



Consistent with the State’s Framework for a Safer Economy, San Francisco is allowing certain businesses and other activities to reopen starting January 28, 2021. The decisions to reopen reflected in those documents balance the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission with the public health risks of economic and mental health stress.

COVID-19 case rates in San Francisco are about twice as high now as they were the last time businesses and activities were open under the State’s purple tier at the end of November and beginning of December. This high rate means generally that twice as many people who you may come into contact with when you are outside your Residence have COVID-19 than before. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. We also face the added risk of new virus variants and mutations in the community, and it is unclear whether these variants may be more contagious or even more deadly.

The opening of sectors does not necessarily signify that these activities are “safe.” The purpose of the required safety protocols contained in the order and directives is make these activities and sectors safer for workers and the public. But reopening requires that all individuals and businesses use particular care and do their part to make these activities as safe as possible by strictly and consistently following all safety protocols and Social Distancing Requirements.

**DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER No. 2020-19e**

**DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF  
THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO REGARDING REQUIRED BEST  
PRACTICES FOR OUTDOOR GATHERINGS, INCLUDING SMALL OUTDOOR  
GATHERINGS, SMALL OUTDOOR MEAL GATHERINGS, OUTDOOR SPECIAL  
GATHERINGS FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES AND CEREMONIES AND POLITICAL  
PROTESTS**

**(PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTIVE)**

DATE OF DIRECTIVE: January 27, 2021

**By this Directive, the Health Officer of the City and County of San Francisco (the “Health Officer”) issues specific direction that Participants and Hosts, as described below, must follow as part of the local response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) pandemic. This Directive constitutes guidance as provided under Sections 4 and 11 and Appendix C-2 of Health Officer Order No. C19-07s issued on January 27, 2021 (the “Stay-Safer-At-Home Order”) and, unless otherwise defined below, initially capitalized terms used in this Directive have the same meaning given them in that order. This Directive goes into effect at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 28, 2021, and remains in effect until suspended, superseded, or amended by the Health Officer. This Directive has support in the bases and justifications set forth in the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. As further provided below, this Directive automatically incorporates any revisions to the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order or other future orders issued by the Health Officer that supersede that order or reference this Directive. This Directive is intended to promote best practices as to Social Distancing Requirements and sanitation measures, helping prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and safeguard the health of workers, customers, and the community.**



**Health Officer Directive No. 2020-19e**

**UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTIONS 101040, 101085, AND 120175, THE HEALTH OFFICER DIRECTS AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1. This Directive applies to all individuals who participate (“Participants”) and individuals and operators of facilities or other places who organize and host (“Hosts”) these three kinds of outdoor gatherings in the City and County of San Francisco (the “City”) as permitted under subsections 4, 9, and 10 of Appendix C-2 of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order:**
  - a) outdoor gatherings of no more than three different Households up to a maximum of 12 people in total between all Households (“Small Outdoor Gatherings”),**
  - b) outdoor gatherings of no more than two different Households up to a maximum of six people in total between all Households involving eating or drinking occurring somewhere other than at an outdoor dining establishment (“Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings”), and**
  - c) outdoor gatherings among people from more than one Household for religious services or religious ceremonies and for political protests (“Outdoor Special Gatherings”).**

**(Together, Small Outdoor Gatherings, Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings, and Outdoor Special Gatherings are referred to below as “Outdoor Gatherings.”) This Directive does not limit gatherings that are otherwise allowed under the Order or any other health directive providing sector guidance. Also, the size number limits for the various types of Outdoor Gatherings that are subject to this Directive do not apply to gatherings at the home of people (including Participants and Hosts) solely from a single Household. Indoor social gatherings among different Households are not allowed at this time.**

- 2. Attached as Exhibit A to this Directive is a list of best practices that apply to Participants and Hosts engaged in Outdoor Gatherings (the “Best Practices”). All Participants and Hosts must comply with all applicable requirements listed in the Best Practices.**
- 3. Hosts that operate a facility or other place in San Francisco and regularly organize or hold Outdoor Gatherings there or who otherwise regularly organize or facilitate Outdoor Gatherings at other locations must, before they begin to host or otherwise facilitate Outdoor Gatherings, create, adopt, and implement a written health and safety plan (a “Health and Safety Plan”). Hosts of any Outdoor Special Gathering must also, before they host or otherwise facilitate an Outdoor Special Gathering, create, adopt and implement a written Health and Safety Plan. The Health and Safety Plan must be substantially in the form attached to this Directive as Exhibit B.**
- 4. Guidance from the Department of Public Health related to Outdoor Gatherings is attached to this Directive as Exhibit C and is available at <http://www.sfdph.org/directives>.**
- 5. If an aspect, service, or operation of the Host covered under Section 3 above is also covered by another Health Officer directive (all of which are available at**



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<http://www.sfdph.org/directives>), then such Host must comply with all applicable directives, and it must complete all relevant Health and Safety Plan forms.

6. Each Host covered under Section 3 above must (a) make the Health and Safety Plan available to anyone interested in participating in the Small Outdoor Gathering and to any involved Personnel on request, (b) provide a summary of the plan to all Personnel working on site or otherwise in the City in relation to its operations, and (c) post the plan at the entrance to any other physical location that such Host operates within the City. Also, each such Host must provide a copy of the Health and Safety Plan and evidence of its implementation to any authority enforcing this Order upon demand.
7. Each Host subject to this Directive must provide items such as Face Coverings (as provided in Health Officer Order No. C19-12d issued on December 22, 2020, and any future amendment to that order), hand sanitizer or handwashing stations, or both, and disinfectant and related supplies to any of that Host's Personnel, all as required by the Best Practices. Where feasible, each Host is also encouraged to provide such items to Participants of Outdoor Gatherings or to make sure that Participants bring their own to the gathering. If any Host is unable to provide these required items to Personnel or otherwise fails to comply with required Best Practices or, if applicable under subsections 3, 4 or 5 above, fails to abide by its Health and Safety Plan, then it must cease operating until it can fully comply and demonstrate its strict compliance. Further, any Outdoor Gathering organized by such Host where the Host has failed to comply is subject to immediate closure and the fines and other legal remedies described below, as a violation of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.
8. For purposes of this Directive, "Personnel" includes all of the following people who provide goods or services associated with the Host in the City: employees; contractors and sub-contractors (such as those who sell goods or perform services onsite or who deliver goods for the business); vendors who are permitted to sell goods onsite; volunteers; and other individuals who regularly provide services onsite at the request of the Host. "Personnel" includes "gig workers" who perform work via the business's app or other online interface, if any.
9. This Directive and the attached Best Practices may be revised by the Health Officer, through revision of this Directive or another future directive or order, as conditions relating to COVID-19 require, in the discretion of the Health Officer. All Participants and Hosts must stay updated regarding any changes to the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order and this Directive by checking the Department of Public Health website ([www.sfdph.org/healthorders](http://www.sfdph.org/healthorders); [www.sfdph.org/directives](http://www.sfdph.org/directives)) regularly.
10. Implementation of this Directive augments—but does not limit—the obligations of each Host covered by Section 3 above under the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order including, but not limited to, the obligation to prepare, post, and implement a Social Distancing Protocol under Section 4.d and Appendix A of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. The Host must follow these Best Practices and update them as necessary for the duration of this Directive, including, without limitation, as this Directive is amended or extended in writing by the Health Officer and consistent with any extension of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order, any other order that supersedes that order, and any Health Officer order that references this Directive



**City and County of  
San Francisco**

**Department of Public Health  
Health Officer Directive**

**Health Officer Directive No. 2020-19e**

**This Directive is issued in furtherance of the purposes of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. Where a conflict exists between this Directive and any state, local, or federal public health order related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including, without limitation, the Social Distancing Protocol, the most restrictive provision controls. Failure to carry out this Directive is a violation of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order, constitutes an imminent threat and menace to public health, constitutes a public nuisance, and is a misdemeanor punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Philip".

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Susan Philip, MD, MPH,  
Acting Health Officer of the  
City and County of San Francisco

Date: January 27, 2021



**Exhibit A to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-19e (issued 1/27/21)**

**Best Practices for Participants and Hosts Involved in Outdoor Gatherings**

**In addition to preparing, posting, and implementing the Social Distancing Protocol (Appendix A of Health Officer Order No. C19-07s), each Host covered by Section 3 of this Directive that operates in the City must comply with each requirement listed below and prepare a Health and Safety Plan substantially in the format of Exhibit B, below. Participants and Hosts must also comply with each of the applicable requirements listed below.**

**1. Section 1 – General Requirements For all Outdoor Gatherings, including Small Outdoor Gatherings, Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings, and Outdoor Special Gatherings:**

**1.1.** All people are strongly encouraged to continue staying safer at home and minimizing unnecessary interactions with others, especially in indoor settings. If people believe they must participate in an Outdoor Gathering, they should consider the health risks relating to COVID-19 to themselves and others before doing so and should take all possible steps to mitigate those risks. Before participating in an Outdoor Gathering, Participants and Hosts should read and make themselves familiar with the Tip Sheet for Safer Interactions During COVID-19 Pandemic and the Tip Sheet for Outdoor Gatherings, which may be found at [www.sfcdep.org/outdoor-gatherings](http://www.sfcdep.org/outdoor-gatherings).

**1.1.1.** Members of vulnerable populations (that is, those over age 50 or with chronic medical conditions) are encouraged to carefully consider the health risks relating to COVID-19 before determining whether to participate in Outdoor Gatherings.

**1.1.2.** Participants and Hosts must not attend any Outdoor Gatherings if they feel ill or are experiencing any one of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking/shivering, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, feeling unusually weak or fatigued, new loss of taste or smell, muscle pain, headache, runny or congested nose, or diarrhea. Participants and Hosts must also not attend any Outdoor Gatherings if they are subject to quarantine or self-isolation under Health Officer Directive 2020-03d, and any subsequent amendments to that Directive.

**1.2.** Outdoor Gatherings must occur completely outdoors. If necessary, Participants and Hosts may enter a building to access an outdoor area or use indoor bathroom facilities. Participants must not remain inside longer than necessary and must not congregate in or near restroom facilities. Hosts must take all reasonable precautions to prevent Participants from congregating indoors.

**1.3.** All Outdoor Gatherings must be scheduled to conclude in no more than two hours. And in any event the duration of all gatherings should be limited to the extent possible.

**1.4.** Multiple Outdoor Gatherings cannot be jointly organized or coordinated to occur in the same outdoor space at the same time – these simultaneous gatherings would constitute a single gathering exceeding the permitted size. While multiple gatherings that are not jointly organized or coordinated may occur in the same space, such as a public park, Participants must not move among Outdoor Gatherings or switch places with Participants in other Outdoor Gatherings. Also, Participants are strongly discouraged from attending more than one Outdoor Gathering per day, and should not attend more than two Outdoor



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Gatherings per week. The more contacts a person has with others, including during Outdoor Gatherings, the more they are placing themselves and others at risk of transmitting the virus.

- 1.5.** Unless otherwise specifically provided in this Directive, all Social Distancing Requirements of Health Officer Order C19-07s (the “Stay-Safer-At-Home Order”) and the Face Covering requirements of Health Officer Order C19-12d (the “Face Covering Order”), as they may be amended, apply to all Hosts and Participants in Outdoor Gatherings.
- 1.6.** Participants who are not part of the same Household must remain at least six feet apart, follow all Social Distancing Requirements, and wear Face Coverings unless eating, drinking, or exempted from wearing a Face Covering under Section 3.g. or h. of the Face Covering Order. Where eating or drinking is allowed under Sections 2 and 4.2 of this Directive, Face Coverings are not required only for a limited period while the individual is eating or drinking.
- 1.7.** Outdoor Gatherings must not include contact sports, recreational or other activity where Social Distancing cannot be maintained (e.g., basketball, football, boxing or dancing). With the exception of Outdoor Special Gatherings, Outdoor Gatherings may include sports with shared equipment (e.g. Frisbee, baseball, playing catch) among members of up to three different Households up to a maximum of 12 people total. This Section also does not apply to organized outdoor fitness classes, which are covered by Appendix C-1 to Health Officer Order C19-07s. If Participants in an Outdoor Gathering engage in physical activity as permitted under the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order, such as dancing or running, they must maintain at least six feet distance from and refrain from physical contact with individuals not part of their Household.
- 1.8.** To prevent virus transmission and assist with effective contact tracing, Participants are strongly encouraged to minimize the number of people in an Outdoor Gathering and keep Participants consistent from one gathering to another. To assist in potential contact tracing efforts, Participants are encouraged to remember who they gather with.
- 1.9.** Participants and Hosts must not share food or drink, or utensils. Participants and Hosts are strongly discouraged from sharing other objects, such as reading materials and religious or spiritual objects with Participants who are not part of their Household. If an object is of critical importance and is shared, Participants and Hosts must take every precaution after each instance of sharing to clean and sanitize the object and/or the hands of the Participants and Hosts who share the object.
- 1.10.** Hosts must not organize an event that encourages Participants to engage in singing, chanting, or shouting or otherwise encourage Participants from doing so during any Outdoor Gathering. Except as otherwise expressly permitted by this Directive, Participants and Hosts are strongly urged not to engage in singing, chanting, or shouting during Outdoor Gatherings – whether or not wearing a Face Covering – due to the substantially increased risk of spreading the virus by airborne transmission during such activities.
- 1.11.** Consistent with the limitations under the State Health Order, Stay-Safer-at-Home Order, and guidance from SFDPH, Hosts and Participants may, subject to any applicable permit requirements, conduct their gatherings under a tent, canopy, or other sun or weather shelter. Any use of impermeable barriers, or area umbrellas, canopies, and other shade



structures must be consistent with guidance in Section 4.c of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.

**2. Section 2 – Additional Requirements for Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings:**

- 2.1. A group consisting of people (including both Participants and Hosts) from no more than two different Households up to a maximum of six people in total between all Households may participate in a Small Outdoor Meal Gathering. The provisions of this Directive for Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings apply only to such gatherings containing members from more than one Household. The provisions of this Directive for Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings do not apply to outdoor dining establishments.
- 2.2. Small Outdoor Meal Gatherings may occur outdoors at places such as public parks, open spaces and other spaces where such gatherings are allowed, and subject to any permit requirements and any rules prohibiting use of picnic tables, barbecues or other common equipment. If necessary, Participants may enter a building to access an outdoor area or use indoor bathroom facilities.

**3. Section 3 – Additional Requirements for Small Outdoor Gatherings:**

- 3.1. A group consisting of people (including both Participants and Hosts) from no more than three different Households up to a maximum of 12 people in total between all Households, may congregate in Small Outdoor Gatherings. Participants from different Household must follow all Social Distancing Requirements. The size of a group must be reduced according to the size of the outdoor space and Participants' ability to follow Social Distancing Requirements at all times. For example, if the size of an outdoor space allows no more than 10 people to follow Social Distancing at all times during a gathering, then the maximum total size for that Small Outdoor Gathering is three Households up to a maximum of 10 people between all Households.

**4. Section 4 – Additional Requirements Specific to Outdoor Special Gatherings**

- 4.1. A group consisting of people from more than one Household may congregate for Outdoor Special Gatherings. Participants from different Households must follow all Social Distancing Requirements. The size of a group must be reduced according to the size of the outdoor space and Participants' ability to follow Social Distancing Requirements at all times. Hosts of Outdoor Special Gatherings must follow all applicable rules and regulations governing the use of public parks and other open spaces. Hosts must also obtain any required permits for their gatherings as otherwise required.
  - 4.1.1. The size limits for Outdoor Special Gatherings apply to religious or cultural ceremonies themselves, and not to any reception or similar gathering before or after. Any outdoor reception or gathering is subject to all applicable rules and limitations governing Outdoor Gatherings including this Directive.
- 4.2. No food or beverages may be served or sold at Outdoor Special Gatherings. Participants and Hosts are prohibited from eating or drinking, and thus removing their Face Coverings to do so, unless necessary for health reasons or proper hydration. Participants must bring their own non-alcoholic beverages if necessary for hydration.
- 4.3. Participants or Hosts may distribute clean, single-use, non-edible items such as maps, flyers, or pamphlets to other Participants at the Outdoor Special Gathering. If such



materials are distributed, Participants and Hosts must continue to maintain six feet of physical distance, such as by placing items in a basket or on a table for Participants to pick-up.

**4.4.** Hosts may allow singing, chanting, or shouting by only one person at a time at an Outdoor Special Gathering provided all of the following conditions are satisfied:

**4.4.1.** The person singing, chanting, or shouting is at least 12-feet from any other person;

**4.4.2.** The person singing, chanting, or shouting is wearing a Face Covering at all times; and

**4.4.3.** Participants are not encouraged to sing, chant, or shout along with the person who is engaging in that activity.

**5. Section 5 – Additional Requirements Specific to Hosts of Any Outdoor Gatherings**

**5.1.** Hosts may organize and hold Outdoor Gatherings provided they have sufficient outdoor space to allow all Participants to comply with Social Distancing Requirements.

**5.2.** In compliance with the Social Distancing Protocol, Hosts covered by Section 3 of the Directive must develop and implement a plan for cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces such as seating, doors, and other common high-touch surfaces before each gathering.

**5.3.** Before hosting an Outdoor Gathering, a Host covered by Section 3 of the Directive must prepare the outdoor space to accommodate attendees and comply with the Social Distancing Protocol. For example, a Host may be required to prepare a plan for safe ingress and egress from the space and add physical markings to demonstrate a six-foot distance in areas participants may be congregating.

**5.4.** Hosts covered by Section 3 of the Directive must prohibit Participants from congregating before or after any Outdoor Gatherings.

**5.5.** Only one Outdoor Gathering may be held by a Host at a single location at a time.

**5.6.** As to Hosts covered by Section 3 of the Directive, Hosts may permit Personnel to participate in sequential Outdoor Gatherings during a single day but are reminded of the increased potential to transmit the virus from one Outdoor Gathering to another. Hosts organizing or participating in sequential Outdoor Gatherings must, in addition to the requirements of this Directive:

**5.6.1.** Provide a minimum of 20 minutes between sequential Outdoor Gatherings during which Participants may safely egress and clear the area and Personnel may adequately clean and sanitize all high touch surfaces and otherwise prepare the space for the next gathering and

**5.6.2.** Ensure that before and between sequential Outdoor Gatherings, Personnel thoroughly wash hands and clean, sanitize, or replace any items or clothing that became soiled or contaminated with secretions or bodily fluids from Participants or different Personnel during earlier gatherings.





- 5.7. Hosts at Outdoor Gatherings must be prepared to assist public health authorities in potential contact tracing efforts. Consider maintaining a list of Participants willing to voluntarily provide their name for contact tracing purposes. Any lists should be discarded after three weeks. If a Participant tests positive for COVID-19, the Host must assist the Department of Public Health to identify other Participants or Personnel who may have been exposed to help prevent further spread of COVID-19.

### Health Officer Directive No. 2020-19e (Exhibit B) Health and Safety Plan (issued 1/27/21)

Each Host Covered by Section 3 of the Directive must complete, post onsite, and follow this Health and Safety Plan.

Check off all items below that apply and list other required information.

*Business/Entity name:*

*Contact name:*

*Entity Address:*

*Contact telephone:*

*(You may contact the person listed above with any questions or comments about this plan.)*

- Business is familiar with and complies with all requirements set forth in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-19e, available at <http://www.sfdph.org/directives>.
- Make sure no one – including employees – attends a gathering who is experiencing any one of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking/shivering, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, feeling unusually weak or fatigued, new loss of taste or smell, muscle pain, headache, runny or congested nose, or diarrhea.
- Gatherings are limited to the maximum permissible number of Households and people, scheduled to last two hours or less, and kept as short as possible. Multiple Outdoor Gatherings cannot be jointly organized or coordinated to occur in the same outdoor space at the same time. Participants do not move among gatherings happening at the same time or switch places with Participants in other gatherings.
- Everyone wears a Face Covering unless eating or drinking or otherwise exempt.
- All Social Distancing Requirements are followed at all times.
- No sharing of food or drink or items like utensils, reading materials, or religious or spiritual objects with Participants. If an object is of critical importance and must be shared, take every precaution after each instance of sharing to clean and sanitize the object and/or the hands of the Participants and Hosts who share the object.
- Avoid singing, chanting, or shouting by Participants or Hosts except as allowed for Outdoor Special Gatherings.
- Develop and implement a plan for cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces such as seating, doors, and other common high-touch surfaces before each gathering.
- Prepare the outdoor space to accommodate Participants and comply with the Social Distancing Protocol. For example, make a plan for Participants to get in and out of the outdoor space safely while maintaining social distancing and add physical markings to demonstrate a 6-foot distance in areas participants may be congregating.
- Only hosting one Small Outdoor Gathering or Small Outdoor Meal Gathering at a time unless there is enough outdoor space to keep simultaneous gatherings separate and socially distanced.
- If Personnel are taking part in sequential gatherings, there is sufficient time between gatherings to engage in proper sanitation and disinfection procedures.

### **Additional Measures**

Explain:



## Tips and Frequently Asked Questions for Gatherings

**NOTICE:** Guidance in this document may be revised due to changes in the COVID-19 risk level tier for San Francisco as assigned by the California Department of Public Health.  
**Refer to the Business Capacities and Activities Table ([BCAT](#)) for all current restrictions, limitations and suspensions.**

**UPDATED January 27, 2021**

**\*\*Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time\*\***

**AUDIENCE:** Hosts, organizers and participants of gatherings of people from more than one household. This information does not apply to gatherings of people living together in a single household.

**BACKGROUND:** San Francisco Health Directives allow people in different households to gather, with restrictions to prevent spread of COVID-19. This tip sheet cover frequently asked questions about how to safely organize, host, and participate in gatherings of people from different households.

The Directives and associated documents are available on the [Health Directives page](#) under Gatherings.

- Directive 2020-19 – Outdoor Gatherings
- Directive 2020-28 – Drive-In Gatherings
- Directive 2020-34 – Indoor Worship

Additional guidance can be found at [www.sfgdcp.org/covid19](http://www.sfgdcp.org/covid19).

### Changes to this FAQ since the Nov. 29 Version:

- Review the Business Capacities and Activities Table ("[BCAT](#)"): the BCAT controls to the extent it conflicts with any information in the guidance document.
- CA Notify: Help stop the spread of COVID-19 using your smartphone
- COVID-19 Vaccine Information
- How does COVID-19 spread?: If you're feeling symptoms, stay home, and get tested
- Ventilation signage must be posted including new employee breakrooms requirement



<b>Overview of Types of Gatherings</b>		
	<b>GATHERING TYPE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF GATHERING</b>
<b>Outdoor</b>	<b>Outdoor Meal Gatherings</b>	Gatherings where eating or drinking take place
	<b>Outdoor Special Gatherings</b>	Political protests; Religious services or ceremonies, including wedding ceremonies and funerals, but <b>not</b> receptions;
	<b>Small Outdoor Gathering</b>	All other types of outdoor gatherings (e.g. receptions, gatherings at a park, hosted tours)
	<b>Drive-in Gatherings</b>	In vehicles (e.g. for movie)
<b>Indoor</b> <b>**Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time**</b>	<b>Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings</b>	Indoor religious and cultural ceremonies, including wedding ceremonies and funerals but <b>not</b> receptions



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How Does COVID-19 Spread?

Our current understanding is that COVID-19 is mostly spread from person-to-person in the air through virus-containing droplets in the breath of someone with COVID-19. These respiratory droplets enter the air when a person breathes. Even more droplets can get in the air when infected people talk, sing, cough, or sneeze. People with COVID-19 may have no symptoms and can still be breathing out virus-containing droplets that can infect others. Transmission can occur through:

- Larger droplets. These larger droplets are sometimes called “ballistic droplets” because they travel in straight lines and are pulled down by gravity. People nearby, usually within 6 feet, are infected when they breathe in these droplets or if the droplets land in their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Smaller droplets or infectious particles. These can float in the air for a period of time and/or travel beyond 6 feet on indoor air currents, especially in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation. People sharing the same space are infected when they breathe in these smaller droplets and particles or the droplets or particles land on their eyes, nose, or mouth – even if they are further than 6 feet away. These droplets are sometimes referred to as “aerosols” or “bioaerosols”.

COVID-19 can also spread if a person touches their eyes, nose or mouth after touching a contaminated surface (also known as a fomite transmission); however, this is less common.

**Monitor Your Health Daily.** Be alert of symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, stay home, and get tested.

### How can we help slow the spread of COVID-19?

#### CA Notify – another way for us to stop the spread

CA Notify ([canotify.ca.gov](https://canotify.ca.gov)) is an app you can add on your smartphone. It uses Bluetooth technology to recognize when you and your phone have been in close proximity to others infected with COVID-19 to help stop the spread of the virus in our community.

If you are using CA Notify and you test positive, your diagnosis will not be shared with others. However, if other people in close contact with you are also enrolled in the app, they will be told they had an exposure. They will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location or identity.

If you are using CA Notify and you were exposed to someone who tested positive and they entered their result into the app, you will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location or identity.

CA Notify is available through Apple and Google. See [canotify.ca.gov](https://canotify.ca.gov) for more information.

### What do we know about the COVID-19 Vaccine?

The vaccine is one of the most important ways to end the pandemic. The FDA, CDC as well as California’s own Scientific Safety Review Workgroup have reviewed all data from clinical trials to ensure the safety and



effectiveness of all COVID-19 vaccines. **When the vaccine is available to you, step up for your health, the health of your loved ones, the health of your community, and get vaccinated.** While the vaccine may prevent you from getting sick, we still do not know if people who have been vaccinated can still get the virus and spread COVID-19 to others. Therefore it is still very important for those who are vaccinated, and for the rest of the population who waits for their vaccines, to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic: wearing a mask that covers your mouth and nose when outside your home, avoiding gatherings, avoiding being indoors with people you don't live with, staying at least 6 feet away from others, and washing your hands often. Find out more about the vaccine, including where and when to get it at: [sf.gov/covidvax](https://sf.gov/covidvax)

### **How can I stay as safe as possible at a gathering?**

- Wear a face covering or mask at all times. A face covering is required at all gatherings outside the house.
- Stay for a shorter period of time. The less time you spend with people you don't live with, the safer it is.
- Stay 6 feet away from people outside your household.
- Only participate in activities or sports where you can stay 6 feet away from people outside your household. Sports and exercise are higher risk because people produce more respiratory droplets when they are breathing harder. Balls and other sports equipment can be shared between only two households.
- Stay away from activities like singing, chanting, shouting, and playing wind or brass instruments. These activities produce many more respiratory droplets, increasing the risk of COVID-19. If you must participate in or be near people who are singing, chanting, shouting or playing wind instruments, see *"How can singing, chanting, shouting, and playing wind/brass instruments be done more safely?"*
- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently. Bring your own hand sanitizer to gatherings where there will be no place to wash or sanitize your hands.
- Consider staying home if you are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 due to your age or medical conditions. See <https://www.sfdcp.org/vulnerable> for a list of groups at higher risk.
- Keep others safe: don't attend if you are or a family member feels ill or has COVID-19 like symptoms. For a list of symptoms, see [www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/covid-guidance/covid-screening.pdf](https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/covid-guidance/covid-screening.pdf).
- Get a flu vaccine. Preventing influenza is especially important during the COVID-19 epidemic because people who have flu and COVID-19 at the same time much more likely to die.

### **As a business or organization hosting a gathering, what must I do?**

- Complete, maintain, and implement the following documents:
  - A **Health and Safety Plan** for the type of gathering, including COVID-19 screening for all [personnel \(www.sfdcp.org/screening-handout\)](https://www.sfdcp.org/screening-handout) and [participants \(www.sfdcp.org/screeningvisitors\)](https://www.sfdcp.org/screeningvisitors). The Health and Safety Plan must be provided to Host Personnel, available to participants, and posted at the physical entrance where the Host operates. See [www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-health-directives.asp](https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-health-directives.asp) to find the correct link for your gathering.



- A **SFDPH Social Distancing Protocol** including a plan to clean and disinfect high touch surfaces such as seating, doors, and others before each Gathering (see [SFDPH Cleaning/Disinfection Guidance](#), posted at [www.sfcddcp.org/covidcleaning](http://www.sfcddcp.org/covidcleaning)).
- **Signage on reporting violations of COVID-19 Health Orders.** Beginning on Nov. 10, Host Businesses or organizations are required to post signs in employee break rooms or areas informing employees of the right to report violations of COVID-19 health orders and directives by calling 311 or visiting [www.sf.gov/report-health-order-violation](http://www.sf.gov/report-health-order-violation). Signage needs to state that employee's identity will remain anonymous. Sample signage is available online at <https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19>.
- **Keep a record of people at your gathering, in case someone is later found to have COVID-19.** People with COVID-19 can infect others up to 2 days before they develop symptoms or test positive. Hosts must help public health authorities in contact tracing efforts in case an attendee develops COVID-19. We can help prevent COVID-19 transmission by contact tracing which helps identify people who may have been exposed and helping them quarantine so they don't inadvertently spread the disease.
  - Keep the attendance/schedules of all personnel at your organization for up to three weeks.
  - Consider maintaining a list of participants willing to voluntarily provide their names for three weeks after an event. Any lists should be discarded after three weeks (unless your business keeps such records in the ordinary course of business).
  - Try to maintain an up-to-date contact list to alert attendees in the event of potential exposure.
  - For more information, see <https://covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing>.
  - Follow SFDPH's guidelines on "[COVID-19 Positive At Workplace](#)" if someone at your gathering tests positive for COVID-19.

**If you are hosting an Indoor Religious/Cultural Gathering **\*\*Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time\*\***, you must adhere to the changes made on the [Business Capacities and Activities Table](#) as well as:**

- **Post signs about the increased risk of COVID-19 indoors.** Post [SFDPH Approved Signage](#), stating:
  - That COVID-19 is transmitted through the air and that indoor settings carry a much higher risk of infection.
  - That seniors and those with health risks should avoid indoor settings with crowds.
  - The maximum capacity of the space and the maximum capacity currently permitted under the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.
  - Post Ventilation signage at public entrances and all break rooms indicating which of the following systems are used:
    - All available windows and doors accessible to fresh outdoor air are kept open
    - Fully operational HVAC systems
    - Appropriately sized portable air cleaners in each room
    - None of the above
- **Ensure that indoor spaces are well-ventilated.**



*Good ventilation controls droplets and infectious particles to prevent COVID-19 transmission by:*

- *removing air containing droplets and particles from the room;*
- *diluting the concentration of droplets and particles by adding fresh, uncontaminated air;*
- *filtering room air, removing droplets and particles from the air.*
- Comply with the ventilation protocols laid out at Section 4.i of the [Stay-Safer-At-Home Order](#), including to review and follow [SFDPH's Ventilation Guidance](#).
- Implement as many improvements in the [Ventilation Guidance](#) as feasible. Keep a hand-annotated copy of the Ventilation Guidance showing which specific improvements were considered and implemented.
- Make any necessary improvements to the ventilation of the establishment, including:
  - Increase natural ventilation by opening windows and doors when environmental conditions allow and if permitted by fire and building safety requirements. Fire doors should not be wedged or propped open.
    - **Doors and Windows** required to be kept closed for **fire/life safety purposes** are exempt. For example, fire doors must remain closed. Make sure open windows do not create falling hazards especially for children
  - If an HVAC systems is present,
    - Ensure HVAC systems are serviced and functioning properly.
    - Evaluate possibilities for upgrading air filters to the highest efficiency possible.
    - Increase the percentage of outdoor air through the HVAC system, readjusting or overriding recirculation ("economizer") dampers.
    - Disable demand-control ventilation controls that reduce air supply based on temperature or occupancy.
    - Evaluate running the building ventilation system even when the building is unoccupied to maximize ventilation. At the minimum, reset timer-operated ventilation systems so that they start operating 1-2 hours before the building opens and 2-3 hours after the building is closed.
  - Consider installing portable air cleaners ("HEPA filters").
  - If the establishment uses pedestal fans or hard mounted fans, adjust the direction of fans to minimize air blowing from one individual's space to another's space.

For more information and additional resources, please see the following: San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH): [www.sfdcp.org/COVID-ventilation](http://www.sfdcp.org/COVID-ventilation).

- **Discontinue indoor singing, chanting, shouting and wind instruments.** The State of California does not currently allow these activities indoors.

**As a host/organizer, how else can I keep our gathering as safe as possible?**

- Keep your gathering under 2 hours, even if it is outdoors. The shorter it is, the safer it is.
- Avoid high-risk activities such as singing, chanting, shouting, and playing wind or brass instruments, even outdoors. The activities produce large numbers of respiratory droplets, increasing the risk of COVID-19.





See more under *“How can singing, chanting, shouting, and playing wind/brass instruments be done more safely?”*

- Promote flu vaccination. Flu vaccines are critical in the fight against COVID-19 by (1) keeping workers and communities healthy and (2) reducing strain on our healthcare and testing systems that are responding to COVID-19. Post signage to encourage flu vaccine among personnel and participants. Find out more information at <http://sfcdcp.org.flu>.

**What else can I do to decrease the risk of our indoor gathering? **\*\*Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time\*\*****

In addition to the measures laid out in *“How can I keep a gathering as safe as possible?”*

- Make sure that personnel and participants are aware that indoor gatherings are much higher risk for COVID-19 than outdoor gatherings, so they can decide if they can safely attend.
- Consider making changes to minimize crowding and make physical distancing easier for people from different households, Examples include moving podiums, creating physical barriers, taping off or moving seating, identifying entrance and exits, indicating walking paths in areas where participants pray or kneel on the floor, prohibiting access to common areas.
- Make changes to minimize touching of high-touch surfaces, for example, by keeping bathroom doors propped open to minimize touching of door handles.
- Make hand sanitizer or handwashing stations available at entrances and exits.
- Discontinue use of shared water vessels, fonts, fountain, and sinks for ceremonial purposes.
- Regularly clean and disinfect common and high touch areas, including bathrooms.

**Can I host more than one gathering on the same day?**

Yes, as long as you schedule gatherings far enough apart that participants from different gatherings do not mix, and you can clean/disinfect high-touch areas between gatherings.

- Hosts must separate outdoor gatherings by at least 20 minutes and indoor gatherings **\*\*Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time\*\*** by 30 minutes between gatherings, to allow time for participants to exit and for personnel to clean/disinfect.
- Between gatherings, personnel must:
  - Clean and sanitize high-touch surface;
  - Clean, sanitize and/or replace any items of clothing that became soiled or contaminated with bodily fluids before using them for a later gathering;
  - Thoroughly wash or sanitize their hands.
- Hosts may not hold more than one Outdoor Gathering at a single location at the same time.
- Hosts may **not** hold both indoor and outdoor gatherings simultaneously to allow for more people to attend a gathering (e.g. indoor and outdoor wedding or funeral).



**Can I hold more than one indoor worship or cultural ceremonial gatherings\*\*Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time\*\*at the same time in a large facility?**

Yes, you may hold simultaneous or overlapping indoor gatherings if all of the following conditions are met:

- Each gathering must be held in its own, physically separate space, either in different buildings, or in different rooms separated by sealed floor-to-ceiling walls. Partitions may not be used to divide an indoor space for two different gatherings.
- Participants from different gatherings are not allowed to mix.
  - Different gatherings must use separate entrances and exits. If only one shared entrance and exit exist, the Host must ensure participants from different gatherings do not enter or exit at the same time, for example, by staggering start and end times.
  - Personnel and participants must not move between gatherings.
- The host must develop a written plan to describe how they will keep people in different gatherings from mixing, as outlined in Section 4.1.3 of the Indoor Worship Directive.
- In general, keep the areas that are not reserved for an indoor gathering closed to participants, unless expressly permitted under the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.

**Can personnel who are not involved in a gathering work on-site while a gathering is taking place?**

Yes. Personnel are allowed to work inside the facility while multiple indoor gatherings **\*\*Indoor Religious and Cultural Ceremonial Gatherings Remain Suspended At This Time\*\*** occur as long as staff follow rules for the Business Operating Office Facilities Directive and Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.

**Can we eat or drink at gatherings?**

- Eating and drinking are permitted at **Outdoor Meal Gatherings**, at **Drive-In Gatherings**, and as part of **religious or faith-based ceremonies**, as long as it is done in a way that minimizes the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
  - Eating and drinking may not take place when personnel and/or participants are within 6 feet of one another, since face coverings must be worn when people are within 6 feet.
  - Avoid hand-to-mouth contact between different people. Respiratory droplets from one person's mouth can land on the other person's hand, increasing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
  - As an example, communion rituals could have the priest and participants masked at all times, with the participants receiving communion in the hand and moving away from others to briefly lower their mask to place the sacramental bread on the tongue (see example video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8tg8A5jmP0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8tg8A5jmP0)).
- People from different households should not drink out of the same glass or cup. They also should not share utensils. If glasses, cups, or utensils are shared, they must be disinfected between households, and anyone



handling the shared item must also wash or disinfect their hands.

- Self-service food, potlucks, or family-style eating with shared serving plates or drink dispensers are not allowed.

**Must we wear masks/ face coverings all the time?**

- You must wear masks as specified in the Face Covering Order.
- Proper use of face coverings is even more critical when in higher risk gatherings, such as indoors.
- Face coverings may be removed briefly while eating or drinking, however proper social distancing should be maintained. If removing face coverings/masks is deemed as essential in a ritual or ceremony, a person may briefly remove their face covering only if they (1) maintain social distance and do not speak, recite, chant, shout or sing; or (2) isolate themselves from all other people to speak or recite, such as by speaking inside an enclosed chamber or behind a plastic or glass partition or face shield no more than 12 inches from the mouth of the speaker and greater than 12 feet away from others.

**What about camping, cookouts, or BBQs?**

- Bring your own supplies including soap, disinfectants, hand sanitizer, paper towels, etc.
- Do not share BBQs or outdoor grilling stations with people outside of your household. Clean all stations frequently.
- If camping with people from outside your household, consider self-isolating for 14 days before and after if you will be in close contact with people you are camping with.
  - “Close contact” is defined by the CDC as being within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over 24 hours) starting from 2 days before the illness starts (for people without symptoms, this means 2 days before they were tested; [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact)).

**Can we sing, chant, shout, or play wind instruments at our gathering?**

**Outdoor Special Gatherings** and **Drive-In Gatherings** may have singing, chanting, shouting or wind instruments,, if all of the following conditions are met:

- Only one person may sing, chant, shout, or play a wind instrument at a time. Group singing, chanting, shouting, or wind instrument playing is not allowed.
- The person performing the activity must be at least **12 feet** from any other person.
- The person singing, chanting, or shouting must wear a **Face Covering** at all times.
- The wind instrument’s bells and/or openings where air/sound exit must be covered with a mask/other fabric at all times.
- When these activities are allowed, consider the following to reduce risk:
  - Ensure the performance is in a large, well ventilated area (see [www.sfdcp.org/COVID-ventilation](http://www.sfdcp.org/COVID-ventilation)).



- Minimize the amount of time engaged in these activities.
- Sing, chant, yell, or play wind instruments more quietly, to produce fewer respiratory droplets. Consider using amplifiers.
- Consider a physical barrier between the performer and others.
- Have performers position themselves so that voices and air exiting from instruments is directed from Participants (for example, in silhouette).
- Encourage performers to get tested for COVID-19 as close to the performance date as possible, accounting for the turnaround time for the test. People can get tested by their regular healthcare provider or at CityTestSF (<https://sf.gov/citytestsf>).
- Take special care to ensure that performers do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and are not “close contact” of someone with COVID-19. See [www.sfc-dph.org/screeningvisitors](http://www.sfc-dph.org/screeningvisitors).
- For wind/brass instruments:
  - Performers must be masked at all times as much as possible when not performing.
  - Instruments must not be shared among individuals of different households.
  - If relevant to the instrument, performers should use a large, thin, plastic-lined pad on their chest and lap to collect spit.

## Resources

Useful COVID-19 Resources to keep checking:

- San Francisco guidance: [www.sfc-dph.org/covid19](http://www.sfc-dph.org/covid19)
- San Francisco Health Officer orders: [www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-healthorders.asp](http://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-healthorders.asp)
- Printable resources such as signage: <https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19>
- California guidance:
  - <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>
  - <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>
- CDC guidance: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/index.html)