

## Ducey orders Arizonans to stay home except for 'essential activities' due to coronavirus

From the Tucson-area coronavirus coverage from January to March: Nearly 1,300 cases in Arizona, stay-at-home order series

*By Howard Fischer Capitol Media Services- March 31, 2020*

PHOENIX — With known infections and deaths increasing, Gov. Doug Ducey issued an order Monday telling people who don't need to be out to stay home.

Starting at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Arizonans must “limit their time” away from their homes or property except to participate in “essential activities,” the order says.

Those activities include obtaining essential services, which he has said can include everything from obtaining groceries and supplies and caring for family members and pets, to going to court and church, or even to get hair or nails done.

Outdoors activities such as golf and hiking are also allowed, “but only if appropriate physical distancing practices are used.”

Violators would be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor that can result in up to six months in jail.

However, Ducey's executive order says “no person shall be required to provide documentation or proof of their activities to justify their activities under this order.”



*Gov. Doug Ducey, with state schools' chief Kathy Hoffman in background, stressed that people are still allowed to move about, on a limited basis, despite his stay-at-home order.  
Howard Fischer / Capitol Media Services*

At a briefing Monday, the governor said he made his decision based on both the number of people infected and the rate of increase. But he also suggested he may have had a bit of a blind spot to public perception.

“This was the first weekend I was actually able to be home for a little bit and I watched some of the national news,” Ducey said. “And now I better understand the fear and anxiety that is gripping the nation and, of course, the state.”

### **PRESSURE TO ACT**

Tucson Mayor Regina Romero enacted a stay-at-home order on Friday, though she was careful to provide the same exceptions for essential services that the governor laid out in earlier directives.

On Monday she urged Ducey to narrow his list of essential services to those “critical to maintaining public health, safety and community well-being.”

“We do not have the luxury of time to drag our feet on this,” Romero said in a prepared statement. “Every hour we wait will cost us avoidable transmissions and critical medical resources.”

In Flagstaff, Mayor Coral Evans, defying Ducey, issued her own proclamation on Thursday that does not have the same exceptions for nail and hair salons as “essential.”

And Ducey has been under pressure from outside sources, most recently including a letter from 100 members of the clergy through the **Valley Interfaith Project**, to do more than he had done to date.

“Our faith traditions teach us that human life has a value far beyond markets and other considerations,” they wrote.

“We also look to the medical science, which clearly states that early action is essential to stop the spread of COVID-19,” the letter continued. “Both our faith and the science tell us that the time for equivocation is long past.”

Ducey, in announcing the stay-at-home order, said he has taken a “calm and steady approach, making data-driven decisions” to protect public health and add hospital beds. He said he’s now ready to take that next step.

“The time for further action is now,” he said.

Driving that, Ducey said, was a recommendation by state Health Director Dr. Cara Christ to implement “enhanced physical distancing measures.”

Christ said there were several factors, including the latest figures showing 1,157 confirmed cases now encompassing all of the state’s 15 counties. There also have been 20 known deaths from the virus.

“As we’ve built capacity, we’ve seen an increase in the percent of community lab tests that are positive,” she added. “And our hospitals have seen an increase in patients with COVID-like illnesses.”

Respiratory cases now are close to 7% of all emergency room visits, up from 2%. And the percentage of tests coming back positive is now about 6%.

Ducey said that, in many ways, his order is not a big change.

“Already, things have been shut down to a large degree,” he said. “They’re going to be shut down even further.”

But he also sought to differentiate what he is doing from orders issued by some other governors.

“When you use words like ‘shelter in place,’ that’s what happens during a nuclear attack,” Ducey said. “That’s what happens when there’s an active shooter.”

He also emphasized that while this is a stay-at-home order, there’s a bit of “give” in what that involves.

Specifically, he said, it directs people to “limit their time away from home except to conduct or participate in essential activities or essential services.”

“We do not want people to feel trapped or isolated in their homes,” Ducey said.

“The weather is beautiful right now. Find a way to get out and enjoy it — with physical distancing.”

He said he wants Arizonans to reach out — at least electronically — to those who probably cannot or should not go out.

“April can be a very difficult month on the mentally fragile,” he said. “So let’s use the technologies we have. Let’s FaceTime people.”

He mentioned that he’s been using that iPhone app to video chat with loved ones such as his 96-year-old grandmother, along with his mother and father-in-law.

“We’ve been doing a lot of phone calls, a lot of FaceTiming,” Ducey said.

He said the state needs to not only battle the virus but “not allow people to go stir-crazy.”

## **MEDICAL SUPPLIES ARRIVE**

Christ separately reported that Arizona has now received 75% of the state’s share of strategic national supplies of “personal protective equipment.” That includes:

- 181,260 N95 masks, the kind that can filter out viruses;
- 532,500 surgical face masks;
- 54,048 face shields;
- 59,631 surgical gowns;
- 361 coveralls;
- And 431,438 latex, non-latex and nitrile gloves.

The Army is working to reopen eight of the nine floors of the closed St. Mary's Hospital in Phoenix, said Maj. Gen. Michael McGuire, director of the state Department of Emergency and Military Affairs.

Christ said that should add 340 high-acuity, intensive-care beds to the state's current capacity of about 1,500.