



Safer At Home Order

Nashville COVID-19 Response [Safer at Home Order: What You Need to Know](#)

To further combat the spread of COVID-19, the Metro Public Health Department has issued a Safer at Home Order — directing all residents of Nashville and Davidson County to stay inside their homes, and immediately limit all movement outside of their homes beyond what is absolutely necessary to take care of essential needs.

Please reference the below FAQs for all questions regarding the Safer at Home Order. If you have additional questions submit a request here:

[SUBMIT A REQUEST](#)

If you have lost your job or income due to layoffs associated with the COVID-19 crisis, you can find updated information about local job openings and opportunities [here](#).

[Read the Safer at Home Order](#)

THE BOTTOM LINE

Residents of Metro Nashville and Davidson County are required to stay inside their homes unless they are engaged in certain “essential activities.” On those occasions when you are out of your home for necessary tasks, stay at least six feet away from others.

YOU CAN ...

- Go to the grocery, convenience or warehouse store
- Go to the pharmacy to pick up medications and other healthcare necessities
- Go to medical appointments (check with your doctor or provider first)
- Go to a restaurant for take-out, delivery or drive-thru
- Care for or support a friend or family member
- Take a walk, ride your bike, hike, jog and be in nature for exercise — just keep at least six feet between you and others.
- Walk your pets and take them to the veterinarian if necessary
- Help someone to get necessary supplies
- Receive deliveries from any business which delivers

YOU SHOULD NOT ...

- Go to work unless you are providing essential services as defined by this Order
- Visit friends and family if there is no urgent need
- Maintain less than 6 feet of distance from others when you go out

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- Visit loved ones in the hospital, nursing home, skilled nursing facility or other residential care facility, except for limited exceptions as provided on the facility websites.

Is this Order mandatory? What happens if I don't comply?

Yes. This is a legally enforceable order.

Why is this happening now?

This Metro Health Department Emergency Order is being issued now because it is urgent that we slow and stop the spread of COVID-19 in Nashville and Davidson County.

The virus spreads easily, and this Order is also intended to prevent the disease from overwhelming our healthcare system. The goal here is to “flatten the curve” to slow down the spread of the virus and ensure we have adequate health care resources for those who get sick with COVID-19 and those who need emergency medical care for accidents, heart attacks, strokes, and other routine medical conditions.

What is the difference between “Safer at Home” and “social distancing”?

Safer at home is a stricter form of social distancing. There are some differences. Safer at home means:

- Stay home (stay unexposed and do not expose others)
- Only go out for essential services
- Stay six feet or more away from others
- Don't gather in groups

The other concepts from social distancing will continue to apply when you are out shopping or walking or going to the doctor. These include washing hands, using hand sanitizer, disinfecting surfaces, not going out if sick, and staying at least six feet away from others at all times.

When does the Order go into effect?

The Order goes into effect Monday, March 23, 2020.

The Metro Nashville Public Health Department, will closely monitor the situation every day to determine the Executive Order's duration and any changes that may be necessary.

What are essential activities and what businesses that will stay open?

The following essential activities will remain open:

- Federal and state offices and services, including post offices and airports
- Essential Nashville government functions including law enforcement, transportation, and businesses that provide government programs and services
- Food and beverage: grocery and beverage stores, farmers markets, food banks, catering, convenience stores selling food, agriculture, food processing, feed mills, and other businesses that directly support the food supply
- Health care, mental and behavioral health, and biomedical research and businesses that directly support the healthcare industry including health information technology, staffing and supplies

- Sanitation and waste removal businesses and services
- Energy, water, and sewage businesses and services
- Pharmacies and medical supply businesses, and other businesses that directly support the drug and medical supply pipeline
- Vehicle fuel, support, service stations and businesses
- Banks, savings and loans, insurance companies, accounting businesses, and other business that directly support the insurance and financial services sector
- Legal and judicial services
- Laundromats/laundry/cleaning services
- Home and business repair, hardware supply
- Warehousing and storage
- Construction and facilities design businesses
- Product logistics, transport, and distribution businesses
- Parcel transportation and delivery businesses
- Veterinary and pet supply business and services including agricultural services and the caring and feeding of all livestock and farm animals
- Home and business cleaning and maintenance services
- All businesses which rely upon deliveries may continue, including florists
- Internet and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services)
- Print, online and broadcast media
- Certain other business and services the Health Department in coordination with Metro Legal and the Office of the Mayor determines are essential for the continued safety and security of Davidson County.

In addition:

- Daycare and childcare business will remain open, but will prioritize children of parents working in essential services.
- Hotels and commercial lodges will remain open, but must end entertainment or dining services in restaurants or group settings. Pick-up and room-service food services may continue.
- Housing and rental services may continue, but agents should practice social distancing, hold no open houses, or gather in groups larger than 10.
- Essential services listed above may continue as long as appropriate distancing is physically possible and encouraged. These businesses will adhere to CDC guidance on social distancing and hand hygiene in the workplace, including encouraging work-from-home and allowing employees when possible to work on-site in shifts to optimize social distancing in the workplace.
- All essential services, especially grocery stores and pharmacies, will make best efforts to establish hours when only available to senior citizens or otherwise vulnerable populations.

What about Government Employees?

This Order does not apply to employees of government agencies working within the course and scope of their public service employment. Employees of the Metro Nashville shall follow any current or future directives issued by the Mayor.

What about infrastructure and construction?

Individuals may leave their residences to provide any services or goods or perform any work necessary to the operations, maintenance and manufacturing of essential infrastructure, including without limitation:

- Construction of commercial and institutional buildings, and residential buildings and housing
- Airport operations, food supply, concessions, and construction
- Water, sewer, gas, electrical, oil extraction and refining.
- Roads, highways, public transportation and rail.
- Solid waste collection and removal.
- Flood control and watershed protection.
- Internet and telecommunications systems (including the provision of essential global, national, and local infrastructure for computing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services)
- And manufacturing and distribution companies deemed essential to the supply chains of the above industries

Can this Order be changed?

Yes. It was important to get this Order in place quickly given the spread of the virus in Tennessee. However, it can and will likely be updated as conditions warrant. Follow updates at covid19.nashville.gov. We will also share new updates with the media.

What if I need employee benefits or relief resources?

There many organizations and government departments that can assist with employee benefits and assistance. Please [visit here](#) for resources and a list of local businesses currently hiring.

What if I need to visit a health care provider?

Do not go to the emergency room unless you have an actual emergency.

If you feel sick, please first call your doctor, a nurse hotline or an urgent care center.

The Tennessee Department of Health and the Tennessee Poison Control Center have launched Coronavirus Public Information Hotlines.

The Tennessee Coronavirus Public Information Lines are (833) 556-2476 or (877)-857-2945. This line is available daily from 10 a.m.–10 p.m. (Central Time Zone). *Call volume may be high, so callers are urged to call again if getting a busy signal.

In addition, local healthcare systems have Coronavirus hotlines for patients on their websites.

People outside the greater Nashville area with respiratory illnesses should contact their primary care provider.

For purposes of this Executive Order, individuals may leave their residence to work for or obtain services at any health care provider, including hospitals, clinics, dentists, pharmacies, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, medical and scientific research facilities, laboratories, healthcare suppliers, home healthcare services providers, veterinary care providers, mental health providers, physical therapists and chiropractors or any related and/or ancillary healthcare services, manufacturers and suppliers.

Health care providers do not include exercise gyms and similar facilities.

Can I still get deliveries from online stores?

Yes. The mail and other delivery services to your home can continue to function, as can food delivery services. Just keep six feet between you and the person delivering the item.

Can I still order the things I need online and have them delivered to my residence?

Yes. The Executive Order identifies businesses that deliver goods or services directly to residences may continue to operate. But keep your social distance by staying six feet from the person delivering the item.

Can I use ride share, on demand service or a taxi?

Only for essential travel. You should avoid being in a vehicle with many other people. In circumstances under which such transportation is needed, you must practice social distancing, cover your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze, use hand sanitizer or wash your hands before and after rides. Airlines, taxis and other private transportation providers, like Uber and Lyft, providing transportation services necessary for essential activities and other purposes are expressly authorized in the Safer at Home Executive Order.

Is Metro public transit still in operation?

All Metro public transit systems remain fully operational for essential travel.

WeGo Public Transit has increased the frequency of its fleet and facility disinfecting program, with greater focus on surfaces touched most frequently by customers and employees.

Signs have been posted around the Central Bus Station and other WeGo facilities to promote healthy handwashing and other habits when riding public transit.

For more information, please visit the WeGo Transit website.

Can I still seek non-essential medical care and doctor's appointments?

Please contact your healthcare provider to determine which visits or procedures you should attend.

Each of the health systems in Nashville are providing guidance about medical care and doctor's appointments.

Should I stock up on food, necessities like toilet paper and medicines?

No. You will continue to be able to purchase these items whenever you need them, as stores selling necessary items like grocery stores, pharmacies and hardware stores will remain open and are frequently restocking.

Please continue to buy normal quantities of these items on the same schedule you normally do. This will ensure that there is enough for everyone.

What should I do if I'm sick or a family member is sick?

Do not go to the emergency room of a hospital unless you have deemed that you have an actual emergency.

If you or a family member is sick, please first call your primary care doctor, a nurse hotline or an urgent care center before going to the hospital.

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In addition, local healthcare systems have Coronavirus hotlines for patients on their websites.

People outside the greater Nashville area with respiratory illnesses should contact their primary care provider.

Check online resources like the CDC website if you are worried that you or a loved one has the COVID-19 virus.

Call 911 or go to the emergency room if you are experiencing a medical emergency.

What should I do if I'm sick or a family member is sick and needs to go to the hospital or a medical provider? How can I protect others?

If possible, walk or drive yourself to the hospital or medical provider. If another person must accompany you, protect them from exposure to the virus: stay 6 feet away from other people, maintain good respiratory hygiene, avoid touching surfaces or faces, and wash hands frequently.

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

Yes. Be sure that you protect them and you by following social distancing guidelines such as washing hands before and after, using hand sanitizer, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance when possible and coughing or sneezing into a tissue.

What if I am diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus or have been exposed to someone who was?

If you have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, you will need to be isolated to protect those around you. If you were exposed to someone who was diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, you should quarantine for the recommended time in order to not expose others if you happen to have the virus yourself. Contact your healthcare provider if you have additional questions, or go to the Metro Nashville COVID-19 website at <http://covid19.nashville.gov/>.

Can I visit loved ones in the hospital, nursing home, skilled nursing facility, or other residential care facility?

Generally these facilities are not allowing visitors. There are limited exceptions. Please visit the website of the facility for the guidelines for that facility.

Does the Order allow me to have my children in childcare? Will my daycare be shut down?

Daycare and childcare business will remain open, but will prioritize children of parents working in essential services.

Are non-profit organizations allowed to continue operating?

Yes, but only if they provide essential services as described in the order. This would include non-profit operating food pantries, providing housing and services for homeless residents and many other critical services.

I am currently on vacation outside of Nashville. Does the Order allow me to return home?

Yes. You should maintain social distancing on your way home, and then you will be subject to the limitations in this Order. If you prefer to stay indoors at your current location, you are encouraged to follow this Executive Order while outside of Nashville in order to protect yourself and others.

What happens if I leave Nashville to go on a planned vacation?

The Order requires that you stay in your place of residence. Traveling runs the risk of spreading the virus to other areas and exposing new populations. As explained above, if you live outside of Nashville, you are allowed to travel to and from work if your work is essential business, or if you need to travel to Nashville, for another essential service like medical appointment.

I'm visiting and staying in a hotel, with family/friends, or in a short term rental. What should I do? Can I go home?

If you have a car and can return home via travel, you may do so if you are following social distancing protocols. If you have a flight or other travel, you should check first with the carrier to see if they are still operating and what protocols they recommend. You are strongly encouraged to shelter in place when you arrive at your destination to avoid infecting anyone else in your home community.

If you need to stay longer, coordinate with your accommodations as best you can.

What do I do about my kids? I have to work.

The Order allows you to take steps necessary to take your children to authorized childcare. Otherwise, you should address childcare needs as you are able given the constraints of the situation.

Can I leave home to exercise?

If you will be both outdoors and not in close contact with people, yes. Otherwise, no, because fitness and exercise gyms and similar facilities will be closed.

How will I entertain my kids? Can we go to the playground or arrange playdates?

Do your best to entertain your children with games, reading, puzzles, and TV/videos at home. Engage them in educational online tools. However, you should not take them to the playground or arrange playdates. Children are not able to maintain social distance, and even adults are prohibited from socializing with friends in this manner. It is essential that we stop the spread of the virus by not having in-person social interactions.

Who counts as a family member?

A family member includes anyone you live with, anyone who is a legal relative of yours, or anyone you treat as a family member.

What do I do about my loved one who needs care from me?

You are permitted to provide care or to help with getting supplies for loved ones. But don't provide care or pick up supplies if you are sick and, instead, find someone else to do it. If you are sick, please try to self-isolate or take other steps not to expose anyone else to your illness.

Can I go to the store (grocery store, market, corner store, food bank, etc.) to buy food and other things?

Yes, you can go to the store to buy food, drinks and goods for yourself, for those in your home, and for anyone else that needs help. This also includes medical supplies at a pharmacy and supplies at a hardware store. When out of your house always maintain six feet of distance from other people.

Can grocery stores and other food retailers remain open?

Yes. Grocery stores, water retailers, produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and similar food retail establishments are encouraged to remain open to provide food and pet supplies to the public. When visiting these establishments, please help retailers maintain at least six feet minimum distance between patrons, including by providing ample space while shopping and waiting in line.

If my child's school is providing food or meals, can I leave home to go to the school to pick up the food or meals?

Yes.

Can I go shopping for things other than food/groceries?

Yes. You can shop for anything that is related to health care, office supplies, hardware supplies, and at businesses listed as essential in the Order. You should minimize unnecessary trips

Can I go to the bank?

Yes, but avoid unnecessary trips.

Can I go out to do laundry or have my laundry done?

Yes.

What are the social distancing guidelines I still need to follow?

The best way to reduce their risk of getting sick, as with seasonal colds or the flu, still applies to prevent COVID-19:

- Wash your 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.
- Avoid groups (stay at least six feet away from others).
- Reduce the time you are around others outside the home, even when at least six feet away.

When practicing social distancing, how far should I stay away from others if I must be away from my home?

At least six (6) feet, which is appropriately two to three steps away, including if you are on the bus or train. This is why it's important to only take public transportation for essential activities—you want to help everyone be able to practice social distancing.

What if I'm in a line and there isn't six feet between me and others?

You should still try to maintain a least six feet between you and others. When that isn't possible for short periods, do your best to keep the duration short. Be sure when you are in line that you don't sneeze or cough onto people. If needed, cough or sneeze into your shirt or into an elbow with clothing on.

I work for an essential infrastructure organization--can I leave home to go to work?

Yes. "Essential Infrastructure" includes, but is not limited to, water, sewer, gas, electrical, roads and highways, construction, public transportation, internet, and telecommunications systems (including the provisions of essential infrastructure for competing services, business infrastructure, communications, and web-based services).

Can I go to a bar/nightclub/theater?

No. Entertainment venues like these are not permitted to be open during this Order.

Can I go to a restaurant, cafe, coffee or tea shop, ice cream shop, or other foodservice location?

Yes, but only to pick-up takeout, curbside or go to a drive through. You cannot dine-in or eat or drink at the facility. Patrons will not be permitted to dine or congregate in restaurants, bars, and similar establishments.

I don't cook--how can I purchase meals?

Restaurants, cafes, food trucks and similar establishments may remain open to supply meals to the public via delivery and carryout. You can also purchase prepared foods at grocery stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, and other such food retailers.

How can I access free or reduced price meals for myself or my family?

Schools, soup kitchens, food banks, and other entities that provide free or reduced priced food goods or meals to students or other members of the public are encouraged to continue providing these services. However, food provided by these establishments to the public may not be eaten on the premises but must instead be delivered or taken away for consumption.

Can I go to the gym or health club?

No. Gyms are closed.

Can I walk my dog/pet?

Yes. Be sure that you distance yourself at least six feet from other pets and owners.

Can I go to a vet or pet hospital if my pet is sick?

Yes. Please call first to determine if there are any restrictions in place.

What if my plumbing gets stopped up or there is another problem with necessary equipment at my home? How will I access those sorts of services?

Call your plumber or building manager. This Order allows service providers like plumbers, electricians, carpenters, exterminators and building managers to keep working and providing their services to the public. To obtain supplies for a DIY solution, you can also visit hardware stores, which are allowed to stay open under this Order.

Can I keep working from home?

Yes, as long as your employer permits it.

What if I want to go to work and I'm not sick?

Unless your work includes an essential function, you cannot go to work. You may have the virus and not know it, or you might get it and risk infecting those you live with.