



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS MARCH 31, 2020 SUPERSEDING SHELTER-IN-PLACE ORDER

Updated: April 2, 2020

Shelter in Place Explained

What does the Superseding Order do?

This [new Order](#) requires that most people continue sheltering in their place of residence until May 3, 2020. This Order replaces the prior Shelter-in-Place Order, which was set to expire on April 7, 2020. It also adds to the list of restrictions to slow the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

You are still allowed to participate in “essential activities” or to work for an “essential business” if it is not possible for you to work from home. This means that you are allowed to leave your home for specified reasons—like to make sure you have the necessities of life (discussed more below) such as getting food and medical supplies, or to perform work for an essential business that you cannot complete from your home. You are also allowed to go outside to take care of a pet or for exercise so long as you stay close to home and don’t congregate in a group and maintain at least six feet of distance between you and other people who aren’t part of your family or living unit.

To watch a video from the San Benito County Health Officer on the new Shelter-in-Place Order go to <https://youtu.be/I0-d2pe1eKc>.

[READ THE FULL TEXT OF THE NEW ORDER HERE](#)

When does the new Order go into effect?

The new Order went into effect starting 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2020.

How long does the new Order last?

The new Order is currently set to last until Sunday, May 3, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. The San Benito County Health Officer may choose to shorten or extend the time period. How long the restrictions are in place will depend on what the Health Officer decides is necessary to protect public health.

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. Check the San Benito County Public Health Services website for updates regularly at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>. The County is working with local media to share important updates and information.

Where is the new Order in effect?

This new Order (or a similar order) is in effect in San Benito County as well as the most populous counties of the Bay Area, including in Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Contra Costa and, Alameda. Additional California counties may issue the same or similar orders.

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,” as defined by the new Order. Do I need to get an official letter of authorization from the County to operate a facility in the County?

No. If your business is covered in the list of essential businesses in the Order, then you may operate your business from a facility in the County so long as you create, post, and implement a “Social Distancing Protocol” for each facility no later than 11:59 pm on April 2, 2020. You do not need to obtain any specific authorization from the County to run your business. The County does not issue written determinations or authorizations.

I work for an Essential 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 County 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 authorized under the Order.

What does it mean to “shelter in place?”

The term “shelter in place” means to stay 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 Benito County’s Order?

Yes. In addition to the statewide order, the San Benito County Health Officer’s Order remains in effect. All residents must comply with the restrictions in both the County and State 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,” to work for an “essential business,” to perform “minimum basic operations” for your employer, or for “essential travel,” as those terms are defined in the new Order (discussed more below)
- Cannot host or attend any gatherings

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), and stay home if you are sick.

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.

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

Yes. But maintain the 6ft distance from all others and wipe down all surfaces.

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.

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. Food and shelter resources are available at <https://hhsa.cosb.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/6Community-Resources-during-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>.

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.

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, coffee 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 may also deliver.

Can I walk my dog?

Yes, but you cannot use dog parks. Be sure that you distance yourself at least six feet from others who are not part of your household.

Can I take my dog to the dog park?

No. Dog parks are areas that encourage people to gather together, and are required to close.

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.

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

Restaurants, coffee shops, 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, convenience stores, and other such food retailers.

How can I access free or reduced-price meals for myself or my family?

Schools, the San Benito County Food Bank, and other entities provide free food or meals to the public are encouraged to continue providing these services. Food and shelter resources are available at <https://hhsa.cosb.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/6Community-Resources-during-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>. 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 that they can maintain minimum business operations and allow people to access their units to the extent they are accessing them for medical or other essential needs.

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?

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. Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for more information. Call 911 or go to an emergency room only if you are experiencing a medical emergency.

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'm a medical provider – am I allowed to remain open for non-essential services?

Yes, if you are a medical provider, your office is encouraged to remain open. Under the Order, all medical services, including routine and preventive care, are considered essential. This includes, but is not limited to, mental health services, immunizations, well-woman exams, dental cleanings, allergy shots, eye exams, physical therapy, and

surgeries. Preventive care should not be deferred. Many visits involve exams or procedures that must be done in person, but practitioners are encouraged to conduct appointments remotely via phone or telemedicine when it is appropriate and feasible to do so.

Can I continue to use reflexology, massage therapy, chiropractic, or similar services?

You may continue to use these services if your healthcare provider has determined that they are medically necessary for you.

Can I still go to my mental health appointments?

Yes, mental health appointments can continue. Patients should consult with their practitioners to determine whether it is appropriate and feasible to conduct individual mental health appointments remotely.

Can I still go to my substance abuse treatment groups (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous) or other group counseling sessions?

All participants in group counseling services must 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.

What mental health resources are available for people experiencing distress?

The following resources are available to help people who may be experiencing distress or heightened anxiety right now:

- San Benito County Behavioral Health Department: (831) 636-4020
- 24/7 Behavioral Health Services Access to Service: (888) 636-4020
- Suicide and Crisis Hotline 24/7: (855) 278-4204
- If you are experiencing an emergency please call 911 immediately.

You can also visit the San Behavioral Health Department website for additional resources at <https://www.facebook.com/sanbenitocountybehavioralhealth/>.

Can and should I donate blood if I am healthy?

Yes, donating blood is an exempt healthcare operation. If you are healthy and do not have COVID-19 symptoms, you are encouraged to donate. The need for adequate blood donations from health people is critical.

Should the hospital cafeteria be closed?

No. The hospital cafeteria falls within the exemption for healthcare facilities and may remain open. The hospital cafeteria must be structured to ensure six-foot minimum distancing between non-related individuals picking up food from or eating in the facility. The hospital cafeteria 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.

Will this order prevent companies working on vaccines and testing for COVID-19 from continuing to do that work?

No. The Order exempts any business that is performing work related to the delivery of health care, including companies working on vaccines and testing for COVID-19.

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 the hospital, clinics, and other organizations that provide healthcare, provide services to healthcare organizations, provide needed supplies to healthcare organizations, or otherwise maintain healthcare 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.

Caretaking and Education

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

You may visit the hospital or another healthcare facility only for the purpose of obtaining health care services and supplies. Non-essential visitations are barred. Do not visit a nursing home, skilled nursing facility, or residential care facility other than for the purpose of securing care. People over 60 years of age are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

Can I leave home to care for my elderly parents or friends who require assistance to care for them? Or a friend or family member who has disabilities?

Yes. 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, and coughing or sneezing into a tissue.

What do I do about my kids? I have to work.

If you work for an essential business, as described in the Order, you can and should continue to work. Certain employers, schools, and community organizations may provide childcare for employees of essential businesses. You may also employ a babysitter to provide home-based care for your kids.

Does this Order require that schools shut down?

This Order requires that all schools stop holding classes at physical locations within the County. Schools can still provide distance learning to their students. Employees of schools 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. Schools can also continue to offer students free and reduced-price lunches for takeaway, which many schools are doing.

Are daycare facilities allowed to operate?

Yes, but only to allow children of owners, employees, volunteers, and contractors for essential businesses, essential governmental functions, or for carrying out minimum basic operations to work. Children of other workers who are not exempt under the Order cannot attend daycare.

Also, any daycare facility operating to serve children of essential workers need to comply with these mandatory 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.

I am a babysitter. Can I go to work?

Yes. The Order allows childcare providers caring for a child in the child’s own home to continue working.

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. Employees may leave home to go to these jobs. 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 the County, 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.

What are “Essential Businesses”?

The following excerpt from the Order lists the “Essential Businesses”:

- i. Healthcare Operations and businesses that operate, maintain, or repair Essential Infrastructure;
- ii. Grocery stores, certified farmers’ market, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of unprepared food, canned food, dry goods, non-alcoholic beverages, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supply, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, as well as hygienic products and household consumer products necessary for personal hygiene or the habitability, sanitation, or operation of residences. The businesses included in this subparagraph (ii) include establishments that sell multiple categories of products provided that they sell a significant amount of essential products identified in this subparagraph, such as liquor stores that also sell a significant amount of food.
- iii. Food cultivation, including farming and agriculture, livestock, and fishing;
- iv. Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;
- v. Construction, but only of the types listed in this subparagraph below:
 1. Projects immediately necessary to the maintenance, operation or repair of Essential Infrastructure;
 2. Projects associated with Healthcare Operations, including creating or expanding Healthcare Operations, provided that such construction is directly related to the COVID-19 response;
 3. Affordable housing that is or will be income-restricted, including multi-unit

- or mixed-use developments containing at least 10% income-restricted units;
4. Public works projects if specifically designated as an Essential Governmental Function by the lead governmental agency;
 5. Shelters and temporary housing, but not including hotels or motels;
 6. Projects immediately necessary to provide critical non-commercial services to individuals experiencing homelessness, elderly persons, persons who are economically disadvantaged, and persons with special needs;
 7. Construction necessary to ensure that existing construction sites that must be shut down under this Order are left in a safe and secure manner, but only to the extent necessary to do so; and
 8. Construction or repair necessary to ensure that residences and buildings containing Essential Businesses are safe, sanitary, or habitable to the extent such construction or repair cannot reasonably be delayed;
- vi. Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services;
 - vii. Gas stations and auto-supply, auto-repair (including, but not limited to, for cars, trucks, motorcycles and motorized scooters), and automotive dealerships, but only for the purpose of providing auto-supply and auto-repair services (and not, by way of example, car sales or car washes). This subparagraph (vii) does not restrict the on-line purchase of automobiles if they are delivered to a residence or Essential Business;
 - viii. Bicycle repair and supply shops;
 - ix. Banks and related financial institutions;
 - x. Service providers that enable residential transactions (including rentals, leases, and home sales), including, but not limited to, real estate agents, escrow agents, notaries, and title companies, provided that appointments and other residential viewings must only occur virtually or, if a virtual viewing is not feasible, by appointment with no more than two visitors at a time residing within the same household or living unit and one individual showing the unit (except that in person visits are not allowed when the occupant is still residing in the residence);
 - xi. Hardware stores;
 - xii. Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the habitability, sanitation, and operation of residences and Essential Businesses, but not for cosmetic or other purposes;
 - xiii. Arborists, landscapers, gardeners, and similar service professionals, but only to the limited extent necessary to maintain the habitability, sanitation, operation of businesses or residences, or the safety of residents, employees, or the public (such as fire safety or tree trimming to prevent a dangerous condition), and not for cosmetic or other purposes (such as upkeep);
 - xiv. Businesses providing mailing and shipping services, including post office boxes;

- xv. Educational institutions—including public and private K-12 schools colleges, and universities—for purposes of facilitating distance learning or performing essential functions, provided that social distancing of six-feet per person is maintained to the greatest extent possible;
- xvi. Laundromats, drycleaners, and laundry service providers;
- xvii. Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery or carry out. Schools and other entities that typically provide free food services to students or members of the public may continue to do so under this Order on the condition that the food is provided to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. Schools and other entities that provide food services under this exemption shall not permit the food to be eaten at the site where it is provided, or at any other gathering site;
- xviii. Funeral home providers, mortuaries, cemeteries, and crematoriums, to the extent necessary for the transport, preparation, or processing of bodies or remains;
- xix. Businesses that supply other Essential Businesses with the support or supplies necessary to operate, but only to the extent that they support or supply these Essential Businesses. This exemption shall not be used as a basis for engaging in sales to the general public from retail storefronts;
- xx. Businesses that have the primary function of shipping or delivering groceries, food, or other goods directly to residences or businesses. This exemption shall not be used to allow for manufacturing or assembly of non-essential products or for other functions besides those necessary to the delivery operation;
- xxi. Taxis, rental car companies, and other private transportation providers providing transportation services necessary for Essential Activities and other purposes expressly authorized in this Order;
- xxii. Home-based care for seniors, adults, children, and pets;
- xxiii. Residential facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, and children;
- xxiv. Professional services, such as legal, notary, or accounting services, when necessary to assist in compliance with non-elective, legally required activities;
- xxv. Services to assist individuals in finding employment with Essential Businesses;
- xxvi. Moving services that facilitate residential or commercial moves that are allowed under this Order;
- xxvii. Childcare facilities providing services that enable owners, employees, volunteers, and contractors for Essential Businesses, Essential Governmental Functions, or Minimum Basic Operations to work as allowed under this Order. Children of owners, employees, volunteers, and contractors who are not exempt under this Order may not attend childcare facilities. To the extent possible, childcare facilities must operate under the following conditions:

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.

What if my business is not considered an essential 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.
- 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, and avoiding all social interaction outside the household when sick with a fever or cough.

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, and avoiding all social interaction outside the household when sick with a fever or cough.

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, dentists, pharmacies, 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 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.

Unless closer contact is necessary for their work, all employees must strictly 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. Other than that, employees cannot be onsite at your lab locations.

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 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. Other than that, you can only maintain minimum basic operations, such as store security and safeguarding your inventory.

What should I do if my employer makes me to go to work?

Many businesses are not allowed to operate under this Order. Essential businesses, as defined in the Order, are allowed (and encouraged) to continue operating. If your work is not an essential business, you are not allowed to go to work and your employer cannot make you go except for limited minimum basic operations such as maintaining the value of a business's inventory, keeping the business site safe and secure, or ensuring that employees are able to work remotely. The Order does not prohibit anyone from working from home. Your employer can require you to work from home – and you can do so – if your work allows it.

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 and other food retailers remain open?

Yes. Grocery stores, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other food retail establishments selling foods 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.

I operate a food facility-- what practices should I follow to keep my patrons safe?

Follow the Notice and Directive to San Benito County Food Facilities in response to COVID-19 at <https://hhsa.cosb.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3Food-Facilities-and-Essential-Business-Guidance-San-Benitopdf.pdf> . For the Spanish version of this Notice and Directive is at <https://hhsa.cosb.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3Spanish-Food-Facilities-and-Essential-Business-Guidance-San-Benitopdf.pdf>.

For more information on San Benito County Food Facilities COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Measures contact Environmental Health at (831) 636-4035 and consult the San Benito

County Public Health Services website for updated local information at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>.

What if I have a cafeteria at my worksite? Can it continue to operate to serve workers who are doing work exempted in the Order?

The cafeteria can operate like other food facilities. It can serve food to the remaining employees, so long as the employees take the food away and do not eat it in the cafeteria. The cafeteria must strictly follow the social distancing requirements in the Order.

Can I operate my liquor store?

You may keep your liquor store open if it also sells a significant amount of products like food, and household cleaning and personal hygiene items.

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.

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 the County and I'm not sick?

Unless your work is exempted in the Order, you cannot go to work at a physical location in the County 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?

Arborist, landscaping, and gardening services can continue only if they are necessary to maintain the habitability, sanitation, operation of businesses or residences, or the safety of residents, employees, or the public (such as fire safety or tree trimming to prevent a dangerous condition). Landscaping services for cosmetic purposes or general upkeep have to stop.

Landscapers and other professionals performing services under contract with governmental agencies should consult the relevant agency to determine whether their services are deemed essential.

How do the Orders apply to working in agriculture?

Any form of cultivation of products for personal consumption or use, including farming, ranching, livestock, and fishing, and associated activities, including, but not limited to, activities or businesses associated with planting, growing, harvesting, processing, cooling, storing, packaging, and transporting such products, or the wholesale or retail sale of such products is allowable, provided that, to the extent possible, businesses comply with the Social Distancing Requirements and otherwise provide for the health and safety of their employees.

Can home service workers continue to provide their services?

Home service workers can keep providing services in homes if they are essential to health, safety, sanitation, or the necessary operation of the home. Generally, this means that plumbing, pest control, important maintenance (to, for example, fix a water leak or a faulty wire), or similar services needed to maintain a safe and sanitary home are allowed. Purely cosmetic or other non-essential home services for general upkeep are not allowed and should be put off. Home-based care for children, adults, seniors, and pets is also allowed under the Order.

What if I have a service or equipment emergency at my home, such as with plumbing or electricity?

Service providers like plumbers, electricians, and exterminators can keep working and providing services to the public that are necessary to maintain a livable, sanitary, and functional household. You can call your building manager or a service provider, or you can also visit your hardware store to assist with making your own repairs.

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.

Can real estate agents show residences in person? Or if I just closed on a home, can I do a walk-through of the home with the agent or seller?

Generally, no. Real estate agents, escrow agents, and other service providers that facilitate residential transactions like home sales and apartment rentals are essential workers, but all appointments and viewings must happen virtually (via video or livestream). Only if a virtual viewing is 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 unit. In-person showings or walk-throughs are not allowed when the occupant is still living in the residence.

Can notaries public continue to operate?

Yes.

Can title insurance companies continue to operate?

Yes.

Are cannabis dispensers and growers allowed to operate?

Medical dispensaries can dispense under healthcare industry exemptions. Suppliers to medical dispensaries and licensed medical growers can operate as well. Non-medical cultivation, supply, and dispensing of cannabis are prohibited, with the exception of deliveries directly to residences. Dispensaries with a mixed clientele of both medical and non-medical customers can do in-person business only with medical customers.

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

No.

Can I have cannabis delivered to my home?

Yes. The Order allows businesses to deliver products to people’s residences.

Can auto dealerships 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.

Can gun shops selling firearms and ammunition continue to keep their storefronts open?

No. Gun shops are not essential businesses under the Order. The Order allows delivery of inventory directly to customers at their residences in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, but gun shops may not make sales from their storefronts.

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.

Construction and Essential Infrastructure

Can commercial construction projects go forward?

The Order allows **only** the following kinds of construction projects to move ahead:

1. Projects immediately necessary to the maintenance, operation, or repair of Essential Infrastructure;
2. Projects associated with Healthcare Operations, including creating or expanding Healthcare Operations, provided that such construction is directly related to the COVID-19 response;
3. Affordable housing that is or will be income-restricted, including single family or multi-unit or mixed-use developments containing at least 10% income-restricted units;
4. Public works projects if specifically designated as an Essential Governmental Function by the lead governmental agency;
5. Shelters and temporary housing, but not including hotels or motels;
6. Projects immediately necessary to provide critical non-commercial services to individuals experiencing homelessness, elderly persons, persons who are economically disadvantaged, and persons with special needs;

7. Construction strictly necessary to ensure that existing construction sites that must be shut down under this Order are left in a safe and secure manner, but only to the extent necessary to do so; and
8. Construction or repair necessary to ensure that residences and buildings containing Essential Businesses are safe, sanitary, or habitable to the extent such construction or repair cannot reasonably be delayed;

I work for an essential infrastructure organization—can I leave home to go to work?

Yes, if the project you are working on is immediately necessary to the maintenance, operation, or repair of Essential Infrastructure. Essential Infrastructure means the airport, utilities (including water, sewer, gas, and electrical), oil refining, roads and highways, public transportation, solid waste facilities (including collection, removal, disposal, 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).

Can my business expand a data center that houses computer servers to ensure that we can maintain existing service levels during a period of increased demand?

Yes, if the construction is immediately necessary to maintain the operation of essential computer or internet infrastructure.

Are there any kinds of special protocols I need to comply with if I'm running an active construction site?

Yes. All construction sites must comply with the COVID-19 Construction Field Safety Guidelines, which are available at <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>.

Can my company continue construction on a healthcare facility?

Yes, if the construction on the healthcare facility is directly related to the COVID-19 response, such as creating or expanding Healthcare Operations that are directly needed to provide COVID-19-related health care.

I run a construction company that builds affordable and market rate housing. Can we continue to build new units?

You can construct only the following kinds of housing:

1. Affordable housing that is or will be income-restricted, including single family or multi-unit or mixed-use developments containing at least 10% income-restricted units;
2. Public works projects if specifically designated as an Essential Governmental Function by the lead governmental agency;
3. Shelters and temporary housing, but not including hotels or motels;
4. Projects immediately necessary to provide critical non-commercial services to individuals experiencing homelessness, elderly persons, persons who are economically disadvantaged, and persons with special needs;

You cannot otherwise continue construction of market-rate only housing, except (i) to ensure that your existing construction sites are left in a safe and secure manner while they are shut down in compliance with this Order; or (ii) to engage in construction or repair necessary to ensure that existing market-rate housing is safe, sanitary, and habitable if that construction or repair cannot be delayed.

I have a contractor scheduled to begin a remodel next week. Can I go ahead with this project?

You must defer your remodel or renovation project unless it is necessary to restore your home to a safe, sanitary, and habitable space and cannot reasonably be delayed.

I am midway through a remodel. Can my construction project continue?

Residential remodeling projects that are partly completed can continue if delaying completion would pose a safety, security, or sanitation risk to residents or impact the habitability of the residence; otherwise, they must be deferred.

I have a construction project that will sustain damage if I do not continue work on it. Can I complete the project if it is not related to provision of healthcare, housing, or essential infrastructure?

You can perform work on the site only to ensure it is safe and secure while it is shut down in compliance with this Order. This includes sending employees to the construction site to secure the site and ensure it does not sustain damage. You can continue construction on the project only if strictly necessary to prevent damage to the project, e.g. completing a roof or ensuring that there is proper drainage after grading has been completed.

Can quarries continue to operate under the Order?

Quarries can continue to operate in order to supply materials necessary for the operation and maintenance of Essential Infrastructure or for construction activities

allowed under the Order. All quarries must comply with social distancing requirements set forth in the Order to the greatest extent feasible.

My business principally manufactures, supplies, or repairs cell phones. Can it operate?

Yes. If your business is primarily engaged in supply or repair of cell phones or other telecommunications devices, then it is essential infrastructure and may continue to operate under the Order.

Government Operations

Is the local government shutting down?

No. Essential government functions will continue, including first responders, emergency management personnel, emergency dispatchers, and law enforcement. Other government 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. For San Benito County, information about availability of County services is regularly updated at

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 government agency is responsible for determining which of its workers are essential workers.

Can I get a building permit or building inspection from the Planning Department 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 or county agency to determine if it is still providing the service you need as an essential governmental function. Information about availability of County services is regularly updated at <http://cosb.us/>. You may also contact the San Benito County Planning Department (831) 637-5313.

Travel and Recreation

I don't have a car. Can I ride the bus, or can I use a taxi?

Yes, but public transit, ride-share services, or any other way of traveling can only be used for Essential Travel, which means:

- i. Travel to provide or access Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, Essential Businesses, or Minimum Basic Operations.
- ii. Travel to care for any elderly, minors, dependents, or persons with disabilities.
- iii. Travel to or from school to get materials for distance learning, to pick up meals, and to access any related services.
- iv. Travel to return home from outside the County.
- v. Travel required by law enforcement or a court order.
- vi. Travel required for non-residents to leave the County and go back home.
- 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, 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.

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 County 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 the county travelling for vacation or business, am I allowed to come home?

Yes, the Order allows you to come home.

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

Yes, you can leave the County to return 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 six feet from everyone outside your household, 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.

I get anxious when I'm cooped up inside. Am I allowed to go on a hike? Can I go to a County 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 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, and avoiding all social interaction outside the household when sick with a fever or cough.

Can I leave home to work out?

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

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, picnic areas, and dog parks, 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.

So, be prepared, plan, stay calm and informed

We are all working to keep our community safe. Be kind to each other. We are all in this together.

For more information on COVID-19, see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and visit the San Benito County Public Health Services website for updated local information at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/publichealth/>.