



PINELLAS COUNTY “COVID-19 SAFER AT HOME” ORDER

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How long will the Safer at Home order be in effect?

Pinellas County’s Safer at Home order is in effect starting Thursday, March 26 at 12:00 p.m. It will last so long as the County’s declared state of local emergency is in place, unless the Board of County Commissioners determines that a policy change is in the public’s best interest.

2. Who is impacted by the Safer at Home order?

The Safer at Home order contains safety directives for residents, businesses and places of public assembly. Residents are ordered to abide by the CDC guidelines for social distancing and stay home except for essential activities as outlined below. Non-essential businesses may remain open so long as they are able to meet CDC guidelines for social distancing. Otherwise, they must close storefront operations and customer foot traffic. Essential businesses are also expected to comply with CDC guidelines to the fullest extent possible.

3. Why is the order necessary?

Pinellas County issued the order to preserve the health, safety and welfare of our residents and to preserve the ability of our healthcare system to serve all in need. Our Emergency Management and public health officials believe that the situation will quickly worsen without this intervention. We have observed similar orders having a positive impact on public health in communities around the world.

4. Is the Safer at Home Order enforceable by law?

Local law enforcement and regulatory officials are authorized to enforce this order, but our hope is that residents and businesses do the right thing to protect themselves and the public good. Stay at home as much as possible to protect your family, friends, neighbors and vulnerable populations. Businesses that do not comply with the order may be subject to the appropriate enforcement action up to and including orders to close and criminal charges.

5. For individuals, what are the permissible exceptions for leaving home?

Individuals may leave home for:

- Primary or emergency care or direct care support for a family member, relative, friend, or their pet
- Healthcare and medical services

- Groceries
- Meal take-outs from local food establishments
- Essential work duties that cannot be performed from home
- Banks and related financial institutions
- Laundry services, laundromats
- Essential home repairs and maintenance
- Outdoor activity while following CDC guidelines (examples include: walking pet, hiking, biking).
- Veterinarians and pet boarding facilities
- Gas stations, auto-supply and auto-repair facilities

6. What about exercise?

Citizens are permitted to engage in outdoor activity such as hiking, bicycling, pet walking, paddling and boating, provided they follow CDC social distancing guidelines and remain at least six feet apart and in groups of 10 or fewer people. Beaches remain closed.

7. What are the new restrictions on non-essential businesses?

Although non-essential businesses must close storefront operations and customer foot traffic if they can't meet CDC guidelines on social distancing, they may continue internal and minimum basic operations required to maintain the businesses. Even then, the business must enforce the CDC social distancing guidelines.

8. Can barber shops, hair, nail and beauty salons and related establishments stay open?

These establishments are considered non-essential businesses, but they may continue to operate only to the extent that they are able to comply with CDC social distancing guidelines. This may require spacing out/staggering client visits so as to prevent any kind of large gathering of clientele.

9. What constitutes an essential business?

Essential businesses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- First Responders, Police and Fire, Jails and Prisons
- Hospitals, clinics and other healthcare operations
- Community based organizations providing meals and social services
- Human Service operations
- Garbage and Sanitation workers
- Transportation: including airports and public transportation such as PSTA
- Utilities, Public Works and essential infrastructure
- Critical trades: (Plumbers, Electricians, Exterminators, Security personnel, etc.) Fire and water damage restoration, appliance repair personnel, exterminators, and other service providers (such as landscape and pool maintenance service providers) who provide

services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences and other structures;

- Government essential service workers
- Gas Stations
- Food: (grocery stores, food banks, restaurants: delivery, take-out or curbside delivery)
- Banks and financial institutions
- Laundromats
- Funeral Services
- Hotel and lodging
- Hardware, garden and supply stores
- Post offices and shipping service

For a full list, please see Resolution 20-20. This is available online at www.pinellascounty.org/COVID19.

10. Are childcare facilities remaining open?

Childcare facilities providing services to citizens employed by essential businesses are permitted, but must care for children in groups of ten or fewer. Children and childcare providers shall not change from one group to another; if more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room. All play equipment used by one group of children must be cleaned and sanitized before use by another group of children. Any child or employee exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 illness cannot stay in the childcare facility.

11. How are places of public and private assembly impacted?

Places of public and private assembly are required to close, whether indoors or outdoors. This includes locations with amusement rides, water parks, pools (except for those in single-family home), zoos, museums, movie and other theaters, public playgrounds, bowling alleys, pool halls, concert and music halls, country clubs, social clubs and fraternal organizations. Places of worship are not specifically referenced; however, they are directed to follow CDC social distancing guidelines.

12. Are golf courses required to close?

No, golf courses may remain open as long as they are able to comply with the CDC social guidelines.

13. Since playgrounds are closing, are parks and boat ramps also closing?

All County parks (except for parks and facilities previously closed) and county-managed boat ramps remain open. CDC social distancing guidelines are required will be enforced. Enforcement agencies will enforce social distancing on sandbars and spoil islands.

14. What about routine, elective or non-urgent medical appointments?

Non-essential medical care like eye exams, teeth cleaning, and elective procedures and treatments should be cancelled or rescheduled. When possible, health care visits should be done remotely.

15. Can I visit family and friends?

For the safety of you and those in your community, you should remain at home as much as possible to help fight the spread of COVID-19. Visits with family members or friends should be limited to medical need or other essential assistance, such as ensuring an adequate supply of food or medication.

16. What can I do to prevent the spread of COVID 19 at home?

The Centers for Disease Control reminds everyone in your household of the importance of practicing everyday preventive actions that can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses: Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using a regular household cleaner.

17. How can I care for a family member with the COVID-19 disease at home?

The CDC recommends you avoid sharing personal items like utensils, cups, food and drinks. Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others. Clean the sick room and bathroom, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.

For more information, please visit Pinellas County's COVID-19 resource web page at:

www.pinellascounty.org/COVID19