



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**SAN FRANCISCO ISSUES MORATORIUM ON GATHERINGS
OF 100 OR MORE TO SLOW SPREAD OF COVID-19**

The City and County of San Francisco has issued a Public Health Order prohibiting gatherings of 100 or more persons

San Francisco, CA — Mayor London N. Breed today announced that the Health Officer of the City and County of San Francisco has issued a Public Health Order prohibiting all non-essential events of 100 or more persons. This measure is necessary to slow the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the community. The Order is effective immediately.

The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) previously recommended cancelling or postponing events of 250 or more. In addition to prohibiting events with 100 people or more, DPH recommends that organizations that serve vulnerable populations cancel gatherings of more than 10 people.

“This new Order is an important measure to support public health,” said Mayor Breed. “We need everyone to follow the recommendations of public health officials to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community. This order mirrors actions being taken by other local governments and the state, and is informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. We know cancelling events and gatherings is a challenge for everyone, but it is essential that we take this step.”

The Order applies to events with 100 people or more but does not apply to: essential government services, transit, office space, hotels, residential buildings, grocery stores, shopping malls, retail establishments, hospitals, medical facilities, community serving organizations like food banks, and other facilities as detailed in the Order.

To allow for appropriate social distancing, restaurants that have a capacity of between 100 and 500 people are allowed to continue operating as long as they reduce their occupancy in half up to a maximum of 100 patrons. For example, a restaurant that has an occupancy of 150 is allowed to operate if it reduces its occupancy in half to 75.

“Today’s action builds on our recommendations last week for social distancing, and makes it easier for people to know exactly how they can help reduce the spread of the virus. Because the virus needs people to spread, by reducing the times and places where large groups of people come together, we can effectively slow it down,” said Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Health.



“We hope that this order will encourage people to skip social gatherings for the time being, and promote telecommuting and social distancing. Together, we can fight the spread of coronavirus, reduce harm to our community, and protect the most vulnerable people.”

Businesses with questions about occupancy should contact the San Francisco Fire Department’s Bureau of Fire Prevention at (415) 558-3300.

The national [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [California Department of Public Health](#) on March 12th announced that large gatherings of 250 people or more should be postponed or cancelled, and that gatherings of individuals who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people.

The Health Department’s chief concern is for vulnerable populations who are most at risk of getting very sick, or dying, if they get COVID-19. That is why DPH recommends that people over 60, or with certain underlying health conditions, limit their outings.

Last week, the Department of Public Health issued aggressive recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community. The recommendations for social distancing are intended to disrupt the spread of the virus and protect community health. These are systemic as well as individual changes that will make a difference in people’s lives. Although the recommendations cause inconvenience, they are necessary and worthwhile to reduce the spread of the virus and interrupt its transmission from person to person.

Read the recommendations that apply to vulnerable populations, large gatherings, workplace and businesses, schools, transit and health care settings at www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus.asp and stay up-to-date on coronavirus news and information.

You can also call 311 and sign up for the City’s alert service for official updates: text COVID19SF to 888-777.

Remember, these are the best ways for all San Franciscans to reduce their risk of getting sick, and preventing COVID-19:

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Try alternatives to shaking hands, like a wave.
- If you have recently returned from a country, state or region with ongoing COVID-19 infections, monitor your health and follow the instructions of public health officials.
- There is no recommendation to wear masks at this time to prevent yourself from getting sick.

You can also prepare for the possible disruption caused by an outbreak:

- Prepare to work from home if that is possible for your job, and your employer.



- Make sure you have a supply of all essential medications for your family.
- Prepare a child care plan if you or a caregiver are sick.
- Make arrangements about how your family will manage school closures.
- Plan for how you can care for a sick family member without getting sick yourself.
- Take care of each other and check in by phone with friends, family and neighbors that are vulnerable to serious illness or death if they get COVID-19.
- Keep common spaces clean to help maintain a healthy environment for you and others. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly with disinfecting sprays, wipes or common household cleaning products.

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