

Stay home except for essential needs

Last updated March 21, 2020 at 3:39 PM

The California State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health is **ordering all individuals living in the State of California to stay home or at their place of residence**, except as needed to maintain continuity of operation of the federal critical infrastructure sectors.

Read the [Executive Order \(pdf\)](#).

See the list of [Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers \(pdf\)](#).

Frequently asked questions

When does the stay at home order go into effect and how long will we stay home? What areas of the state are covered?

The order went into effect on Thursday, March 19, 2020. The order is in place until further notice. **It covers the whole state of California, and it exempts activity as needed to maintain continuity of operation of the federal [critical infrastructure sectors](#), critical government services, schools, childcare, and construction, including housing construction.**

What can I do? What's open?

Essential services will remain open, such as:

- Gas stations
- Pharmacies
- Food: Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants

- Laundromats/laundry services
- Essential state and local government functions will also remain open, including law enforcement and offices that provide government programs and services.

What's closed?

- Dine-in restaurants
- Bars and nightclubs
- Entertainment venues
- Gyms and fitness studios
- Public events and gatherings
- Convention Centers
- Hair and nail salons

Can the Order be changed?

Yes. The State Public Health Officer may issue orders as needed – for example if more information emerges about the public health situation – and issue new orders and directives as conditions warrant.

How does this order interact with local orders to shelter in place? Does it supersede them?

This is a statewide order.

Business and taxes

What businesses and organizations are exempt?

Businesses and organizations that provide critical infrastructure for the state are exempted, including health care and public health, public safety, food and agriculture and media. See the [full list of exempt sectors \(pdf\)](#).

I run/work at an exempted business or organization, as defined by the

operate?

No. If your business or organization is in the list of [exempt sectors](#), it may still operate. You do not need to obtain any specific authorization from the state to do so.

Do I need to pay my taxes?

Yes, state and federal deadlines have been extended. All state taxes are now due on [July 15](#).

Schools and childcare

My school is providing free grab-and-go meals and childcare. Are those still open?

Yes. It is essential to keep children fed and educated. School employees should report to work and focus on distance learning, school meals, and childcare/supervision.

Are daycares still open? Can my babysitter still come to the house?

Yes. Daycares are still open, but only for children of parents working in essential sectors. Daycare centers that remain open should employ heightened cleaning and distancing requirements. Babysitters may also come to the house to care for minors of parents working in essential sectors.

Health care and helping sick relatives

What if I need to visit a health care provider?

If you are feeling sick with flu-like symptoms, please first call your doctor, a nurse hotline, or an urgent care center.

If you need to go to the hospital, call ahead so they can prepare for your arrival. If you need to call 911, tell the 911 operator the exact symptoms you are experiencing so the ambulance provider can prepare to treat you safely.

Non-essential medical care like eye exams, teeth cleaning, and elective procedures must/should be cancelled or rescheduled. If possible, health care visits should be done remotely.

Contact your health care provider to see what services they are providing.

May I still go out to get my prescriptions?

Yes. You may leave their homes to obtain prescriptions or get cannabis from a licensed cannabis retailer.

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

Yes. Be sure that you protect them and yourself by following social distancing guidelines such as washing hands before and after, using hand sanitizer, maintaining at least six feet of distance when possible, and coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue and then washing your hands. If you have early signs of a cold, please stay away from your older loved ones.

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

Generally no. There are limited exceptions, such as if you are going to the hospital with a minor who is under 18 or someone who is developmentally disabled and needs assistance. For most other situations, the order prohibits non-necessary visitation to these kinds of facilities except at the end-of-life. This is difficult, but necessary to protect hospital staff and other patients.

Outdoor recreation

Can I still exercise? Take my kids to the park for fresh air? Take a walk around the block? Walk my dog?

Yes. So long as you are maintaining a safe social distance of six feet from people who aren't part of your household, it is ok to go outside for exercise, a

Does this order affect hiking? State Parks?

No, you may still go outside so long as you practice social distancing of six feet. California State Parks have closed indoor facilities and campgrounds, but trails and outdoor spaces are still open. Spending time outdoors can lead to a number of overall health and wellness benefits like lessening anxiety, boosting creativity and getting your vitamin D. If you decide to make a trip, remember to keep social distance.

For information on National Parks, please visit their website [here](#).

Pets

Can I walk my dog? Take my pet to the vet?

You can walk your dog. You can go to the vet or pet hospital if your pet is sick. Remember to distance yourself at least six feet from other pets and owners.

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