undue risk. The new order is expected to be issued before May 11, 2020.

(Added 5/6/2020)

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

Probably not in person, but you can participate remotely. Under a separate order (Order No. C19-08), the Health Officer has ordered all counselors, including psychologists, marriage and family therapist, and licensed clinical social workers, to postpone in-person routine counseling appointments or conduct them by phone or videoconference. 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.

(Added 4/2/2020)

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)

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 requirements set forth in the Order, including maintaining at least 6 foot distance between individuals and capping group size to reduce in-person interactions.

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.

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.

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. If you were exposed to someone who was diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, you should quarantine for the recommended time in order to not expose others if you happen to have the virus yourself. Contact your healthcare provider if you have additional questions, or go to the DPH website at www.sfdph.org.

(Added 4/2/2020)

CARETAKING AND EDUCATION

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

Generally, no. There are limited exceptions, such as if you are going to the hospital with a minor who is under 18 years old or someone who is developmentally disabled and needs assistance. For most other situations, other existing Orders of the Health Officer addressing this emergency prohibit non-necessary visitation to these kinds of facilities. If you need to know more, please contact the facility you want to visit by phone before you leave. This is difficult, but it is necessary in order to protect hospital staff and other patients.

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.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

Are childcare facilities allowed to operate?

As of May 4, childcare establishments and other educational or recreational institutions or programs can operate to provide care or supervision for children of all ages to enable people to work for an essential business or outdoor business, perform minimum basic operations for a business, or work as an essential governmental employee—whether those people are working from home or from a business facility (e.g., a doctor doing telemedicine from home).

Childcare facilities need to comply with the following conditions in the Order to the extent possible:

1. Childcare must be carried out in stable groups of 12 or fewer. “Stable” means that the same 12 or fewer children are in the same group each day.
2. Children shall not change from one group to another.
3. If more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room. Groups shall not mix with each other.
4. Childcare providers shall remain solely with one group of children.

Childcare establishments are also subject to the State’s Shelter in Place Order, but the Health Officer will assess whether to ease childcare restrictions further in coordination with the State and as the spread of COVID-19 is further contained.

Parents are still prohibited from organizing gatherings of children, even in small groups.

(Amended 4/29/2020, 4/30/3030, 5/1/2020; 5/4/2020)

I am a nanny. Will I get in trouble if I go to work?

You won’t get in trouble if you go to work. The Order allows nannies and childcare providers caring for a child in the child’s own home to continue working.

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 10 people total.

(Added 5/4/2020)

May a high school hold a drive-in graduation ceremony, where the students and members of their household stay in their own cars and the cars remain at least six feet apart from one another at all times?

No. These ceremonies are large gatherings outside of a household that are not allowed under the current order. There are many potential health risks that such a gathering could pose, such as people getting out of their cars to use the bathroom or for other purposes; rolling down their car windows to get fresh air, hear a program or talk with others; and the handing out of diplomas to graduates. By contrast, certain limited outdoor activities like going to the beach are allowed so that individuals can continue to engage in healthy and safe recreation activities that do not involve the risks of large gatherings of this sort. Still, we recognize the disappointment this restriction causes for students and their families. The Health Officer will continue to monitor the situation to see whether ceremonies of this sort may occur later this summer, if health conditions warrant doing so and there are adequate guidelines in place to ensure the ceremonies may be conducted safely.

(Added 5/6/2020)

BUSINESSES

Will all business offices and stores be required to close?

No. “Essential businesses” may keep their facilities open (and are strongly encouraged to keep them open) to continue providing essential services and products to the public. In addition, as of May 4, “Outdoor Businesses” are allowed to keep their facilities open. Employees may leave home to go to jobs at these businesses. But all businesses, including essential ones, are required to maximize the number of employees working from home and bring in only those employees who can’t carry out their job duties from home.

Non-essential businesses must cease all activities at their facilities within San Francisco, except to provide minimum basic operations, such as maintaining the value of a business’s inventory, keeping the business site safe and secure, ensuring that employees are able to work remotely, or providing for the delivery of existing inventory to residences or businesses. Employees may otherwise work from home.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

What if my business is not considered an essential business or (as of May 4) an outdoor business? Does this Order require that I shut down my business facility?

Yes, it does, except for the following “Minimum Basic Operations,” which are defined in the following excerpt from the Order:

- 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.

Other than to maintain minimum basic operations, your employees can only work remotely from their residences. 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)

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

A business can request reconsideration of a directive to temporarily shut down or change its operations by emailing HealthOrderAppeals@sfcityatty.org. 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)

I operate an indoor store that sells only non-essential goods (for example, books, records, games, jewelry, or apparel). Can I continue to sell products to customers at my storefront?

No. If you do not sell a significant amount of essential goods like food, hygiene, or cleaning products, you cannot keep your storefront open, you cannot have people (employees or customers) in your store, and you cannot allow customers to pick up orders or be served curbside or “at the door.” Your store may ship or deliver items directly to customers’ residences. Beyond making items available for delivery, you can only maintain minimum basic operations, such as store security and safeguarding your inventory.

(Added 4/7/2020; Amended 4/29/2020)

I work for a large technology company that provides products and services that the public needs to access critical services. Is my company being completely shut down?

No. But most employees of these companies need to work from home. The only employees of these companies who can go to work are: (i) employees who are needed to maintain the minimum basic operations described in the Order; or (ii) employees who are needed to work onsite to operate, maintain, or repair Essential Infrastructure (i.e., essential global, national, and local infrastructure for internet, computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services for the community) and who cannot perform their work duties from home.

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)

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, if they provide essential services (or as of May 4, run an outdoor business) as described in the Order. This would include non-profits operating food pantries, providing housing for homeless residents, and providing other critical services. Non-profit organizations that do not provide essential services cannot continue operating their facilities, except to provide minimum basic operations, such as maintaining the value of inventory, keeping the site safe and secure, providing for the delivery of existing inventory to residences or businesses, or ensuring that employees are able to work remotely. All employees may also work remotely from their residences.

All employees must strictly comply with the Order's social distancing requirements, including maintaining a distance of at least six feet from one another (unless closer contact is necessary for their work), 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)

What if some of the work my business does at its facility is essential and some is non-essential?

Businesses that include an Essential Business component at their facilities alongside non-essential components must scale down their in-person operations to the Essential Business component only. For instance, if 20% of manufacturing capacity in your business is devoted to essential products, and 80% of capacity is devoted to non-essential products, you can only operate at 20% capacity. The one exception to this rule is that retail businesses that sell a significant amount of essential products like food, personal hygiene, and consumer household products may keep their entire retail storefronts open even if some of the products they sell are non-essential.

I operate a “big box store” that sells some clothing in addition to groceries and personal hygiene products. Can I keep open the part of my store that sells clothing?

Yes. If your store sells a significant amount of groceries and hygiene products, you can keep your entire store open.

I operate a store that mainly sells non-essential goods, but also sells a small amount of essential goods like food and hygiene products. Can I continue to sell products to customers at my storefront?

No. If you do not sell a significant amount of goods like food, hygiene, or cleaning products, you cannot keep your storefront open. Your store can deliver items directly to customers' residences, but you cannot have people in your store and you cannot allow

customers to pick up orders or be served curbside or “at the door.” Beyond making items available for delivery, you can only maintain minimum basic operations, such as store security and safeguarding your inventory.

(Amended 4/6/2020)

Under the Order, convenience stores, liquor stores, and other similar types of establishments can stay open if a “significant” portion of the inventory they sell to the public consists of food, hygienic products, or household products necessary for the sanitation, habitability, and operation of a residence. What is a “significant” portion?

These storefronts may stay open if at least 25% of the floor area used for product sales is used for food, hygienic products, and/or household consumer products necessary for personal hygiene or the habitability, sanitation, or operation of residences.

(Added 4/7/2020)

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.

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.

What best practices should farmers’ markets follow to reduce the risk of transmission?

Spacing:

- All vendors are spaced at least 6 feet apart from one another. As each booth is at least a 10ft square, this offers 16 feet between the start of one tent and the start of another.

- All vendors are required to put a physical barrier (such as caution tape) between them and the produce they are selling.
- No produce sampling.
- No seating.
- All prepared foods must be served to go.
- Customers ask a staff person at the booth for pre-bagged or bunched items, and then it is handed to the customer in a bag--no self selection of produce.
- Chalk demarcations on the ground to indicate where shoppers should stand behind others, while waiting to purchase produce.
- Any seller who does not abide by these requirements will not be allowed to sell product.

Signage

- Posting signage at each stand about the Public Health Order in multiple languages
- Prepare, post and implement a Social Distancing Protocol

Sanitation

- Whenever possible, someone else at a farm booth handles the payment so that money is only being handled by one staff person who is not then touching produce.
- Staff and sellers are required to wear gloves.
- Provide handwashing stations throughout the market with soap and warm water and tissues.

Security (crowd control)

- Have security to ensure social distancing of patrons.

(Added 4/2/2020)

Can I operate my liquor store?

You may keep your liquor store open if it also sells a significant amount of products like food, household cleaning items, or personal hygiene items. Under a Mayor emergency order, they must close by 8 p.m.

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.

Can warehouses and distribution centers that supply essential businesses stay open?

Yes, but only to the extent they support or supply those essential businesses. Warehouses and distribution centers should minimize the number of employees onsite and strictly comply with all social distancing requirements in the Order.

Can plant stores and nurseries stay open?

Plant nurseries that qualify as “Outdoor Businesses” under the Order may open. Plant stores and nurseries that are not “Outdoor Businesses” may stay open to the extent they provide seeds and materials for food cultivation but, to the extent feasible, they should scale down their in-store operations to this essential business component only. Plant stores and nurseries that stay open must comply with all social distancing requirements, including preparation and posting of a social distancing protocol. Plant stores and nurseries may also deliver directly to residences and businesses, and may have someone physically on site to water and care for the plants as part of their minimum basic operations.

(Added 4/3/2020; Amended 4/29/2020, 5/4/2020)

May florists stay open?

Florists can deliver directly to residences and businesses. They cannot have people in the store and cannot allow customers to pick up orders or be served curbside or “at the door.”

(Added 5/4/2020)

May a manufacturer that has changed its business function to begin producing essential products for medical facilities to help address the pandemic operate as an essential business?

Yes. Companies that are changing their business function to produce surgical masks, personal protective equipment, sanitizing products, or other essential products for medical facilities to help address the pandemic can operate to set up and perform these functions. They must comply with all social distancing requirements including the preparation and posting of a social distancing protocol.

(Added 4/3/2020)

In light of the new face covering order, may a manufacturer that has pivoted to producing face masks for the general public operate as an essential business?

Yes, manufacturers that are changing their business function to produce face coverings for the public can operate to set up and perform these functions. They must comply

with all social distancing requirements including the preparation and posting of a social distancing protocol.

(Added 4/30/2020)

Can fabric stores supply operate to supply fabric to companies manufacturing face coverings?

Yes, businesses that manufacture face coverings are essential and businesses that supply other essential businesses with the supplies necessary to operate may continue to do so under the Order.

(Added 4/30/3030)

I operate a large retail store selling largely non-essential items, but we also sell some goods that essential businesses need to operate. Can I keep my retail store open as an essential business that supplies other essential businesses?

No. Businesses that supply other essential businesses with the support or supplies they need to operate can remain open only for the purpose of supplying those essential businesses. They cannot stay open to keep making sales to the general public from retail storefronts.

What if I want to go to work at a physical location in San Francisco and I'm not sick?

Unless your work is exempted in the Order, you cannot go to work at a physical location even if you want to. You can work from home for any business if your employer allows it and your work can be done from home.

I operate a business that is required to close—can my business deliver things to people's homes?

Yes, non-essential businesses may maintain minimum basic operations. This includes making deliveries of existing inventory to people's homes.

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, but they must strictly comply with social distancing requirements.

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

Can home service workers continue to provide their services?

Yes, home service workers—like plumbers, electricians, and exterminators—can keep providing services that are necessary to maintain a livable, sanitary, and functional household, as well as services that are attendant to a construction project. Home-based care for children, adults, seniors, and pets is also allowed under the Order.

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

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

Yes, so long as the service is necessary to maintain safety and sanitation. Allowable operations include routine maintenance work like cleaning, chemical balancing and adjustments, and filtration (necessary to, for instance, prevent pool algae from blooming) and safety-oriented repairs.

(Added 4/3/2020)

Are short-term rentals such as Airbnb allowed?

Under the Order, short-term rentals can still operate to a limited extent, but individuals should only use short-term rentals when necessary to engage in Essential Activities (apart from outdoor recreation activities), Essential Travel, Essential Business, Essential Governmental Functions, and Outdoor Business. This includes individuals staying overnight in the City to perform the essential activity of caring for the health and safety needs of a family member. This does not include vacationing, sightseeing, and generally visiting with friends or relatives.

Furthermore, it would be allowable if an individual needed shelter (e.g. to avoid homelessness, domestic violence, or other unsafe conditions) or, in certain narrow situations, needed to self-isolate to avoid infecting or becoming infected by a household member.

Finally, between occupants, the owner must thoroughly clean and sanitize the unit, including sanitizing all surfaces and laundering all linens.

(Added 5/4/2020)

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

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

appointment with no more than two visitors at a time from the same household, and only one agent showing the property. In-person showings or walk-throughs are not allowed when the occupant is present in the residence. Commercial viewings should be limited to the minimum number of persons possible.

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

Are the following people permitted to operate under the Order as service providers that 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 recent 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, individuals are strongly urged to quarantine for 14 days.

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

I am a landlord for a unit where each of the tenants has a separate lease for a bedroom, and they share living, dining, and bathroom space. One of the bedrooms is vacant, and the others are occupied. Can I execute a lease and move in a new tenant into the vacant room?

No. Involuntary changes to the members of a household, or to the composition of individuals in a dormitory or shared bedroom setting, are not permitted at this time.

(Added 4/7/2020)

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)

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)

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)—retail sales are not permitted;
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)

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. In addition, while travel to and from cannabis dispensaries to pick up products is permitted, individuals are strongly encouraged to have cannabis products delivered to their home instead of obtaining them on-site. If in-store pickup is required, to the greatest extent feasible, dispensaries and patrons must comply with social distancing requirements, including by maintaining six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public, including any customers standing in line.

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

Yes, although dispensary patrons are strongly encouraged to have cannabis products delivered to their home instead of obtaining them on-site.

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.

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

An outdoor business is a business that was primarily operating outdoors prior to March 16, 2020, and that has the ability to fully maintain social distancing of at least six feet between all persons. For retail businesses, this means that more than 50% of the total floor area regularly used for product sales was outdoors prior to March 16, 2020. The Order provides some examples of common outdoor businesses, such as plant nurseries, agricultural operations, and landscaping and gardening services. Outdoor businesses, including outdoor retail businesses, must conduct *all* business and transactions involving members of the public in outdoor spaces. This means that if an outdoor business includes an indoor facility or indoor portion of its retail space that typically serves the public, that indoor facility or indoor portion of retail space must be closed to the public and all sales must take place outdoors. Employees may continue to use the indoor space as necessary and may bring products outdoors for the public. Outdoor businesses must comply with the Order’s social distancing requirements and post a social distancing protocol.

(Added 4/29/2020)

Are auto dealerships now allowed to serve customers from their facilities under this new Order?

Auto dealerships that qualify as an “outdoor business,” as that term is defined in the Order, may serve retail customers from their facilities. (All auto dealerships may provide supply and repair services.)

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

Can auto dealerships that are not “outdoor businesses” sell cars online and deliver them to people’s homes?

Yes. The Order allows businesses to deliver products to people’s residences. But car dealerships cannot sell or lease cars in-person.

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 following requirements. Any vendor who does not abide by these requirements may not continue to sell product.

Spacing:

- All vendors are spaced at least 6 feet apart from one another.
- All vendors are required to put a physical barrier (such as caution tape) between them and the products they are selling.
- Customers ask the vendor for items, and then it is handed to the customer—no self-selection of items or touching of items that the customer does not purchase.
- Chalk demarcations on the ground to indicate where shoppers should stand behind others, while waiting to purchase items.

Signage

- Posting signage at each stand about the Public Health Order in multiple languages

Sanitation

- Staff and sellers are required to wear gloves.
- Provide handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer throughout the area.

Security (crowd control)

- Have security to ensure social distancing of patrons.

(Added 5/4/2020)

Do outdoor businesses include gyms and trainers that prior to the emergency conducted outdoor exercise sessions like boot camps?

No. The Outdoor Businesses that are allowed to operate are considered low risk because they are outdoors and because they involve only brief and infrequent interactions among individuals. Training sessions and group exercise classes involve prolonged person-to-person interactions, even if outdoors. Also, they are higher risk because exercise causes people to more forcefully expel airborne particles, making the usual social distancing measures less adequate to prevent transmission.

(Added 5/4/2020)

Are photographers permitted to work under the new May 4 order?

Yes, photographers are permitted to work as follows. First, photography related to news/journalism is permitted under the exception for “Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services.” Second, personal outdoor photography is allowed as a permissible outdoor activity. And third, as long as it was done before March 16, 2020 primarily outdoors, professional photography that is done outdoors is permitted as an Outdoor Business, so long as social distance requirements are maintained.

(Added 5/4/2020)

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

Yes, cemeteries are essential infrastructure.

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.

Are office supply stores, stationary stores, and art supply stores essential businesses since they supply products needed for people to work from home?

No. Businesses that supply products needed for people to work from home are no longer classified as essential businesses in the new order. Accordingly, they must temporarily close retail locations within the City, but they may deliver directly to residences and businesses and continue minimum basic operations.

(Added 4/3/2020)

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)

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.

I have Code violations on my property and have been ordered to correct the violations. Can the abatement work be done while the Shelter in Place Order is in effect?

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.

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 when the April 29th Order goes into effect on Monday?

Yes. The projects must comply with the new protocols in order to proceed. 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 5 or more workers at a construction site be applied?

This definition only applies to construction of Essential Infrastructure, as defined in Section 16.c 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 order to 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)

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 get a building permit or building inspection from the Department of Building Inspection for my construction project, or make sure my business gets the Fire Department’s fire safety and hazmat inspection that I need to keep operating?

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

TRAVEL AND RECREATION

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, but public transit, ride-hailing services, or any other way of traveling can only be used for essential travel, which means:

- i. Travel related to the provision of or access to essential activities, essential governmental functions, essential businesses, minimum basic operations, Outdoor Activities, and Outdoor Businesses.
- ii. Travel to care for any elderly, minors, dependents, or persons with disabilities.
- iii. Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services.
- iv. Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the City.
- v. Travel required by law enforcement or court order.
- vi. Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the County. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of the County remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel.
- vii. Travel to manage after-death arrangements and burial.
- viii. Travel to arrange for shelter or avoid homelessness.
- ix. Travel to avoid domestic violence or child abuse.
- x. Travel for parental custody arrangements.
- xi. Travel to a place to temporarily reside in a residence or other facility to avoid potentially exposing others to COVID-19, such as a hotel or other facility provided by a governmental authority for such purposes.

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

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

(Amended 4/29/2020)

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

Yes, you can use shared bikes and scooters for essential travel, such as commuting to work as an essential employee. 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, but only to perform essential activities or essential government functions, operate an essential business, or perform minimum basic operations at a non-essential business, as those terms are defined in the Order. You can also leave to go back home or engage in other essential travel. Otherwise, the answer is no because that puts you and others in the community at risk. Keep in mind that Health Officers in neighboring counties have issued the same or similar shelter-in-place orders.

If I'm outside San Francisco travelling for vacation or business, am I allowed to come home?

Yes, the Order allows you to come home. But you may need to self-isolate for 14 days if you were possibly exposed to COVID-19.

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

Yes, you can leave the City to return home, but you are urged to self-isolate upon returning home.

The Order prohibits non-essential travel on foot or bike – can I still go on a walk or take a bike ride?

Yes. The Order allows you to go outside for exercise activities like walking and running, as long as you strictly follow social distancing requirements, including maintaining a distance of at least six feet from everyone outside your household or living unit.

I get anxious when I'm cooped up inside. Am I allowed to go on a hike? Can I go to a park or open space?

Yes. 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?

If you will be outdoors and not in close contact with other people, and will not be using equipment that other people outside your household have touched, yes. Otherwise, no. Fitness centers, gyms, recreational centers, fitness equipment at parks, climbing walls, tennis courts, basketball courts, swimming pools, and other shared sports facilities are closed.

(Amended 4/29/2020)

Can golf courses reopen under the new Order?

Outdoor recreation facilities that are not expressly prohibited by the Order, such as golf courses, skate parks, and athletic fields, are permitted to open only if they comply with any restrictions on access and use that are established by the Health Officer, another government agency, or other entity that manages such area to reduce crowding and risk of transmission of COVID-19. Golf courses are allowed provided that groups are limited to no more than two players when not in the same household; if cart use is allowed then there is no more than one person (if not in the same household) per cart and carts are sanitized in between users; equipment, including golf balls, is not shared or touched by others outside the same household; pro shops are not open; and subject to compliance with a social distancing and sanitation protocol that is at least as protective of public health as the protocols set forth [here](#).

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

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

The general requirements for outdoor activities with individuals not from the same household are:

- No physical contact.
- No shared balls or other equipment.
- No use of common high touch surfaces in facilities.
- No team sports or spectating at any sporting event or recreation activity.
- Must abide by Social Distancing Requirements.

- Follow recommendations in Face Covering Order.
- Must separately confirm the activity is permitted under the State’s shelter in place order.
- If the activity is performed at a facility, the facility must adopt and post a Social Distancing Protocol including appropriate signage.
- Equipment rental—e.g., golf clubs, skate, bike, and boat rental—is not permitted.
- Outdoor recreation activities permitted under the order must conform to any restrictions on access and use established by the Health Officer, government, or other entity that manages such area to reduce crowding and risk of transmission of COVID-19. Such restrictions may include, but are not limited to, restricting the number of entrants, closing the area to vehicular access and parking, or closure to all public access. In the event that too many people engage in permitted activities in close proximity, they may be directed to spread out or leave to avoid high-risk situations.

Outdoor activities that include close physical contact or the use of shared equipment solely by members of the same household or living unit, such as tossing or kicking a ball back and forth on a field, are permitted in groups of six or fewer.

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

What outdoor recreation activities are permitted under the new Order?

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

- Walking, jogging, or running;
- Hiking;
- Walking dogs on leash;
- Sunbathing or picnicking (but not at picnic benches or tables) when sufficient distance is maintained at all times between members of a household and others not in the same household;
- Bicycling;
- Golf;
- Swimming, surfing, or paddling in the ocean or lakes;
- Exploring rock pools;
- Gardening;
- Meditation;
- Picnics (with members of your household);
- Boating, kayaking, and sculling (but only in craft used solely individuals or if by more than one individual, only by members of one household);
- Paddle boarding, kitesurfing and windsurfing (with the individual’s own equipment);
- Skateboarding, including at a skate-park;

- Roller-skating and roller-blading;
- Archery ranges;
- Tai Chi (individually, not in groups),
- yoga (individually, not in groups);
- Bird watching;
- Kite flying;
- Outdoor photography;
- Fishing, including fly casting (as long as social distancing can be maintained at all times, and there is no sharing of equipment, including rods, reels, tackle or bait); and
- Individual equestrian activities.

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

Can tennis courts reopen under the new Order? How about basketball courts?

No. Tennis courts and basketball courts must remain temporarily closed under the new order.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020)

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

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

- Tennis and other racquet sports;
- Swimming in pools, including lane swimming;
- Gyms and fitness centers;
- Spas pools, saunas and steam rooms;
- Basketball;
- Baseball and softball;
- Football;
- Volleyball;
- Lacrosse;
- Soccer;
- Kickball;
- Rugby;
- Wrestling;

- Martial arts (karate, taekwondo, jiu jitsu, etc.);
- Disc sports where multiple people outside a household touch the disc;
- Playgrounds;
- Gym equipment;
- Climbing walls and gyms;
- Picnic benches and tables;
- Barbeque areas;
- Enclosed dog parks (but dog parks that are not enclosed are allowed subject to social distancing and any requirements or limitations imposed by the City for use for such areas, including on-leash or voice command restrictions, in light of current CDC recommendations regarding the risk of transmission of the virus between dogs and from dogs to humans, see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>);
- Field or ice hockey;
- Ice skating;
- Roller skating in an enclosed area;
- Bocce ball;
- Cricket;
- Team crew;
- Recreational fishing party boats (where social distancing cannot be maintained at all times and there are common use facilities, such as a bathroom)
- Water polo or other team water sports;
- Bowling;
- Gymnastic or trampoline activities with shared equipment; and
- Track and field or other competition events involving group of people or where equipment used by an individual is not disinfected between each user.

These activities are allowed by members of the same household or living unit in groups of six or fewer.

(Added 4/29/2020; Amended 4/30/2020)

Can I take my kids to the playground?

No. Recreational areas with equipment that lots of people touch or areas where people gather close together, like playgrounds and picnic areas, must be closed and you cannot use them while the Order is in effect. You can take your kids 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.