Essential Businesses and Operations

The intent of this Order is to ensure that the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible, while enabling essential services to continue, to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the greatest extent possible. When people need to leave their places of residence, whether to perform Essential Activities, or to otherwise facilitate authorized activities necessary for continuity of social and commercial life, they should at all times and as much as reasonably possible comply with Social Distancing Requirements. All provisions of this Order should be interpreted to effectuate this intent.

Click here to view the Director’s Stay at Home Order.

Essential Businesses and Operations

Stores that sell groceries and medicine: Grocery stores, convenience stores, farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets and other stores that sell groceries, canned food, dry goods, frozen food, fresh produce, pet supplies, fresh meat, prepared food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and other household products such as cleaning supplies, will remain open.

Pharmacies and stores that sell medicine, both prescription and over-the-counter, and medical supplies necessary to maintain safety, sanitation and essential functions are included in the order.

Food, beverage, licensed marijuana and agriculture: Businesses that manufacture, produce and cultivate food and drinks will remain open. This includes businesses that deal in farming, fishing and livestock. Medical marijuana producers and manufacturers are included. Businesses that care for animals, such as shelters, adoption agencies and kennels will also will remain open.

Charities and social services: Agencies and nonprofits that provide services and essentials to people will remain open. Food banks, shelters and similar businesses, religious and secular, are included.

Religious organizations: Religious facilities, entities, groups are still permitted, as well as gatherings such as funerals and weddings.

Media: Newspapers, radio stations, television stations and other media will remain open.

First amendment protected speech
Gas stations and transportation businesses: Gas stations, auto supply and repair stores, farm equipment, construction equipment, boat repair, bike shops and related facilities will be open.

Financial and insurance institutions: Banks, currency exchanges, consumer lenders such as pawnbrokers, consumer installment lenders and sales finance lenders, credit unions, appraisers, title companies, financial markets, trading and futures exchanges, payday lenders, affiliates of financial institutions, businesses that issue bonds, related financial institutions and institutions selling financial products will remain open.

Insurance companies, as well as underwriters, agents, brokers and related insurance claims and agency services also will be open.

Hardware supply stores: Businesses that sell plumbing, electrical and heating material will remain open.

Critical trades: Those in construction trades such as electricians, plumbers, exterminators, HVAC workers, cleaning and janitorial staff, maintenance staff and anyone who ensures safe work environments are considered essential.

Mail and delivery services: Post offices and businesses that deal in shipping and delivery of mail will remain open. Food and grocery delivery are included, especially as restaurants are only available in a carry-out and delivery capacity.

Educational institutions: Public and private K-12 schools, colleges and universities will remain open via online and distance learning. Faculty and staff can also work on critical research and perform other essential functions, provided social distancing practices are followed and people remain six feet apart.

Laundry services: Laundromats, dry cleaners, industrial laundry services and laundry service providers will remain open.

Restaurants for consumption off-premises: Restaurants may only remain open for delivery and carry-out. People are not permitted to gather in dining areas. Schools and other businesses that serve food may continue to operate under the same

Supplies to work from home: Businesses that manufacture supplies necessary to work from home will remain open.

Supplies for essential businesses and operations: Businesses that sell or manufacture necessary products for those in other essential businesses will stay open to provide the necessities for other essential businesses.

Transportation: Taxi services, including businesses like Uber and Lyft, airlines, vehicle rental services, paratransit services, marinas, boat storage, and other private or public transportation, especially as it pertains to other essential businesses, will continue.

Home-based care and services: In-home care services for seniors, adults, children or those with developmental disabilities will continue. This is extended to those who deliver meals as well as caregivers or nannies who travel to a home to give care.
Residential facilities and shelters: Facilities and shelters for adults, senior citizens, children, people with disabilities, substance abuse issues or mental illnesses and pets will remain open.

Professional services: Legal, accounting insurance and real estate services will remain open.

Manufacture, distribution and supply chain for critical products and industries: Those providing services and manufacturing products necessary for pharmaceutical, technology, biotechnology, healthcare, chemicals and sanitation, waste pickup and disposal, agriculture, food and beverage, transportation, energy, steel and steel products, petroleum and fuel, mining, construction, national defense, communication and other products used by essential businesses will remain open.

Critical labor union functions: Labor Union essentials, such as administration of healthcare and welfare funds, personnel checking on the health and well-being of those in essential businesses will continue.

Hotels and motels: Hotels and motels intended for lodging will remain open. Any food services intended for delivery or carry-out will remain open as well.

Funeral services: Funeral homes, mortuaries, cremation and burial services will remain open.

Guidance for Essential Businesses and Operations

Social Distancing Requirements: For purposes of this Order, Social Distancing Requirements includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.

Required measures: Essential Businesses and Operations and businesses engaged in Minimum Basic Operations must take proactive measures to ensure compliance with Social Distancing Requirements, including where possible:

Designate six-foot distances. Designating with signage, tape, or by other means six foot spacing for employees and customers in line to maintain appropriate distance;

Hand sanitizer and sanitizing products. Having hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers;

Separate operating hours for vulnerable populations. Implementing separate operating hours for elderly and vulnerable customers; and

Online and remote access. Posting online whether a facility is open and how best to reach the facility and continue services by phone or remotely.
COVID-19 Information and Checklist for Businesses/Employers

Business and employers are to take the following actions:

- Allow as many employees as possible to work from home by implementing policies in areas such as teleworking and video conferencing.

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home until they are free of fever (without the use of medication) for at least 72 hours (three full days) AND symptoms have improved for at least 72 hours AND at least seven days have passed since symptoms first began. Do not require a healthcare provider's note to validate the illness or return to work of employees sick with acute respiratory illness; healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.

- Ensure that your sick leave policies are up to date, flexible, and non-punitive to allow sick employees to stay home to care for themselves, children, or other family members. Consider encouraging employees to do a self-assessment each day to check if they have any COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath).

- Separate employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms from other employees and send them home immediately. Restrict their access to the business until they have recovered.

- Reinforce key messages stay home when sick, use cough and sneeze etiquette, and practice hand hygiene to all employees, and place posters in areas where they are most likely to be seen. Provide protection supplies such as soap and water, hand sanitizer, tissues, and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.

- Frequently perform enhanced environmental cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, such as workstations, countertops, railings, door handles, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.

- Be prepared to change business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations).