**Tip Sheet for Operating Indoors: Personal Services**

**UPDATED March 2, 2021**

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<th>ALERT: Remain Cautious</th>
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<td>In alignment with the State’s recommendations, San Francisco is reopening at the State’s Red Tier starting March 3, 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.</td>
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<td>Even though COVID-19 case rates have come down, 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. The opening of sectors does not necessarily signify that these activities are “safe.”</td>
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<td>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 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, avoiding get-togethers and gatherings to the extent possible, if you must gather minimize the amount of time you spend with people you don't live, getting tested and isolating if you are ill, and 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 at this time 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.</td>
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**AUDIENCE:** Indoor Personal service providers, including hair salons, barber shops, nail salons, body art practitioners, electrology services, massage (in a non-healthcare setting), tanning salons, estheticians, skin care, and cosmetology services.

**NOTICE:** The following Tip Sheet was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) based on recommendations and guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the State of California, and Personal Service Providers licensing and industry groups. It is posted at [http://www.sfcdcp.org/businesses](http://www.sfcdcp.org/businesses). This TIP sheet may be revised due to changes in the COVID-19 risk level tier for San Francisco as assigned by the California Department of Public Health. Please see the associated changes in the Business Capacities and Activities Table (BCAT) at the top of this document: any changes made on the Table override the conflicting information in this document.

**BACKGROUND:** On March 2, 2021, the Health Officer issued d authorizing and providing guidance for Personal Services and amended Appendix C-1 Additional Businesses Permitted to Operate. This document summarizes the main action items from the Directive. All personal service providers must adhere to all state and local regulations.

San Francisco Department of Public Health. *Updated 3/2/2021*
Summary of Changes since the 1/28/2021 Version

• Format changes. Major updates are in blue.
• For services that require the customer to remove their face covering:
  o services must be 6 feet from others or in a separate room.
  o Personal Service Providers must wear eye protection such as a face shield or goggles.
  o Personal Service Providers must wear a well-fitted mask and are strongly recommended to wear a non-vented N95 mask, even if not fit-tested, to provide maximum protection during procedures that require the customer to remove their Face Covering. Guidance regarding well-fitted masks can be found at: www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate.
• If any activity involves removal of face coverings, business is required to post Ventilation Checklist and implement at least one measure.

Indoor Activities Increase COVID-19 Risk

Scientists agree that the risk of transmitting COVID-19 is generally higher indoors than outdoors. Consider the increased risk to yourself and your community before participating in indoor activities.

The COVID-19 virus can travel in the air more than six feet and builds up indoors. Generally, whenever possible, choose outdoor activities over indoor activities, and if you need to go indoors, limit your time indoors if you are with people who are not in your household. Avoid enclosed spaces that are crowded and have poor ventilation.

How Does COVID-19 Spread?

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 exhales (breathes out), including when they talk, sing, cough, or sneeze. People with COVID-19 may have no symptoms at all and can still be breathing out virus-containing droplets.

• Larger droplets are sometimes called “ballistic droplets” because they travel in straight lines and are pulled down by gravity. People nearby, usually within six 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 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.
Basic 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.
- **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.**

COVID-19 vaccine is here!

The vaccine is one of the most important ways to end the pandemic. The FDA, CDC as well as California’s own Scientific Safety Review Workgroup have reviewed all data from clinical trials to ensure the safety and effectiveness of all COVID-19 vaccines. **Strongly encourage all personnel to get vaccinated.** While the vaccine may prevent you from getting sick, we do not know if people who have been vaccinated can still get the virus and spread COVID-19 to others. 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: wearing a mask that covers your mouth and nose when outside your home, avoiding gatherings, avoiding being indoors with people you don't live with, staying at least 6 feet away from others, and washing your hands often. 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)

CA Notify – another way for us to stop the spread

**CA Notify** ([canotify.ca.gov](http://canotify.ca.gov)) is an app you can add 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.

If you are using **CA Notify** and you test positive, your diagnosis **will not be shared** with others. However, if other people in close contact with you are also enrolled in the app, they will be told they had an exposure. They will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location or identity.

If you are using **CA Notify** and you were exposed to someone who tested positive and they entered their result into the app, you will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location or identity.

**CA Notify** is available through Apple and Google. See [canotify.ca.gov](http://canotify.ca.gov) for more information.
Flu vaccines

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. Those over the age of 6 months are strongly encouraged to get a flu shot. See http://www.sfcdcp.org/flu

Contact Tracing

- The San Francisco Department of Public Health, in partnership with community, including businesses helps identify those who have had close contact with anyone who has COVID-19. People can transmit the virus 48 hours before they develop symptoms. Some people never develop symptoms and can still transmit the virus. We can help prevent COVID-19 transmission by contact tracing which helps identify people who may have been exposed and helping them quarantine so they do not inadvertently spread the disease. We do this whenever there is an outbreak of infectious diseases like measles, tuberculosis, and others to protect the community’s health.

- Help ensure the health of your Personnel, clients, and our community. Retain the attendance/schedules of all Personnel at your organization for up to three weeks. It is recommended that organizations maintain a list of clients willing to voluntarily provide their name and contact information [or consent to retain their credit card information] for contact tracing purposes. Any lists should be discarded after three weeks. Patrons are not required to provide contact information.

- If Personnel or a client tests positive for COVID-19, the organization must assist the Department of Public Health in identifying other Personnel or clients who may have been exposed.

- **Cover your face**, test early, and trace! Find out more at https://covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing

Plan and Prepare your space

Review the Tip Sheet for Safer Interactions During COVID-19 Pandemic at www.sfcdcp.org/safersocial

Plumbing

If your business or workplace has been vacant during the Shelter In Place ordinance, check that your plumbing is working properly and flush stagnant water from the pipes. See the PUC guidance here.

Supplies

- Provide approved disinfectants for uses against COVID-19. The approved products are listed on the Environmental Protection Agency’s website.

- Provide handwashing/hand sanitizing stations for both Personnel and clients.

- Provide a non-porous chair or plastic basket or paper bag for client’s clothing or belongings.

- Provide proper Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for all Personnel. Eye protection and/or gloves may be required when performing specific services. See the Cal/OSHA guidance on Expanded Personal Care Services.

- Personnel and customers must wear a Face Covering at all times. Services that cannot be offered without removal of Face Coverings are currently prohibited.
• If you don’t already have a touchless payment system, consider installing one.

**Cleaning and Sanitation**

• Follow all sanitation requirements. All equipment must be properly disinfected between clients. This includes but is not limited to, chairs, tables, combs, brushes, scissors, etc. Review the directive for specific COVID-19 sanitation requirements.

• All linens must be washed between clients; even if your client does not get under them.

• Personnel handling soiled linens should wear gloves and follow proper glove removal and hand washing protocols.

• Wash your hands frequently and between clients.

• If feasible, Personal Service Providers should consider changing their own clothes after each client or wearing scrubs or a clean, launderable or disposable smock.

**Capacity**

• Review the BCAT for current **capacity and activity limits**

• Redesign layout to allow for proper social distancing. Space workstations at least **six feet apart**.

• Implement the **Mandatory Metering System** to ensure maximum Capacity Levels specified in the Business Capacities and Activities Table (BCAT) are not exceeded. See **Coordinate your Efforts**.

• Develop and implement a written procedure to **track** the **number of persons** entering and exiting the facility to ensure at or below allowable capacity.

**Mandatory Signage Requirements**

Add all COVID-19 related signage as required by **Sections 4.g and 4.h of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order**. Complete signage requirements are described in **Directive 20-30**.

Indoor personal service providers that will be providing services requiring the removal of clients’ Face Coverings, may only open or remain open to the public if they are using at least one of the following ventilation strategies:

**All businesses operating indoors must:**

• Review the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) Ventilation Guidance [https://www.sfcdcp.org/COVID-ventilation](https://www.sfcdcp.org/COVID-ventilation) 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 breakrooms 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
Doors and Windows required to be kept closed for fire/life safety purposes are exempt. For example, fire doors must remain closed. Make sure open windows do not create falling hazards especially for children.

If due to smoke or other conditions, a business cannot implement any of those measures, businesses that offer indoor dining must temporarily close and indoor personal service providers cannot have clients remove their Face Coverings until the ventilation measure(s) can be reinstated.

The County has templates available for the signage, including the mandatory ventilation checklist, available online at https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19. The Outreach Toolkit includes printable resources including many of the signs required or suggested to open Personal Services. Signs about proper hygiene, social distancing, Face Coverings, health screening, the risks of indoor transmission, testing and getting vaccinated are all available.

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

Make Necessary Ventilation Improvements, If Feasible, Including:

- Open windows to increase natural ventilation with outdoor air when health and safety allow. When possible, consider also leaving room doors slightly open to promote flow of outdoor air through the indoor space.
  - Do not prop or wedge open fire doors. Continue to follow fire and building safety requirements.
  - If open windows pose a risk of falls for children, use window locks to keep windows from opening more than 4 inches, or other safety devices to prevent falls.
- If your program has an HVAC system (sometimes called mechanical ventilation, forced air, or central air), follow the recommendations in SFPDH Ventilation Guidance. Prioritize maximizing the intake of outdoor air and minimizing recirculated air during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recommendations include:
  - Make sure the HVAC system is checked by a professional and is working properly.
  - Open outdoor air dampers and close recirculation dampers (“economizers“). This will maximize the amount of outdoor air that the HVAC system takes in and minimize the amount of indoor air that is recirculated.
  - If you can use higher-efficiency air filters without reducing airflow or damaging your HVAC system, use air filters rated MERV13 or better.
  - Disable “demand-control ventilation controls” so fans keep running even when a room doesn't need to be heated or cooled.
  - Keep the HVAC system running even when the building is not being used, if you can. If your HVAC system has a timer, set it to run, at a minimum, from 1-2 hours before the building opens until 2-3 hours after everyone has left the building, including custodial staff.
• Consider using portable air cleaners ("HEPA filters").

• If the establishment uses pedestal fans or hard mounted fans, adjust the direction of fans to minimize air blowing from one individual’s space to another’s space.

For more information and additional resources, please see the following: San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH): https://www.sfcdcp.org/COVID-ventilation or email at dph.doc.ventilation@sfdph.org.

### Protect Personnel and Clients

Conduct wellness checks for everyone (Personnel and clients) before they enter the building. Instructions for screening clients is attached to the Directive.

• Encourage your clients to conduct a self-screening before they arrive for their appointment.

### Coordinate your Efforts

A COVID-19 Worksite Safety Monitor must be on duty at all times. The site safety monitor will:

• Act as the staff liaison and single point of contact for Personnel at each site for questions or concerns around practices, protocols, or potential exposure.

• Serve as a liaison to SFDPH. The liaison should train staff to advise patrons, if necessary, that the dining establishment will refuse service to the customer if they fail to comply with safety requirements.

• Ensure patrons’ compliance with all aspects of the Health Safety Plan, such as wearing masks, preventing congregations or crowding, and generally maintaining social distance.

### Metering System to Enforce Capacity Limits

A Mandatory Metering System must be implemented to ensure maximum capacity Levels specified in the Business Capacities and Activities Table 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.

• Consider increasing the number of on-site staff to prevent crowding situations during busy seasons.

### Scheduling

• In accordance with the State of California guidance, Hair Salons and Barbershops may see clients by appointment only. Walk-ins are not permitted at this time. Other Personal Services providers are also strongly encouraged to see clients by appointment only.

• Schedule your clients to allow enough time between appointments so workspaces and tools can be properly cleaned and disinfected. Consider servicing fewer clients each day or expanding operating hours to allow for more time for sanitation between clients.

• Consider pausing strict cancellation policies to encourage sick clients to stay home. Clients must be allowed to reschedule due to symptoms of COVID-19 without charge.
• Remind clients not to arrive too early for an appointment. Clients may need to wait outside depending on the capacity of the space.

Special considerations for Specific Service Types

**Cal/OSHA provides additional requirements and guidance** for Personal Services providers and includes the tips listed below.

**Barber services**

• Review the BCAT for current restrictions.

• When providing services that require the client to remove their face covering, providers must perform the service at least 6 feet away from other or in a separate room and are strongly recommend to wear eye protection such as a face shield or goggles.
  
  o Providers must wear a well-fitted mask and are **strongly recommended to wear a non-vented N95 mask**, even if not fit-tested, to provide maximum protection during procedures that require the customer to remove their Face Covering. Guidance regarding well-fitted masks can be found at: [www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate](http://www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate).

• It is strongly recommended that providers wear eye protection when providing services to head and neck area and/or if the provider is within three feet of the client for more than 15 minutes.

• Ask your client to limit conversation while they are unmasked. Not speaking is safer.

• Provide your client with a tissue or towel in case they need to cough or sneeze while their face covering is removed.

**Esthetic, Skin Care and Cosmetology**

• Review the BCAT for current restrictions.

• When providing services that require the client to remove their face covering, providers must: perform the service at least 6 feet away from other or in a separate room and must wear eye protection such as a face shield or googles.

• Providers must wear a well-fitted mask and are **strongly recommended to wear a non-vented N95 mask**, even if not fit-tested, to provide maximum protection during procedures that require the customer to remove their Face Covering. Guidance regarding well-fitted masks can be found at: [www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate](http://www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate).

• It is strongly recommended that providers wear eye protection when providing services to head and neck area and if the provider is within three feet of the client for more than 15 minutes.

• Limit conversation while your client is unmasked. Not speaking is safer.

• Provide your client with a tissue or towel in case they need to cough or sneeze while their face covering is removed. Have the client dispose dirty tissues or towels in a lidded container.

• Disposable gloves should be worn throughout the entire esthetic service, and while performing cleaning and disinfection of all implements and surfaces after each client session.

• Single use applicators should be disposed of immediately in a lidded container lined with a plastic bag.
Electrology

- Review the BCAT for current restrictions.
- Personnel and customers must wear a Face Covering at all times. When providing services that require the client to remove their face covering, providers must perform the service at least 6 feet away from other or in a separate room and must wear eye protection such as a face shield or goggles.
- Provider must wear a well-fitted mask and are **strongly recommended to wear a non-vented N95 mask**, even if not fit-tested, to provide maximum protection during procedures that require the customer to remove their Face Covering. Guidance regarding well-fitted masks can be found at: [www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate](http://www.sfcdcp.org/maskingupdate).
- Electrologist must wear disposable gloves.
- It is strongly recommended that providers wear eye protection when providing services to head and neck area and/or if the provider is within three feet of the client for more than 15 minutes.
- Tweezers, rollers, and needle holder caps should be properly cleaned and sterilized between each client.
- Needles used for electrolysis must be single-use, disposable, prepackaged, and sterile and disposed of in an approved sharps container immediately after use.

Massage Therapists (in non-healthcare settings)

- Review the BCAT for current restrictions.
- Ask the client to clean their hands with hand sanitize or by washing their hands with soap and water prior to service.
- The massage therapist and client must wear a face covering at all times.
- **Facial massages are not permitted** (per the state) if it requires your client to remove their face covering.
- Barriers such as washable sheets and pillowcases are not a substitution for cleaning and disinfecting protocols. Massage tables and chairs must be properly disinfected between clients.
- Hand treatments should be provided as the last part of the massage and hands should be washed immediately upon finishing the massage.
- You may do outcalls if you have an Outcall Massage Permit.

Nail Services

- Review the BCAT for current restrictions.
- Ask client to clean hands with hand sanitizer prior to service.
- Portable tubs/bowls must be disinfected with an EPA-registered liquid disinfectant that is labeled as a bactericide, fungicide and virucide.
- Use disposable tools as much as you can. All disposable items should be thrown away in lined and lidded trash can.
• Do not allow clients to get multiple services at the same time, such as a manicure and pedicure.

• All providers must always wear a face covering or a respirator when required. Please see the Cal/OSHA guidance on Expanded Personal Care Services.

• All nail providers must wear disposable gloves during the service and while cleaning and disinfecting all tools and surfaces after each client.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is it safe for me to get a massage/haircut/facial/etc.?
A. All activities that bring you within six feet of individuals outside of your household, particularly those indoors or for a sustained period of time (more than 15 minutes), carry risk. You can decrease that risk by being vigilant in your personal hygiene and going to a service provider who also takes health and safety precautions seriously.

  o Wear a face covering as required. Use a face covering with ear-loops to keep your mask from interfering with your services.

  o You must cancel/reschedule an appointment if they have COVID-19 symptoms. The Health Directive prohibits your Personal Service Provider from charging an extra fee if you have to reschedule due to COVID-19 symptoms.

  o Consider limiting the amount of time spent at personal care service appointments to decrease your exposure and the exposure of those around you.

Q. I bring my own tools/polish to my appointments; can I do that?
A. Not at this time and it is strongly advised to minimize the number of items you bring inside to your appointment. Keep to essentials only (wallet, keys, small purse).

Q. Are N95 masks required?
A. N95 masks are not required for clients. Continue to follow your industry regulations and use an N95 mask or respirator when required. If you use an N95 mask or respirator with a valve, you must cover the valve with a face covering.

Q. Are gloves required?
A. Esthetic, skin care, cosmetology and nail services are required to wear gloves throughout the service and while cleaning and disinfecting tools. If possible, have latex-free gloves on hand for both clients and staff with latex allergies. Wearing gloves is not a substitute for hand washing.

Q. Am I allowed to operate both indoor and outdoor personal services?
A. Yes. Operating outdoors is highly encouraged.

Q. I am a practitioner who offers Reiki, Cupping, or Rolfing. Where do I fit in?
A. This is the correct guidance to follow. You should also review the Directive on Ambulatory Care.

Q. I am a body art practitioner; may I continue to offer my full menu of services?
A. Current state guidance does not allow piercing of the nose or mouth or any service that requires the client to remove their face covering.
Q. I provide personal care services out of my home; can I start doing that again? Or - I provide personal care services in clients’ homes, can I start doing that again?
   A. Yes, if you were able to do this pre-COVID-19, you may start operating your business again. You must adhere to the current directive and guidance.

Q. Should we vacuum or sweep hair?
   A. Vacuuming with a HEPA filter is recommended over sweeping. If you do not have a vacuum with a HEPA filter, consider carefully sweeping during a period when the fewest people are occupying the space. Consider waiting to sweep/vacuum as part of the disinfection protocols between clients. Wear a face covering and sweep gently to minimize movement and spread of particles.

Q. I’m a Business Owner. How do I make sure Personnel are not sick when they work?
   A. Please see SFDPH guidance on Asking COVID-19 Screening Questions, posted at www.sfcdcp.org/screen.

Q. What if a service provider or client tests positive for COVID-19?
   A. People may be able to transmit the virus 48 hours before they develop symptoms of COVID-19. They may also transmit the virus even if they never develop symptoms.

   Please see SFDPH guidance What to do if Someone at the Workplace Has COVID-19.

   Providers should keep a list of Personnel and Clients, which will help SFDPH with contact tracing.

Resources

You can find printable resources such as signage in the COVID-19 toolkit.

Cal/OSHA guidance:

- Indoor Personal Services Guidance and Personal Services checklist
- Indoor Hair Salons and Barber shops Guidance and checklist

CDC’s COVID-19 Employer Information for Beauty Salons and Barbershops


Free eye protection and other PPE:

- https://oewd.org/free-ppe-available