



FAQs: General Ventilation

November 13, 2020

The following FAQs was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health for use by local facilities, and will be posted at www.sfgdcp.org/COVID-Ventilation. This interim guidance may change as knowledge, community transmission, and availability of PPE and testing change.

AUDIENCE: Non-healthcare organizations (including businesses, companies, offices, schools, faith-based and similar organizations). Healthcare personnel and first responders need to check with their infection control and safety & health groups for guidance as there are specific hazards or hazardous activities which ventilation systems are set to control. Additional information for healthcare organizations can be found at www.sfgdcp.org/covid19hcp under Health Care Exposures.

Frequently asked questions

1. [If my restaurant, gym, or personal services business has multiple rooms or enclosed spaces, but the only ventilation I have is to open my front door, is this enough to satisfy the requirements of the Health Order?](#)

In order to comply with applicable building codes, it is likely your business either has adequate natural ventilation (windows and doors open to outside air) or a mechanical ventilation system that may be adjusted to provide additional outside air. If you are not sure what type of ventilation you have, please consult with your landlord or facilities manager. If you are still unsure whether you have adequate ventilation, SFDPH strongly recommends that you also use appropriate portable air cleaners for each enclosed area and room in your business.

2. [If my personal services business provides services to customers who remove their face covering and I provide those services in a separate room or curtained off area, should I use a PAC in each area?](#)

SFDPH strongly recommends that you use a separate PAC in each space where you are providing personal services where the customer removes their face covering.

3. [If my business has doors that open to another interior space, but not to outside fresh air, does that satisfy the requirement to open doors and windows? What if the space is within a mall or gym?](#)

No, if your business does not have windows or doors that open to fresh outside air, opening your windows and doors to another interior space does not satisfy your ventilation requirements. However, if your business is in a mall or gym or other fully enclosed space that is building code compliant, it should have a mechanical ventilation system that can be adjusted to satisfy your ventilation requirements. To improve safety, you may also add one or more portable air cleaners to your space. You should generally not open doors and windows to other interior spaces as this may cause cross-contamination, unbalance ventilation systems, and/or compromise the fire/life safety of the building.

For more detailed information see the San Francisco Department of Public Health's **Guidance on Ventilation** and **Portable Air Cleaners FAQs** posted at <https://www.sfgdcp.org/COVID-Ventilation>