In alignment with the State’s recommendations, San Francisco is reopening at the State’s Orange Tier starting March 24, 2021. The decision to reopen balances the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission with the public health risks of economic and mental health stress.

Even though COVID-19 case rates have come down, and more people are vaccinated, there remains a risk that people who you come into contact with may have COVID-19. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. We also have confirmed there are new, more contagious virus variants in the San Francisco Bay Area and that some of these variants are more likely to cause serious illness and death in unvaccinated people. We don’t yet know exactly how these variants will impact vaccine effectiveness, although clinical trial and real world data are reassuring that they will still work as intended. The opening of sectors does not necessarily signify that these activities are “safe.”

We have made our best efforts to create guidance to help these activities and sectors provide safer environments for workers and the public. However, this requires that everyone do their part to make these activities as safe as possible, including: wearing a well-fitted masks that covers your mouth and nose especially when talking, avoiding indoor settings to the extent possible, maintaining at least 6 feet distance from those you don’t live with, getting tested and isolating if you are ill, complying with additional health protocols required of open businesses. People at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 — such as unvaccinated older adults and unvaccinated people with health risks — and those who live with or care for them are urged to defer participating in activities with other people outside their household where taking protective measures of wearing face masks and social distancing may be difficult, especially indoors or in crowded spaces.

If you are fully vaccinated (i.e., 14 days have passed since your final shot), you can feel safer about your own health risks when participating in activities permitted by our state and local health departments. However, please consider the possible risk your exposure may have on those around you, especially those you live with and those who are unvaccinated, when you take part in activities that involve people outside your household.

### Business Capacities and Activities Table or BCAT

The Health Officer ordered suspensions or restrictions on capacity limits of the activities as shown in the table. These suspensions or restrictions amend any related orders, directives, or guidance. All impacted people and entities are required to adhere to these new limits and must otherwise continue to monitor and comply with all applicable Health Orders and Directives.

Refer to the BCAT ([English](#), [Chinese](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Russian](#)) for all current restrictions, limitations and suspensions.
Tips for Retail Businesses Offering Curbside or In-Store Shopping or Services During COVID-19

Updated March 23, 2021

AUDIENCE: Businesses that offer in-store/curbside retail, services, and outdoor equipment rental during the COVID-19 pandemic. “Business” includes many types of organizations, such as nonprofit organizations, employers, community-based organizations and others. “Personnel” includes employees, contract workers, gig-workers, volunteers and others.

Curbside Retail is the provision of items to customers who do not enter your facility. Curbside Retail includes Personnel delivering items to a customer in a parked car or truck, or to a customer on a parked bicycle, scooter or motorcycle. The customer stays with their vehicle in a parking lot or legal parking space. Personnel can also deliver items to a customer who comes to your location on foot.

Summary of revisions since previous versions

- Refer to the Business Capacities and Activities Table (BCAT) for all current restrictions, limitations and suspensions.
- Includes information about CA Notify and a recommendation to get a COVID-19 vaccination when it becomes available.
- New or revised information on ventilation, mandatory metering and signage.

COVID-19 Information

Our current understanding is that COVID-19 is mostly spread from person-to-person in the air through virus-containing droplets in the breath of someone with COVID-19. These droplets enter the air when a person breathes. Even more droplets can get in the air when infected people talk, sing, cough, or sneeze. People with COVID-19 may have no symptoms and can still be breathing out virus-containing droplets that can infect others. Transmission can occur through:

- Larger droplets. These larger droplets are sometimes called “ballistic droplets” because they travel in straight lines and are pulled down by gravity. People nearby, usually within 6 feet, are infected when they breathe in these droplets or if the droplets land in their eyes, nose, or mouth.

- Smaller droplets or infectious particles. These can float in the air for a period of time and/or travel beyond 6 feet on indoor air currents, especially in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation. People sharing the same space are infected when they breathe in these smaller droplets and particles or the droplets or particles land on their eyes, nose, or mouth – even if they are further than 6 feet away. These droplets are sometimes referred to as “aerosols” or “bioaerosols”.

COVID-19 can also spread if a person touches their eyes, nose or mouth after touching a contaminated surface (also known as a fomite), however this is less common.

COVID-19 Prevention

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70 % isopropanol.
Tips

- **Avoid Close Contact.** To the greatest extent, maintain at least six feet of social distancing between yourself and the people who don’t live in your Household.
- **Wear a Face Covering.** Cover your mouth and nose with a Face Covering in public settings and when around people who don’t live in your Household.
- ** Routinely clean and disinfect** frequently touched surfaces.
- **Monitor Your Health Daily.** Be alert of symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, stay home, and get tested.

**Indoor Risk**

Scientists agree that the risk of transmitting COVID-19 is generally much greater indoors than outdoors. Consider the increased risk to yourself and your community while planning activities and dining. Any increase in the number of people indoors or the length of time spent indoors increases risk. Small rooms, narrow hallways, small elevators, and weak ventilation all increase indoor risk. Each activity that can be done outdoors, remotely, or by teleconference reduces risk. More detail can be found at [www.sfcdcp.org/indoorrisk](http://www.sfcdcp.org/indoorrisk)

**The Role of Ventilation**

Good ventilation controls droplets and infectious particles to prevent COVID-19 transmission by:
- removing air containing droplets and particles from the room,
- diluting the concentration of droplets and particles by adding fresh, uncontaminated air,
- filtering room air, removing droplets and particles from the air.

Whenever you are in a room or space that has been shared or is shared with people from outside your household assure yourself that there is good ventilation and that doors and windows are open, if possible.

**COVID-19 vaccine is here**

The vaccine is one of the most important ways to end the pandemic. The FDA, CDC, and California’s own Scientific Safety Review Workgroup have reviewed data from clinical trials to ensure the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. **We strongly encourage all persons to get vaccinated.** The first vaccines approved in the US are about 95% effective in preventing sickness from COVID-19, however we do not know how well they prevent infections that do not cause symptoms. This means that we do not know how common it is for a person who got the vaccine to carry the virus and transmit to others, including those who have increased risk for severe illness or death. Therefore, it is still very important for those who are vaccinated, and for the rest of the population who waits for their vaccines, to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic: wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose when outside your home, avoid get-togethers/gatherings, avoid being indoors with people you don’t live with, stay at least 6 feet away from others, and wash your hands after touching shared objects or after touching your face. Find out more about the vaccine, including where and when to get it at: [sf.gov/covidvax](http://sf.gov/covidvax)

If you have received the COVID-19 vaccine, please read more about whether you need to quarantine at: [www.sfcdcp.org/quarantineaftervaccination](http://www.sfcdcp.org/quarantineaftervaccination).

If you have received the COVID-19 vaccine, please read more about safer social interactions at: [www.sfcdcp.org/lifeaftervaccine](http://www.sfcdcp.org/lifeaftervaccine)
Create Required Plans and Protocols and Post Required Signage


The following must be available for all personnel and posted at the entrance or elsewhere on the business site.

- Fill out and post the [Health and Safety Plan](#) template for Directive 2020-17. If other Directives apply to your business, you may need to complete more than one Health and Safety Plan.
- Complete and post the [Social Distancing Protocol](#) and any signs that are required by that document.
- Post [signage about the risk of being indoors](#)
- Display the [poster with information about reporting health order violations](#)
- Review the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) [Ventilation Guidance](#) and keep an annotated copy available. Ventilation guidance from recognized authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control, ASHRAE, or the State of California may be used instead.

Post signage at public entrances and in all break rooms indicating which of the following systems are used:

- All available windows and doors accessible to fresh outdoor air are kept open
- Fully operational HVAC systems
- Appropriately sized portable air cleaners in each room
- None of the above

Create a Safer Space for Personnel and Customers

All businesses are required to establish a Mandatory Metering System to ensure maximum Capacity Levels specified in the Business Capacities and Activities Table (BCAT) are not exceeded. Develop and implement a written procedure to track the number of persons entering and exiting the facility to ensure at or below allowable capacity. Consider designating personnel to monitor store capacity.

Measures to ensure maintaining capacity limits and ensuring space for distancing include:

- Create designated circles or lines with marking on the ground to indicate six-foot distancing for customers.
- Create directional paths of travels if applicable, such as one-way entrance and exit for customers, signs for bathrooms.
- Consider using single line queue, instead of multiple line queues, to reduce customers’ wait time and enable easy management of queues.
- Consider setting up a queue management system to only allow limited number of shoppers at a time so that a six-foot distancing can be maintained among patrons and Personnel at all times, for small square footage or mom-and-pop stores where hiring a designated staff is not necessary or feasible.
- Maintain Plexiglas or other barriers between customers and cashier. If not possible, please ensure at least six feet of distance.
- Consider increasing the number of on-premises staff to prevent crowding situations during holiday seasons.
• You may need to change the physical layout of your business to help social distancing for customers and personnel.

Additional measures businesses should implement include:
• Provide customers with easy access to hand sanitizer.
• Personnel must routinely clean and disinfect other high-touch surfaces that can be safely cleaned in a manner that complies with industry standards, but no less than once daily. Personnel are not required to clean and disinfect surfaces after each individual customer touches a surface unless the patron appears symptomatic or there is visible contamination with nasal or oral secretions.
• Consider setting special hours for Older Adults and those with Health Risks to shop and avoid exposure to crowds.
• Consider outdoor sales. Refer to Special Considerations for Curbside Retail section below for additional information.
• Encourage the flu vaccination.
  o Post signage to encourage flu vaccine among personnel and participants.
  o Flu vaccines are critical in the fight against COVID-19 by (1) keeping workers and communities healthy and (2) reducing strain on our healthcare and testing systems that are responding to COVID-19. Find out more information at https://sfcdcp.org/flu.

Educate and Train Personnel
Businesses should designate a Worksite Safety Monitor who will ensure that Personnel properly clean and disinfect, screen customers for symptoms, and monitor the number of customers in the store or in line. Consider training the Worksite Safety Monitor and other Personnel on de-escalation with customers who do not comply with policies. Personnel may worry about their own risks, so provide resources to address anxiety, stress, and mental health.

Provide information on sick leave and other benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home (see Paid sick leave in San Francisco). Remember that employees cannot be fired due to COVID-19 results or needed time off related to COVID-19.

Provide information on CA Notify (canotify.ca.gov), an app you can install on your smartphone. It uses Bluetooth technology to recognize when you and your phone have been in close proximity to others infected with COVID-19 to help stop the spread of the virus in our community.

Check Your Space if it has been Vacant for an Extended Period
If your business has been closed for weeks or months, check for pest infestation or harborage, and make sure all pest control measures are functioning. Perform routine maintenance on ventilation systems including air ducts and vents. Flush out the stagnant water from the plumbing lines by running water through fixtures. Detailed guidance may be found at: sfwater.org/flushingguidance.

Getting Back to Business
Follow the Best Practices in Exhibit A of Directive 2020-17. To help compliance, you may need to ask customers to change the way they interact with your business and your products. Changes may include:
• Strongly encourage customers to refrain from touching merchandise unnecessarily and to use hand sanitizer before touching merchandise or upon entry to your business.
• Establish procedures for safe handling of returned merchandise.
• Establish procedures for safe handling of returned merchandise. Consider encouraging customers to send returns or exchanges by a delivery service to reduce unnecessary contact. There is no requirement that returned items be sanitized or quarantined.

• Prohibit self-sampling of items such as cosmetics and perfume.

• Fitting rooms for customers are allowed as long as masks are worn and hand hygiene is emphasized.

• If customers bring their own bags from home ensure that:
  o bags are not placed directly on conveyor belts, outside of shopping carts, or any other surface where customers are served.
  o reusable bags make no contact with employees.
  o customers bag their own merchandise.
  o customers do not bag merchandise in the checkout area if they cannot maintain physical distancing.

• If your business uses self-service bins (“Bulk Bins”) for any type of bulk products that customers dispense themselves into containers, follow the requirements in Section 3.3 of Directive 2020-07:
  o Signage reminding customers to sanitize their hands, keep their masks on, and maintain 6 foot distance from other customers must be posted next to the Bulk Bins;
  o Hand Sanitizing Stations must be made available next to bins;
  o Reusable containers are allowed only if no one else, including at checkout, will touch the container. Your business must provide containers if this is not possible;
  o Consider providing disposable serving scoops or other utensils and designate this area for more frequent sanitizing by Personnel.

Restrooms for Customers

High-touch surfaces in restrooms such as faucets, toilets, counters, door handles, and light switches should be frequently cleaned and disinfected in accordance with industry standards and the Social Distancing Protocol using EPA-registered disinfectants approved for use on SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) virus.

Consider creating and posting a cleaning schedule and sign-off sheet at the entrance to restrooms to track how often the facilities are being cleaned.

Retail Stores in an Enclosed Indoor Shopping Center

Retail stores in an enclosed Indoor Shopping Center that do not have direct access to adjacent sidewalk, street, parking lot, or alley area, may open for in-store retail as specified in the Business Capacities and Activities table, and with approval of a plan submitted to the Health Officer.

Special Considerations for Curbside Retail

Curbside Retail may occur in a parking lot or your business can utilize the Shared Spaces program for operations on the sidewalk or parking lane.

• All customers and Personnel must comply with the Face Covering Order, which requires that they wear a Face Covering at all times.

• Remind customers to call or otherwise message to let your business know when they arrive

• Ask for the vehicle’s make, model, color, and license plate number during the offsite/remote sales transaction so your Personnel can easily locate the customer.
• Remind customers when they place their order that they must turn their motor off when they arrive at your facility or location.

• Load into the trunk when possible. When feasible, Personnel may load the items purchased into the vehicle’s trunk compartment.

Traffic, bike and sidewalk safety is very important:

• Make sure your outdoor operations do not block pedestrian passage and ensure people with disabilities have full access.

• Customers waiting in line outside your business must remain at least 6 feet apart from each other and from customers who may be waiting in line for other businesses nearby.

• Delivering items to a vehicle should be done from the curb, unless the vehicle is in a parking lot.

• Do not deliver to double parked vehicles. You can use the Shared Spaces program to change parking spaces into temporary loading zones for no fee.

• Address any other traffic, bike lane or mobility safety issues specific to your location.

Frequently Asked Questions

Which stores can open? How many Personnel can be present at the same time?

Refer to the Business Capacities and Activities Table (BCAT) for all current restrictions, limitations and suspensions.

Should my staff wear gloves?

Routine glove use is not recommended. The CDC explains that in general, gloves are appropriate when cleaning or caring for someone who is sick (see link: When to wear gloves). In most other situations, wearing gloves is not necessary and may still lead to the spread of germs. The best way to protect yourself is to regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

There’s a metered parking space immediately outside the entrance to my store. How can I provide for use of that space for curbside pickup?

You can request that the adjacent street parking be converted to a temporary loading zone to help encourage physical distancing and reduce crowding. To do so, you can utilize the city's Shared Spaces Program.

Resources

• San Francisco:
  o SFDPH Communicable Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 information
  o SF.GOV comprehensive resources for businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  o Downloadable signage to print yourself, or to request printed posters
  o How to get tested for COVID-19 in San Francisco sf.gov/citytestsf
  o Information from the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development about COVID-19, such as employer requirements, employee benefits, and resources
  o Paid sick leave in San Francisco
• California:
  o State of California Blueprint for a Safer Economy
  o Guidance for Retailers from the State of California
  o CAL OSHA information on protecting workers from COVID-19
  o CA Notify is an app that can notify you when you come into close proximity to others infected with COVID-19
  o COVID-19 Vaccine Information at sf.gov/covidvax.
  o California Department of Public Health and Cal OSHA have guidance specific to delivery workers during COVID-19.

• Federal:
  o CDC Resuming Business Toolkit
  o CDC Return to Work Guidance
  o US Food and Drug Administration has useful information for food pick-up and delivery