

COVID-19 | Safer at Home FAQ

The Safer at Home Order directs everyone in the city of Milwaukee to stay at home and isolate themselves as much as possible to stop or slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Everyone who can is being asked to stay home except for essential activities.

This will not feel like “business as usual” for individuals or businesses. This is an emergency situation that requires a strong response to mitigate the impacts to our healthcare system.

Q1. What’s new in the extended Safer at Home order?

A. The following changes (and any others described in the full Order) for the extended Safer at Home order go into effect 8:00 am on Friday 4/24/2020 and will continue until 8:00 am Tuesday 5/26/2020.

Businesses with essential operations that include sales (including retail stores) may remain open or reopen for sales provided they:

- Consider establishing curbside pick-up to minimize in-store traffic and outdoor lines, or methods like car-side drop-off or scheduled pick-ups
- Limit the number of people allowed inside the premises
- Establish line patterns inside and outside the store to help patrons ensure they stand at least 6 feet apart

Some additional businesses that are allowed to open, with restrictions:

- Libraries may open for curb-side pick-up of books and other materials, so long as all operations are performed by one person in a room/space. Materials must be requested online or by phone prior to pick-up. Pick-ups should be scheduled.
- Golf courses (public and private) may open provided:
 - Social distancing requirements are observed at all times (aside from members of the same household or living unit)
 - All tee times and payments are done online or by phone
 - Tee times are spaced to avoid clustering of foursomes
 - Pro shops, clubhouses, and driving ranges must remain closed and use of golf carts is prohibited
 - Restaurant/bar facilities may remain open but must comply with the restrictions of other food establishments.

All public and private K-12 schools have been closed for the remainder of the school year. Distance/virtual learning may continue. Schools may remain open for other government functions and for food distribution.

Q2. Why am I being ordered to stay at home?

A. Minimizing the number of people you come into contact with is the most effective way to slow the spread of COVID-19. If too many people become sick at the same time, the city's hospital systems may become overwhelmed and not be able to provide care to those who need it. Everyone staying home as much as possible is a community effort to ensure we do not exceed hospital ability to provide care to everyone who needs it.

Q3. Can I still go outside?

A. Yes, you can still go outside for essential needs such as obtaining essential goods and services, exercising (walk, run, bike), walking the dog, or other necessary activities. It is important to still practice social distancing while outside and in public places by staying at least 6 feet away from other people, covering coughs and sneezes with your sleeve or elbow, and washing hands with soap and water/hand sanitizer as often as possible. Group activities or team sports are not allowed (unless all participants are members of the same household or living unit).

Public parks and open spaces may be closed at the discretion of local health officials if social distancing is not being observed, there are violations of the Safer at Home Order, or the local government does not have the ability to monitor the use of public space.

Q4. Can I go to the grocery store?

A. Yes, essential businesses will remain open and that includes grocery stores. Please check the hours of your local grocery store as some locations have reduced hours or have certain shopping hours for individuals who are 60+ years old. If you need to go to the grocery store, please practice social distancing and remain at least 6 feet away from others.

Q5. Can I still get the mail? Can I still order goods online for delivery?

A. Yes, getting the mail and having consumer goods delivered to your residence are allowed.

Q6. Can I still get together with friends at their house?

A. No. This emergency order prohibits any public or private gatherings of any number of people that are not part of a single household or living unit. Members of the same household or living unit are still free to gather. Stay at home as much as possible and consider alternative ways to connect with friends and extended family: FaceTime, Skype, WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, or other video conferencing software.

Q7. What if my job requires me to still go in to work?

A. Some jobs still require workers to be there in-person ONLY if those businesses are considered ESSENTIAL and are EXEMPT per EO 12. Maintain social distancing on your commute, whatever method of transportation that you use to get to work. If you are able, clean or wipe down surfaces w/ antiseptic wipes or spray you touch often at your workplace: desk, doorknobs, phones, etc. If needed, rearrange desk assignments to ensure all employees stay at least 6 feet away from each other. Schedules may also need to be staggered so the office is 50% full to support social distancing in the work environment.

Essential businesses and operations shall implement safe business practices to the greatest extent feasible, including but not limited to:

- Using technology to avoid meeting in person

- Comply with social distancing requirements between all individuals on the premises (employees, customers, others)
- Increase cleaning and disinfection practices
- Consider screening employees for symptoms prior to entering premises, and adopt policies to prevent workers from reporting if they show respiratory symptoms

Q8. I rely on public transportation to get to work and the store. Will I still be able to take the bus or the Hop?

A. MCTS and the Hop urges everyone to avoid all public transportation trips that are not essential. Attempt to use other modes of transport if possible (e.g. walk, bike, or personal vehicle). If you must take the bus, enter through the back door, continue to maintain social distancing: stay 6 feet away from others at the bus stop and when selecting your seat, use touchless payment (mobile app, M-card) instead of cash if possible, and wash hands or use hand sanitizer as soon as possible when you disembark from the bus/Hop.

The Hop is temporarily reducing its schedule of operations effective March 26th. Please view the link for more information at thehopmke.com/alert/important-information-regarding-covid-19-coronavirus.

MCTS announced changes:

- No fares are being collected
- All entry and exit is via the back doors, except those using a mobility device or those needing assistance with ADA accommodation
- Only 10 people allowed on a bus at a time
- Buses that run Monday-Friday have resumed normal schedules, EXCEPT Freeway Flyers

Up-to-date information on changes can be found at ridemcts.com/about-mcts/covid-19.

Q9. I help my older relatives/friends at their home. Can I still visit them?

A. Caring for others who live outside of your household is considered an essential activity, so you are still allowed to go to their residence and help them. Maintain 6 feet of social distance during your travel as much as possible, wash your hands often while visiting your relative or friend, and ensure high touch surfaces are cleaned often to protect their health and your own. Do not share personal items (cups, utensils, food or drinks).

Q10. I help my older relative at their nursing home/assisted care facility.

Can I still visit them?

A. It is recommended to stop visiting nursing homes and assisted care facilities during this time of social distancing and the Stay at Home Order. Such facilities house people who are at higher risk of severe illness if they become infected with COVID-19, so limiting their potential exposure is very important.

Many nursing homes and assisted care facilities have stopped allowing visitors completely. Utilize digital connection methods like FaceTime, WhatsApp, Skype, Google Hangouts, etc. to stay in touch with relatives. If your relative does not have a device that supports these services, contact the facility and ask how best to stay in touch.

Q11. What if I'm homeless and don't have a residence?

A. People experiencing homelessness are exempt from the stay at home orders. They are still urged to find shelter. [Please call 211 and ask for shelter information.](#)

Q12. I run a business that is not on the essential services list. What do I do?

A. Non-essential businesses must stop their activities and operations. Virtual activities (working from home and other online service provision) may continue.

Non-essential businesses can continue at Minimum Basic Operating level. THIS IS NOT BUSINESS-AS-USUAL OPERATIONS.

Minimum Basic Operating means staffing the lowest number of people possible to ensure the continuity of the most basic functions of your business, like inventory, security, payroll and benefits, facilitating any employees who are working from home, etc. For those who must be in the workplace, maintain social distancing of 6 feet of distance between coworkers. Employers are allowed to send staff to pick up mail or packages daily or whatever frequency is necessary.

Q13. I don't know if my business is essential or not. How do I find out?

A. Please visit the state website to determine Essential Business status at wedc.org/essentialbusiness.

You can also refer to the Emergency Order itself to help determine if you are essential, and what business operations may continue https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2020/04/16/file_attachments/1428995/EM028-SaferAtHome.pdf

Q14: Can I go to church or attend a religious ceremony?

A. Religious services are allowed as long as they maintain social distancing which is at least 6 feet between persons. No more than 10 individuals can be gathered at once for this purpose only. **All other public gatherings are prohibited.** Individuals should be screened prior to allowing admittance using a form (State or MHD can provide) and fever check not to exceed 100.4 degrees F. Furniture, surfaces, and any items used will need to be sanitized after each use. Some congregations are allowing sign up to hold smaller but more frequent services but the cleaning and sanitizing in between each service. We recommend you consider alternative ways to connect with your congregation or faith community through options such as FaceTime, Skype, WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, or other video conferencing software.

Q15. Can I be punished or ticketed for leaving my house?

A. Yes, the city of Milwaukee Common Council passed an ordinance on April 21, 2020 that allows Milwaukee Police and the Health Department to issue citations that may be up to \$500 if individuals are deliberately violating the state Safer at Home Order. This means if you attend a party or hang out with a large group of people, you could face a citation. The order also states that the City of Milwaukee hopes to maintain all enforcement options including education, citations, and arrest.

Summarized list of permitted activities (not exhaustive), where leaving the house is allowed:

- Tasks essential to maintaining health and safety (obtaining medicine, seeing a doctor, etc.)
- Meeting basic human needs: Getting supplies and services needed for everyone in the household to stay in their home (food, alcoholic items, household items, pet food and supplies, etc.)
- Physical activity--Outdoors (walking, biking, hiking, running), while still maintaining 6 feet of distance with others
- Care for a family member or friend in another household
- Care for older adults, minors, dependents, people with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons
- Voting in the spring primary election (if still held on time), and other election-related activities

Travel to and from these essential activities is permitted travel.

Travel not related to performing these essential activities, essential businesses, or essential government functions should be considered prohibited.

Summarized list of essential businesses that may continue operating (not exhaustive):

- Health care operations, including but not limited to:
 - Hospitals, medical centers, clinics, and other places people obtain care
 - Pharmacies and drug stores, stores that sell medicine including CBD
 - Companies related to the manufacture, research, and supply chain of pharmaceuticals, medical devices and equipment, biotechnology, etc.
 - Eye care, including places that sell glasses and contact lenses
 - Dentist offices
 - Home health agencies, residential care agencies, personal care agencies, hospice
 - Mental health and substance abuse providers such as Narcotics/ Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-ANON
 - Other businesses relating to the provision of health/medical services, the related supply chain, or other businesses needed for the functioning of the health care system as a whole
- Veterinary and animal health care services
- Human and social service providers, businesses that provide food, shelter, and other life necessities for economically disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable individuals
- Charitable services providers
- Critical infrastructure
 - Those involved in food production, distribution, sale
 - Construction- only essential businesses and healthcare
 - Building management and maintenance
 - Airport operations
 - Utilities operations and maintenance (water, gas, electric, sewer)
 - Roads, highways, public transportation, railways, ports
 - Solid waste recycling and collection, includes landscaping services
 - Cybersecurity
 - Internet, video, telecommunications services

- Food retailers, including convenience stores, grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, bakeries, etc.
- Businesses that ship/delivery groceries, food, and consumer goods directly to residences
- Restaurants and bars for the purposes of off-premise consumption (food for delivery or carry-out orders)
- Pharmacies, health care supply stores, health care facilities
- Media outlets
- Child care facilities, as long as they are following limitations/restrictions put in place by the city/state
 - Groups of 10 children or fewer, the same 10 children in each group
 - Groups in the same facility should not mix
 - The same adult supervisor should stay with the same group of children each day
- Gas stations and auto repair facilities
- Banks and financial institutions
- Laundry services, laundromats, dry cleaners, industrial cleaning operations
- Garbage collection
- Hardware stores
- Plumbers, electricians, and others that ensure the safety, sanitation, and operation of residences, essential activities, and essential businesses
- Educational facilities for the purposes of minimum basic operations, distributing food, and facilitating distance learning
- Roles required for businesses to maintain minimum basic operations (see above)
- Suppliers that provide products needed to work from home or maintain essential business operations, and non-essential minimum basic operations
- Professional services like legal, accounting, real estate, etc.
- Law and safety
- Mail, shipping, delivery, and logistics services
- Essential government functions