

Frequently Asked Questions: Stay-At-Home Orders

Why are we doing public health orders?

- We have widespread transmission of COVID-19 throughout many parts of Colorado and the U.S.
- While we don't know everything about COVID-19, we do know that it spreads person-to-person, including from people who have very mild symptoms and may not know they are sick.
- By making some short-term changes to the way we live and interact with one another, we can slow the spread and save lives.
- The only thing we are certain we must do right now to slow the spread is to keep people from coming into contact with each other, which was not occurring despite repeated public health warnings and pleas from every level of government.
- If the COVID-19 pandemic continues to grow at its current pace, it will overwhelm our health care system and put even more people at risk of severe illness or death.
- By implementing the stay at home order, we believe that we can:
 - Slow the spread of the disease so our healthcare system can minimize the number of deaths.
 - Give public health and healthcare time to get needed supplies, ramp up testing, and investigate the extent of the spread.
- By flattening the curve — reducing the number of people who will get COVID-19 in a short period of time — we can save lives.

What does the stay at home order mean?

- It literally means stay at home, with the exceptions listed below.

When does this go into effect?

- At 8:00 am Thursday, March 26th.

How long will this last?

- It is currently dated to end on April 17th, 11:59 p.m.
- **However**, this is subject to change as this rapidly changing situation evolves.
- All public health orders will be reassessed regularly based on the evolving pandemic.

Can I leave my home?

Yes, for these reasons only:

- Getting medical care for you, a family member or your pet
- Visiting a healthcare professional
- Getting medical supplies or medication

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- Getting groceries, food (via takeout, drive-thru, food banks/pantries) or other essential household items
- Getting necessary supplies to work from home
- Picking up materials from your child’s school necessary for distance learning (e.g., tablet, books)
- Going outside for physical activity--as long as you stay at least 6 feet away from people who do not live in your household (i.e., follow social distancing practices)
- Going to work, **ONLY** if you provide essential products or services at an essential business such as health care operations, infrastructure operations and maintenance, certain government functions.

What is closed?

- In-person public or private gatherings of any kind with people who live outside of your residence
- Traveling, except to get essential services or medical care
- Bars and restaurants (except for pick-up and carry-out)
- Hair and nail salons
- Tattoo shops
- Gyms and recreation centers
- Playgrounds, golf courses, tennis and basketball courts

How will we know if it’s working?

- Our goal is to “flatten the curve” and decrease the exponential spread of COVID-19.
 - Our local public health agencies will be looking at things like measures of decreased transmission and improved capacity of health care facilities as indicators of success.

It may take a few weeks after social distancing orders have been in place to see improvement, because people who are getting sick now may have been exposed many days ago, but experience from elsewhere indicates that these actions can help decrease the exponential spread of COVID-19.

What are the penalties for not following the order?

It is unlawful for any person to willfully violate, disobey, or disregard this Order. Any person who does so may be guilty of a class 1 misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, may be punished by a fine of up to \$5,000.00 and imprisonment in a county jail for up to eighteen months, per Colo. Rev. Stat. §§25-1-516 and 18-1.3-501. In addition, if you do not follow this Order, TCHD may seek a court order in Colorado state district court to enforce this Order and/or to restrain or enjoin any violation of this Order. If you do not comply with this Order pending the district court’s decision, you may be subject to arrest and involuntary compliance.

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How is this different from what we were doing before?

- These Stay-At-Home Orders are in addition to other recently issued public health orders that promote social distancing, such as those from the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#).
- The Stay-At-Home Orders go a step further by requiring individuals to do their part by staying at home and away from others.

What businesses/organizations are exempt?

Please refer to the order for a full list of exemptions. Some of these include:

- Healthcare Operations
- Essential Critical Infrastructure
- Grocery stores, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of food
- Businesses that provide food, shelter and social services, and other necessities of life
- Gas stations
- Newspapers, television, radio and other media services
- Hardware stores
- Banks and financial institutions
- Essential Government functions

I run/work at an exempted business or organization, as defined by the Order, do I need to get an official letter of authorization from the state to operate?

- No.

My school is providing free grab-and-go meals? Are those still happening?

- Yes, but please check with your school district to verify that these services are taking place.

Are daycares still open? Can my babysitter still come to the house?

- Yes, but **only** for children of parents working in essential sectors.
 - Daycare centers that remain open should employ increased cleaning practices and distancing requirements. (See order)
- Babysitters are allowed to care for minors of parents working in essential sectors.

What if I need to visit a health care provider?

- If you are feeling sick with COVID-like symptoms (coughing, fever, shortness of breath), please first call your doctor, a nurse hotline, or an urgent care center.

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- If you need to go to the hospital, call ahead so they can prepare for your arrival. If you need to call 911, tell the 911 operator the exact symptoms you are experiencing so the ambulance provider can prepare to treat you safely.
- **NOTE:** Because of the current lack of available COVID tests, you may not receive one even if you have symptoms of the illness.

Can I still exercise?

- Yes, as long as you go outside and use social distancing from others (at least six feet from people who aren't part of your household).
 - All playgrounds, golf courses, tennis courts, basketball courts, picnic areas, and other similar areas are closed.

Can people still go hiking?

- Yes, as long as they continue to practice social distancing of at least six feet and as long as parks are open.
 - This means avoiding crowded trails and parking lots.
 - And staying home if you are sick.

Can I walk my dog or take my pet to the vet?

- You can walk your dog. You can go to the vet or pet hospital if your pet is sick; if you have a non-urgent appointment with a vet, consider rescheduling.
- Always practice social distancing at veterinary facilities, and don't pet other people's pets.