



County of Los Angeles Safer at Home Health Order FAQ for Small Businesses

1. What is the Safe at Home Health Order?

On March 21, 2020 and on March 31, 2020, the County of Los Angeles Health Officer issued a revised [“Safer at Home”](#) Health Officer Order and Addendum, respectively (collectively referred to as the Order) to address the continued rapid spread of COVID-19 and the need to protect the County’s residents. The Order calls upon everyone to stay at home or in their place of residence, except when they need to travel to and from work at an Essential Business, to work at or provide service to a Healthcare Operation or Essential Infrastructure. The Order also allows persons to leave their home to shop at an Essential Business, engage in an Essential Activity, or to participate in an individual or family passive outdoor recreational activity. Additionally, all non-essential businesses are required to stop in-person operations and close to the public.

The Order applies to all parts of the County except the cities of Long Beach and Pasadena, which have their own city public health departments. Businesses and organizations in these cities should check with their own public health departments for guidance.

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

This Order is currently in effect through April 19, 2020. Public Health will continue to monitor the rate of COVID-19 disease spread, the severity of the resulting illnesses and deaths, California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, and the need for additional measures. If needed, the Health Officer may extend, expand, or modify the Order to protect the public’s health.

3. What is an “Essential Business”?

An Essential Business is any business providing products or services that are required to maintain the health, welfare and safety of the public. Guidance and a list of “Essential Businesses” can be found on the Los Angeles County Business and Worker Disaster Help Center at <https://lacountyhelpcenter.org/>. Examples of “Essential Businesses” not prohibited by the Order are:

- Stores that sell groceries and other products that are necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.
- Organizations and businesses that provide shelter, social services, and other necessities of life.
- Banks, Credit Unions, financial institutions, and insurance companies.
- Gas stations and convenience stores.
- Hardware stores, building supply stores, auto repair shops, and bicycle repair shops.

- Plumbers, electricians, property managers, gardeners, landscapers, security personnel, and funeral homes/mortuaries.
- Laundromats, dry cleaners, businesses that provide mailing and shipping services.
- Hotels, motels, and shared rental units.
- Airlines, ride-sharing services, taxis, and other private transportation services.
- Non-manufacturing transportation or distribution businesses that ship, truck or provide logistical support for the delivery of groceries, food, goods or services directly to residents, Essential Businesses, Healthcare Operations and Essential Infrastructure.
- Hospitals, clinics, public health centers, and other licensed health care providers.
- Construction services and activities for public, commercial, and residential property.
- Professional services, such as payroll, accounting, and legal, when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities.
- Businesses that assist with the inspection, recording, and transfer of residential and commercial property.
- Educational institutions (if facilitating distance learning).
- Businesses that support transportation needs.
- Childcare centers.
- Home-based care providers for some groups.
- Entities that perform work essential for national security.
- Healthcare Operations. See the Order for a list of what are considered to be Essential Infrastructure providers.

4. What does it mean if my business is listed as an “Essential Business”?

Essential Businesses may remain open during the pendency of the Safer At Home Order to provide services that are vital to the lives of Los Angeles County residents. If you are an Essential Business, no further action is required. However, you are still required to practice the following infection control precaution:

- Practice social distancing by requiring patrons, visitors, and employees to be separated by six (6) feet to the extent feasible.
- Provide access to handwashing facilities with soap and water or hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Post a sign in a conspicuous place at the public entry to the venue instructing members of the public to not enter if they are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness, e.g. fever, cough.
- Adhere to communicable disease control recommendations provided by Public Health.

5. What if my business is determined NOT to be an “Essential Business”?

The Safer at Home Order requires the immediate temporary closure of all businesses that are not considered Essential Businesses. These businesses include, but not limited to, movie theaters, event arenas, bars and nightclubs, gyms, bowling alleys, arcades, playgrounds, hair and nail salons, non-essential retail stores, indoor shopping malls, and others. In addition, restaurants and other food-serving facilities are limited to delivery, pick up, or drive-thru with no on-site or table service.

This material is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If you have questions about Essential Businesses and Activities authorized under the County’s “Safer at Home” Order, you may contact L.A. County’s Business and Worker Disaster Help Center at (833) 238-4450. If you would like to report a complaint or have a compliance concern, you may contact the Department of Public Health’s environmental health reporting line at (888) 700-9995.

6. What if my business is NOT listed as an “Essential Business” on the Order, but my business believes it should be considered an Essential Business?

If you believe your business is essential or are unsure about whether or not it is considered “non-essential,” you should: 1) First carefully review the Order, and the Essential Business list posted on <https://lacountyhelpcenter.org/>; and 2) If “non-essential” status is still unclear, you may contact the Los Angeles Business & Worker Disaster Help Center at 833-238-4450 or disasterhelpcenter@lacounty.gov. Please note the Help Center will not provide legal advice.

7. Are non-profit organizations allowed to continue operating?

Only those that provide essential services as described in the Safer at Home Order can remain open. This would include non-profits operating food pantries, providing housing and services for homeless residents, and many other critical services. Non-profits must also comply with the Order’s social distancing requirements, including maintaining a distance of six feet from one another, frequently washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an effective hand sanitizer, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoiding all social interaction outside the household when sick with a fever or cough.

8. Is there guidance available for retail food facilities, such as restaurants?

Yes. A tailored guidance document for retail food facilities is available from Public Health at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/GuidanceFoodFacilities.pdf. It describes the requirements of the Order, identifies which facilities are exempted, and describes recommended prevention practices.

9. How will this Order be enforced?

To protect the public’s health, the Health Officer has requested that the Sheriff and the Chiefs of Police in all cities located in the Los Angeles County Public Health Jurisdiction ensure compliance with and enforcement of this Order. Law enforcement officers and public health investigators may issue citations if businesses are non-compliant or order the business closed.

10. What if the Order is violated?

Violations of this Order is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment, fine or both under California Health and Section Code Section 120295 *et seq.*