

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information



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# Stay home except for essential needs

San Diego County public health officials have issued orders to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus disease, or COVID-19. A statewide order issued March 19 expands on parts of the local order.

**San Diego County public health order** (PDF)

**California public health order** (PDF)

**List of essential critical infrastructure workers** (PDF)

## What the orders mean

- Everyone needs to stay home except to take care of essential needs or go to an essential job.
- Practice social distancing. Keep at least six feet away from other people unless they're family. Avoid gatherings of any size.

## What is open?

You need to follow social distancing when you visit these essential services, including:

- Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores
- Restaurants for take-out, delivery or drive-through
- Pharmacies
- Banks
- Laundromats/laundry
- Hardware/home improvement stores

Essential government services are still available. Many government agencies have closed public offices but are offering services online, over the phone or other ways.

## What's been closed?

- Dine-in restaurants
- Bars and nightclubs.
- Gyms and fitness centers
- Hair and nail salons
- Entertainment venues
- Public events and gatherings

## Businesses

Businesses and organizations that provide critical infrastructure are exempted, including health care and public health, public safety, food and agriculture and media. See the **full list of exempt sectors** (PDF).

Businesses allowed to stay open must also practice social distancing and encourage employees to work from home if possible. They must also suspend requiring employees to provide doctors' permission to stay home.

## Schools and childcare

- All public and private schools, colleges and universities are closed. Parents of minor children must take steps to keep them at home.

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.

Child care facilities need to operate in the following way:

- Groups of children are limited to 10, and they have to be the same children each day.
- If there is more than one group at a facility, they need to be in separate rooms.
- Children cannot move from group to group.
- The groups cannot mix. The providers must stay with one group.

## Health care and helping sick relatives

### What if I need to visit a health care provider?

If you are feeling sick with fever or cough or other 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.

### What about routine, elective or non-urgent medical appointments?

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 healthcare provider to see what services they are providing.

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

Yes, if you are not feeling sick. 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. Hospital administrators may determine other exceptions in special circumstances. This is difficult, but necessary to protect hospital staff and other patients.

## Going outdoors

You can go for a walk, walk your dog, go to a park or hike if you keep six feet from people who are not in your household. Avoid any groups.

## Why are we doing this?

The goal is to “flatten the curve.” That means to keep people from getting sick all at once. We can slow a virus’s ability to infect people by keeping them apart.

When a new virus like novel coronavirus appears, faster spread means higher demand on the health care system. The increase can overwhelm the health care system and make it harder to take care of all sick people, whether they have COVID-19 or not.

However, if people stay away from each other by staying at home and practicing social-distancing, the virus cannot infect as many people as fast.