

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

Through our Safer at Home efforts, the public, businesses, and partners have made progress in slowing the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Los Angeles County, allowing for a phased reopening of some businesses and public spaces. However, with no vaccine or proven treatment available, COVID-19 remains a serious risk and the work that’s been done to slow its spread in Los Angeles County must continue. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) is calling on the public, businesses, and community partners to continue social (physical) distancing and infection control practices to protect workers and residents from COVID-19 during the reopening process.

COVID-19 ROADMAP TO RECOVERY

In partnership with business, community, and civic leaders, Public Health has developed a phased [COVID-19 Roadmap to Recovery: A Phased Approach to Reopening Safely in Los Angeles County](#). This allows for a gradual, conditional relaxing of some requirements, while keeping social (physical) distancing and infection control practices in place, to slow the spread of COVID-19. Public Health will monitor how effectively we are controlling its spread and make changes, as needed to protect workers and residents.

SAFER AT HOME HEALTH OFFICER ORDER

The COVID-19 Roadmap to Recovery provides a guide for gradually and more safely reopening some services, businesses, and public access in Los Angeles County. The Safer at Home Health Officer Order outlines what businesses, partners, and the public must do to help support this and to prevent a surge in COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths.

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OVERVIEW OF THE COVID-19 ROADMAP TO RECOVERY.....	2
SAFER AT HOME ORDER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	2
Overview of the Safer at Home Order	2
Social (Physical) Distancing and Infection Control	4
Business Openings and Temporary Closures	4
Household and Personal Care Needs	5
Work/Employment.....	5
School, Childcare, and Learning.....	5
Healthcare	6
Shopping and Restaurants	7
Gatherings and Events	7
Caregiving	7
Housing and Safety.....	8
Legal and Civic Activities	8
Fitness and Recreation.....	9
Travel.....	9
LEARN MORE.....	10



Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

OVERVIEW OF THE COVID-19 ROADMAP TO RECOVERY

1. What is the COVID-19 Roadmap to Recovery?

The [COVID-19 Roadmap to Recovery: A Phased Approach to Reopening Safely in Los Angeles County](#) is a five-stage plan that was developed with input from businesses and partners in Los Angeles County and is in line with Governor Newsom's COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap. Its goal is to ensure that we continue to slow the spread of COVID-19 and prevent a surge of cases at healthcare facilities, while allowing for a gradual, safe return of some activities outside of the home, such as work and recreation.

Through each stage, residents will need to continue practices that can prevent COVID-19 spread: social (physical) distancing, wearing [cloth face coverings](#)* in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), washing their hands, self-isolating, and self-quarantining.

* Cloth face coverings are used to reduce the risk of someone who has the virus and does not know it from transmitting the virus to others. Children under the age of 2 years (including infants) and anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, or is unable to remove a face cover without help should not wear one. Those between the ages of 2 and 8 should use them but under adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation.

2. How fast will we move through the recovery stages?

Without a vaccine and proven treatment options, COVID-19 will remain a serious risk. So, the recovery process will be gradual, as Public Health carefully considers when it is safe to move to each new stage based on: (a) the number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths; (b) whether the healthcare system can handle a surge in cases; (c) the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) available for healthcare providers and staff; (d) availability of testing, especially for vulnerable groups and high-risk jobs or settings; and (e) the ability to quickly isolate persons with COVID-19 and quarantine their contacts to prevent spread of COVID-19.

In addition, we can move the recovery stages as allowed by directives and orders from the State.

SAFER AT HOME ORDER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Overview of the Safer at Home Order

3. What is the Safer at Home Order?

The Safer at Home Order is a legal order issued by the Los Angeles County Health Officer to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect the most vulnerable members of our community.

4. What does the latest Safer at Home Order require?

The latest Safer at Home Order:

- Requires people to remain in their residences as much as possible, but allows them to leave their homes for specific activities, including getting healthcare, going to work, getting goods or services from businesses, recreation (physical activity), caring for vulnerable individuals, and obtaining other allowed services, as long as they stay 6 feet or more from people who are not part of their household (don't live with them) whenever possible and wear a [cloth face covering](#) when in close contact with others outside the home.
- Requires people who are 65 years of age or older and people of any age who have underlying health conditions to only leave their home for necessities, such as food or medical care.
- Allows specific lower-risk retail businesses to open for curbside or outside pick-up, as long as social

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

(physical) distancing and infection control requirements that are in the Order are followed.

- Does not generally allow gatherings of people who are not part of the same household or living unit, but allows for some exceptions such as attending a behavioral health or substance use disorder group or setting up live-stream (such as for a worship service) if there are 10 or fewer people present.
- Allows certain public spaces to be open for recreational purposes, as long as visitors follow social (physical) distancing and infection control requirements.

5. While the Safer at Home Order is in effect, when can you leave your home?

Residents should stay home as much as possible. They can leave home for the following Essential Activities:

- To participate in activities that are important to their own or family/household members' (including pets') health and safety, such as going to a doctor or vet or getting medical supplies or medication.
- To get or deliver needed services and supplies, such as groceries, for themselves, family members or household members, from businesses that are allowed to be open.
- To care for minors, the elderly, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons.
- To receive in-person behavioral health or substance use disorder support in therapeutic small group meetings, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, as long as there are 10 or fewer people present.
- To work at a business that is allowed to be open (Essential Businesses, Essential Infrastructure, Healthcare Operations, or specified Lower-Risk Businesses) or to carry out Minimum Basic Operations (as defined in the Order) at a business that is temporarily closed by the Order.
- To work for, volunteer at, or obtain services at Healthcare Operations (as defined in the Order.)
- To access Essential Governmental services, such as getting social and administrative services or complying with a court or law enforcement order.
- To participate in certain recreational activities, as long as social distancing requirements and any rules regarding access or use are followed.

However, people who are 65 years old and older and/or those who have underlying health conditions should only leave home for essential activities such as getting medical care or food, because they are more likely to have serious illness from COVID-19. They should stay home as much as possible; have groceries, medicine, and necessary goods delivered; and call their provider immediately if they have even mild symptoms. Public Health has strongly recommended that employers offer them telework or other accommodations.

6. How long will the Safer at Home Order be in effect?

This Order is in effect until it is extended, expanded, or updated to protect the public's health.

7. Do Los Angeles County residents have to follow the Los Angeles County and California Orders?

All residents who live in the Los Angeles County Public Health Jurisdiction (all parts of the County except the cities of Long Beach and Pasadena), must follow the Los Angeles County Safer at Home Order. The cities of Long Beach and Pasadena have their own public health departments and residents and businesses in those cities should check with their own public health departments for guidance. Residents must also follow any statewide orders but if there are differences, must comply with whichever Order is stricter.

8. What happens if I don't comply with the Safer at Home Order?

Public Health trusts that residents will voluntarily follow the Order to protect loved ones, other residents, and our community. However, if you don't follow the Order, you can be fined, imprisoned, or both.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

Social (Physical) Distancing and Infection Control

9. What steps to prevent COVID-19 spread are you required to follow?

COVID-19 can spread when people are in close contact or when they touch something with the virus on it and then touch their face. To prevent spread of COVID-19, you're required to: (1) Maintain at least six-feet of physical distance from individuals who are not part of your household; (2) Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol; (3) Wear a [cloth face covering](#) when in contact with others who do not live in the same household or living unit; and (4) Avoid all physical interaction outside the household when you're sick with a fever or cough, except for necessary medical care.

10. Do you have to perform social (physical) distancing with household members and at home?

No, you don't have to stay 6 feet from people who live in the same household or living unit with you. If you are ill though, you should remain in a separate room, preferably with your own bathroom, and minimize contact with others to avoid infecting others in the home.

11. Can visitors come to your home?

You should not have visitors, other than people who need to provide essential services, such as caregiving or repairs. These visitors shouldn't come in if they are ill and must wear a [cloth face covering](#) and practice social (physical) distancing, as much as possible, while in your home. Consider other ways to connect with family and friends, such as through phone calls or video conferencing.

Business Openings and Temporary Closures

12. Which types of businesses are open under the Safer at Home Order?

All businesses that are defined in the Order as Essential Businesses, Essential Infrastructure, and Healthcare Operations, as well as certain businesses that are considered to be Lower-Risk Businesses, as defined in the Order (See Question 13) can be open if they follow requirements in the Order.

13. Which Lower-Risk Businesses can be open under the Safer at Home Order?

Two categories of Lower-Risk Businesses can reopen if they follow requirements in the Order:

- Lower-Risk Retail Businesses: These are retail businesses that are not listed as High-Risk in the Order and: a) are not located in an indoor mall or shopping center or b) are in an indoor mall or shopping center but can be accessed by customers from outside of the building. All Lower-Risk Retail Businesses that are allowed to open can only provide goods and services via curbside, doorside, other outdoor or outside pickup, or delivery. Members of the public cannot go inside.
- Manufacturing and logistics sector businesses that supply Lower-Risk Retail Businesses.

Lower-risk Businesses must follow social (physical) distancing and infection control requirements to keep workers and customers safe.

14. Which types of businesses or properties are temporarily closed under the Safer at Home Order?

- Lower-Risk Businesses that are located *within* an indoor mall or shopping center (i.e., in the interior of the mall and customers cannot enter the store from outside of the building)
- Higher-Risk Non-Essential Businesses: These are businesses that may bring people into close contact for longer periods of time such as movie theaters, bowling alleys or personal grooming establishments. See the [Business FAQ](#) for additional details.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

Household and Personal Care Needs

15. Can you go to the post office or private mailbox to pick up your mail?

Yes, as long as you stay at least 6 feet from people who are not part of your household and use a [cloth face covering](#) while you are there.

16. Can you do your laundry at a laundromat?

Yes, as long as you stay at least 6 feet from people who are not part of your household and use a [cloth face covering](#) while you are there.

17. Can you buy pet food or have your pet groomed?

Yes. You can go to a pet supply store to buy pet supplies and can have your pet groomed at a veterinary clinic, a pet feed store, or a pet grooming store. Mobile pet grooming is also allowed. Stay at least 6 feet from people who are not part of your household and use a [cloth face covering](#).

18. Are car dealerships open?

Car dealerships can be open for repairs, auto supplies, and showroom and internet sales if they follow specific social (physical) distancing and infection control requirements.

19. Can a repair person, such as a plumber, come to fix a problem at your home?

Yes. You can continue to get services that are needed to maintain the safety and sanitation of your home. Service providers should not come into your home if they are ill and when there, must wear a [cloth face covering](#) and stay 6 feet or more from you as much as possible.

20. Are personal grooming businesses open?

No. Hair salons, barber salons, and nail salons are considered to be Higher-Risk and are not yet open.

Work/Employment

21. Can you go to work?

Yes. If you work at a business that is allowed to be open, you can go to work, as long as you follow social (physical) distancing and infection control requirements when you are traveling to/from work and while you are at work. Stay at least 6 feet from people who are not part of your household whenever possible and use a [cloth face covering](#) if you are in close contact of others. In order to be open, businesses must follow requirements related to infection control and social (physical) distancing. Ask your employer about ways to reduce the chance for COVID-19 to spread, such as rearranging the worksite to allow employees to keep a safe distance from other employees and customers, alternative work schedules, or working from home.

22. Can you apply for unemployment if you've been affected by COVID-19?

If your employer has reduced your hours or closed operations due to COVID-19, you may be able to file a claim for unemployment insurance. See https://www.edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019.htm.

School, Childcare, and Learning

23. Can your children go to childcare?

Yes. Childcare facilities can be open, as long as they follow requirements that are described in the Order.

- Childcare must be carried out in stable groups of ten (10) or fewer. "Stable" means the same ten (10) or fewer children are in the same group each day. Children cannot change from one group to another.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

- If more than one group of children is cared for at one site/facility, each group must be in a separate room and these groups cannot mix with each other.
- Each childcare provider must be solely with one group of children.

24. Can you or your children attend school or college?

K-12 schools, colleges, and universities can continue to operate but must do so in a way that is safe as possible for students, teachers, and staff. At this time, schools, college, and universities can continue to facilitate distance learning, offer meals for pick-up, and perform essential functions or Minimum Business Operations.

25. Can schools, colleges, and universities have graduation ceremonies?

At this time, K-12 schools, colleges, and universities can hold virtual graduation ceremonies but cannot hold graduation ceremonies in-person or by car/drive-in.

Healthcare

26. Can you leave your home to seek medical care or pick up medications?

Yes, you can leave in order to seek essential services such as medical care or to pick up medications. Be sure to call your provider first since many practices are now offering telemedicine services. Similarly, check to see if your medications can be delivered to your home.

27. Can you receive elective and preventive healthcare services?

Important preventive services such as well-child visits, immunizations, and other health screenings, including cancer screenings, should not be delayed. Whenever appropriate and available, consider taking advantage of telemedicine or video visits. In addition, providers can choose to offer elective medical services as long as the healthcare system does not get overwhelmed by the need to care for COVID-19 patients and providers can meet certain criteria (e.g., having enough personal protective equipment). However, because COVID-19 still poses a significant risk, Public Health recommends you carefully consider any elective procedure or surgery.

28. Can you receive dental services?

Dental services pose a higher risk for the spread of COVID-19, so only emergency care and certain non-emergency dental care may now be able to be provided. Speak to your dentist to find out what services are available.

29. Can you go to a behavioral health or substance use disorder group?

You can go to group counseling and participate in peer support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, if there are fewer than 10 people there and you follow social (physical) distancing and infection control requirements. You can also take advantage of sessions that are held by telephone or video conference if they are available and meet your needs.

30. Can you still leave the home to donate blood?

You can continue to give blood at Red Cross centers and at blood donation sites.

Blood drives are not prohibited by the Safer at Home or other Los Angeles County Orders if social (physical) distancing practices are in place. Red Cross will continue to hold blood drives to help meet patient needs and has implemented new measures that ensure that blood drives and donation centers are even safer for donors and staff. You should be prepared to wear a [cloth face covering](#) while you are there.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

Shopping and Restaurants

31. Can you shop at retail businesses?

Yes, you can shop at any business that is allowed to be open, as long as you stay at least 6 feet from people who are not part of your household whenever possible and use a [cloth face covering](#). Non-Essential Lower-Risk Retail Businesses that are allowed to be open can only open for curbside, doorside, other outdoor or outside pickup, or delivery. Members of the public cannot go inside, even just to look at or pay for an item.

32. Are indoor shopping malls open?

Indoor shopping centers and malls are closed, except for businesses that can be accessed by customers from the outside of the building. If the business is an Essential Business, customers can enter and shop inside, but Lower-Risk Retail Businesses can only offer curbside, doorside, other outdoor or outside pickup, or delivery. Members of the public cannot go inside lower-risk retail businesses, even to quickly look at merchandise or make a payment.

33. Can you get deliveries from online stores?

Yes. Logistic and delivery businesses that are open can deliver to your home. The delivery person should be wearing a [cloth face covering](#) if they must have contact with you to complete the delivery.

34. Are restaurants open? How can you buy meals?

Restaurants, cafes, food trucks, and similar businesses continue to remain open for drive-thru, carryout, and delivery only. You can also purchase prepared foods at grocery stores, supermarkets, warehouse stores, certified farmers' markets, and convenience stores.

35. How can you get free or reduced priced meals?

Soup kitchens, food banks, and other organizations that provide free or reduced priced food or meals are encouraged to continue providing these services. You must pick up and take away the food or have it delivered to you. You may not eat on the premises. Visit www.covid19.lacounty.gov/food for additional information on available resources.

Gatherings and Events

36. Are conferences, conventions, or other large events allowed?

No. Large events, such as conferences or events at convention centers, whether public or private, are still not allowed.

37. Are individual and family gatherings allowed?

No individual and family gatherings, of any size, are allowed.

Caregiving

38. Can you care for a family member, friend, or pet who requires assistance to care for themselves at their home or residence?

Yes. You can provide care for vulnerable and dependent people or animals. However, you should take precautions to protect them and yourself, such as being sure that you don't have a fever or symptoms of illness before leaving to provide care, keeping at least 6 feet from others whenever possible, wearing a [cloth face covering](#) (or a surgical mask if you are caring for an ill individual), and frequently washing your hands or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, including immediately after you arrive at and leave their home.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

39. Can you take a family member or friend to needed appointments like healthcare or social service visits?

Yes, as much as possible, you must stay 6 feet or more from people who are not part of your household, when taking family members or friends to these appointments.

40. Can you visit loved ones in the hospital, skilled nursing facility, or other residential care facility?

To protect patients/residents, visitors, and healthcare personnel, except for visiting a child and for end-of-life visits, face-to-face visits are not allowed at licensed congregate healthcare facilities, such as skilled nursing facilities and residential care facilities. Many hospitals also have policies that only allow face-to-face visits for these circumstances. Outside of pediatric and end-of-life visits, please use other ways to communicate with loved ones such as telephone calls, texts, and video calls.

Housing and Safety

41. How can you comply with the order if you are experiencing homelessness?

People who are experiencing homelessness are encouraged to try to stay with family or friends, identify housing options, or access emergency resources, such as shelters. You can call 2-1-1 for additional information on resources. You should also wear a [cloth face covering](#) when in close contact with other people and stay 6 feet or more from others whenever possible.

42. If your home environment is abusive, do you need to stay at home?

No. Call 2-1-1 to identify safe and supportive housing alternatives. You should not stay in environments that are not safe.

43. Can you stay in dorms, shelters, or other congregate settings?

Yes, but you need to follow any measures that the institution has put into place to reduce the spread of disease. You should wear a [cloth face covering](#) when in close contact with others and should stay 6 feet or more from people whenever possible.

44. Can you be evicted from your house or apartment while the Safer at Home Order is in effect?

Some local jurisdictions have issued renter protections during the Safer at Home Order. Check with your local City office to see if there are eviction protections where you live. For additional information on eviction moratoriums and rent freezes visit dcba.lacounty.gov/noevictions.

45. Can you move into a second residence or a new home?

Public Health recommends that you stay in your primary residence for your health and safety as well as for the health and safety of both communities. It is recommended that you move into a new home only if the move can't be postponed or is necessary for safety or sanitation reasons or to preserve access to shelter.

Legal and Civic Activities

46. Can you leave home to comply with a Court order?

Yes. You can leave home to comply with Court or enforcement orders but must follow social (physical) distance, including wearing a [cloth face covering](#) when in close contact with others, and infection control precautions.

47. Can you leave home to take a citizenship test?

The federal government will determine whether citizenship tests will be held. Please contact the government agency that is giving the test to determine whether you should appear. If you are required to appear, wear a

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

[cloth face covering](#) and practice social (physical) distancing while there. If you are ill, stay home and ask the agency that is giving the test about your options for rescheduling or taking the test from home if possible.

48. Can you get married?

Yes. To be married in-person, the couple being married, the officiant and the witness are allowed to physically be in the same room. Other attendees are not permitted. Social (physical) distancing should be observed during the ceremony (except between the couple). Livestreaming may be an option for others who want to view the ceremony.

In addition, Governor Newsom signed an [executive order](#) that, through June 29, 2020, allows adults to obtain a marriage license by videoconference. This is allowed at the discretion of the local County Clerk, if both adults are located within California, and at least one is a resident of LA county. Both individuals must be present during the videoconference on a device with video/audio capabilities (desktop, laptop tablet or phone) along with an internet connection. They must also be able to present valid government identification and have a valid credit card. Visit the Los Angeles County Clerk site at: <https://www.lavote.net/home/county-clerk/marriage-licenses-ceremonies/general-info> to learn if this may be an option for you or call 1-800-201-8999, option 1 to get on the waiting list.

Fitness and Recreation

49. Can you go to the gym/a fitness center or a pool?

No. Gyms, fitness centers, and public pools, hot tubs, and saunas, including those located at apartment, townhouse and condominium complexes are closed.

50. Can you go to/take children to a park?

Yes, but when at the park, you should stay at least 6 feet from people who are not part of your household. However, indoor and outdoor playgrounds and pools at parks will remain closed.

51. Are outdoor recreation options such as trails, beaches, and golf courses open?

Trails, beaches, and other open spaces and outdoor recreational facilities, including golf courses, tennis and pickle ball courts, shooting and archery ranges, equestrian centers, model airplane areas, community gardens, and bike parks, can be open, as long as visitors follow social (physical) distancing and infection control precautions and rules regarding use/access. However, no recreational programming or public events can be held at these sites.

Public piers, public beach parking lots, and bicycle paths that cross the sand are still closed. In addition, playgrounds, basketball courts, volleyball courts, baseball and soccer fields, splashpads, aquatic facilities, and concession stands remain closed. Streets or other areas can be temporarily closed to car traffic, for recreation such as walking or riding bikes, but no events or gatherings can be held on closed streets.

See the [Reopening Protocol](#) for the site you'd like to visit for additional information on activities that are allowed and those that are not permitted.

Travel

52. Can you take public transit or ride-sharing services (e.g. Lyft or Uber)?

You should only travel outside of the home if necessary. If it is necessary, you can take public transportation or use ride-sharing services as long as you wear a face covering during your ride and at stops/stations where others are present and stay 6 feet or more from people who aren't part of your household when possible.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Keeping LA County Safer at Home: Health Officer Order FAQ

53. Can you take a trip?

You should only travel outside of your area if it is essential/necessary. For instance, you can travel to take care of after-death arrangements. Before leaving, confirm what the requirements are for funerals and gatherings in the area you're traveling to. Guidance for funerals in Los Angeles County is posted at:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/business/GuidanceConductingFunerals.pdf>.

LEARN MORE

- Download the Safer at Home Order: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
- Learn more about the COVID-10 Roadmap to Recovery:
 - Infographic: www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/HOO/RoadmapToRecovery.pdf
 - Slideset: www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/HOO/RoadmapToRecovery-powerpoint.pdf
- Learn what steps you should take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 when you're outside of your home. Visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus> and click on the Reopening Protocol for the site that you're interested in visiting (e.g., retail business, manufacturing site, beach, and trail).

What You Should Know

- ▶ **Reopening Protocols** (NEW)
- ▶ **Recovery** (NEW)
- ▶ **Health Officer Order**

- Call 2-1-1 (LA County Information Line) if you have questions about COVID-19. 2-1-1 can provide information on nonprofit and social services such as food pantries, homeless shelters, rental assistance, mortgage assistance, and utility assistance.