



Consistent with the State’s Framework for a Safer Economy, San Francisco is allowing certain businesses and other activities to reopen or expand starting March 24, 2021. The decisions to reopen balance the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission with the public health risks of economic and mental health stress.

Even though COVID-19 case rates have come down significantly, and more people are vaccinated, there remains a risk that people who you come into contact with when you are outside your Residence may have COVID-19. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. Due to limited supply of vaccine, only a minority of San Franciscans are fully vaccinated. We also have confirmed there are new, more contagious virus variants in the San Francisco Bay Area and that some of these variants are more likely to cause serious illness and death in unvaccinated people.

The opening or expansion 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 to make these activities and sectors safer for workers and the public. But reopening and expansion 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 wearing Face Coverings and following Social Distancing Requirements and all other safety protocols.

People at risk for severe illness with COVID-19—such as unvaccinated older adults, and unvaccinated individuals with health risks—and members of their household are urged to defer participating at this time in activities with other people outside their household where taking protective measures of wearing face masks and social distancing may be difficult, especially indoors or in crowded spaces.

DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER No. 2020-18c

**DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF
THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO REGARDING REQUIRED BEST
PRACTICES FOR BUSINESSES OPERATING OFFICE FACILITIES**

(PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTIVE)
DATE OF DIRECTIVE: March 23, 2020

By this Directive, the Health Officer of the City and County of San Francisco (the “Health Officer”) issues industry-specific direction that businesses operating Office Facilities, as described below, must follow as part of the local response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) pandemic. This Directive constitutes industry-specific guidance as provided under Section 4.e of Health Officer Order No. C19-07u, including as it may be revised or amended in the future, (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 March 24, 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



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transmission of COVID-19 and safeguard the health of workers, customers, and the community.

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 owners, operators, managers, and supervisors of any business operating in an indoor office facility and that are otherwise authorized to operate under the terms of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order, including Essential Businesses, Outdoor Businesses, and Additional Businesses that operate, at least in part, within any office space (“Office Facilities”). For clarity, this Directive applies to Office Facilities operated by the County.**
- 2. Attached as Exhibit A to this Directive is a list of best practices that apply to Office Facilities (the “Best Practices”). Each Office Facility must comply with all of the relevant requirements listed in the Best Practices.**
- 3. Each Office Facility, before it begins to permit Personnel or members of the public onsite, must create, adopt, and implement a written health and safety plan (a “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 Office Facilities is attached to this Directive as Exhibit C and at www.sfdph.org/directives.**
- 5. If an aspect, service, or operation of the Office Facility is also covered by another Health Officer directive (all of which are available at www.sfdph.org/directives), then the Office Facility must comply with all applicable directives, and it must complete all relevant Health and Safety Plan forms.**
- 6. Each Office Facility must (a) make the Health and Safety Plan available to a member of the public and Personnel on request, (b) provide a summary of the Health and Safety Plan to all Personnel working on site or otherwise in the City in relation to its operations, and (c) post the Health and Safety Plan at each entrance to any Office Facility within the City. Also, each Office Facility must provide a copy of the Health and Safety Plan and evidence of its implementation to any authority enforcing this Directive upon demand.**
- 7. Each Office Facility subject to this Directive must provide items such as Face Coverings (as provided in Health Officer Order No. C19-12, and any future amendment to that order), hand sanitizer or handwashing stations, or both, and disinfectant and related cleaning supplies to Personnel and to the public, all as required by the Best Practices. If any such Office Facility is unable to provide these required items or otherwise fails to comply with required Best Practices or 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, as to any non-compliant Office Facility, any such Office Facility is subject to immediate closure and the fines and other legal remedies described below, as a violation of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.**



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8. For purposes of this Directive, “Personnel” includes all of the following people who provide goods or services associated with the Office Facility: employees; contractors and sub-contractors (such as those who sell goods or perform services onsite or who deliver goods for the business); independent contractors; vendors who are permitted to sell goods onsite; volunteers; and other individuals who regularly provide services onsite at the request of the Office Facility. “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. Each Office Facility 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/directives) regularly.
10. Implementation of this Directive augments—but does not limit—the obligations of each Office Facility 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 Office Facility must follow these industry-specific 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.

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".

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

Date: March 23, 2021



Exhibit A to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-18c (issued 3/23/2021)

Best Practices for Businesses Operating Office Facilities

In addition to preparing, posting, and implementing the Social Distancing Protocol required by Section 4.d and Appendix A of Health Officer Order No. C19-07 (the “Stay-Safer-At-Home Order”), each Office Facility 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.

Requirements:

1. Section 1 – Requirements For All Office Facilities:

- 1.1.*** Make any necessary adjustments to the layout of the Office Facility to allow for at least six feet of physical distancing between all people working in or visiting the Office Facility. Such adjustments may include some or all of the following, where feasible: adding markers to the floor space to signal appropriate social distancing; limiting hallways to a single direction; spacing racks or shelves six feet or more apart; widening high-traffic areas; or adding Plexiglas screens to areas where receptionists or security guards are stationed.
- 1.2.*** If all or part of an Office Facility has been vacant or dormant for any significant period during the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order, the Office Facility must ensure plumbing is functioning and that pipes are flushed before use. The San Francisco PUC provides guidance for flushing and preparing water systems at:
<https://sfwater.org/index.aspx?page=1327>.
- 1.3.*** All Office Facilities must comply with the ventilation protocols at Section 4.i of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. Review SFDPH’s guidance for improved ventilation available at:
<https://www.sfcdep.org/COVID-ventilation>.
- 1.4.*** Develop a strategy to ensure Personnel comply with the Social Distancing Protocol (Appendix A of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order) (the “Social Distancing Protocol”) and to limit the number of people in the Office Facility at a given time, consistent with the requirements in the Stay-Safer-at-Home Order. Such plans must address: (i) requiring Personnel to notify management before coming into the Office Facility; (ii) staggering Personnel shifts to the greatest extent possible to avoid exceeding capacity limits, avoid congregating, and provide for sanitation; (iii) strongly encouraging all Personnel who can perform their work remotely to telecommute to the greatest extent feasible; (iv) converting in-person meetings to online meetings; and (v) encouraging members of the public, vendors, and contractors to make appointments before coming to the Office Facility.
- 1.5.*** Modify policies for using elevators and stairs serving as access to, from and within the Office Facility.
 - 1.5.1.*** Where feasible, make stairways accessible to Personnel and visitors entering the Office Facility. Encourage Personnel who are physically able to use the stairs.
 - 1.5.2.*** Limit capacity in elevators to the **lesser** of: (1) four people, or (2) the number of people who can fit in the elevator while maintaining at least six feet of distance



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from each other. During peak building entry and exit times, this number may be adjusted to up to four individuals at a time for any elevator that does not allow for six feet of physical distance between riders.

- 1.5.3.** Add signage to elevators and on all floors requiring anyone who rides the elevator to wear Face Coverings as provided in Health Officer Order No. C19-12, and any future amendment to that order (the “Face Covering Order”) and discouraging people from talking in the elevators.
- 1.5.4.** Provide hand sanitizer outside the elevators on the ground floor.
- 1.6.** Add all COVID-19 related signage to the Office Facility as required by Sections 4.g and 4.h of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. The County is making available templates for the signage available online at <https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19>.
- 1.7.** Require everyone who enter the Office Facility to wear Face Coverings as provided in the Face Covering Order.
- 1.8.** Develop a strategy and implement daily COVID-19 symptom self-verifications for all Personnel as required by the Social Distancing Protocol.
- 1.9.** Personnel are strongly discouraged from holding meetings in person even if they are otherwise working at the Office Facility. Consider using alternate technologies, such as tele- or video-conferencing from separate offices. Limit the number of people who attend a meeting in person to the maximum extent possible.
- 1.10.** Office Facilities with conference rooms are strongly discouraged from permitting Personnel to use such spaces for meetings unless meeting remotely is not feasible. If the Office Facility permits use of its conference rooms, it must comply with the following:
 - 1.10.1.** Limit the number of persons in each conference room to 25% of the maximum occupancy and post a sign in each room listing the maximum number of people permitted in the space.
 - 1.10.2.** Notify Personnel who will use the conference room that, where feasible, they should leave doors and external windows open while in use to increase available ventilation.
 - 1.10.3.** Prohibit eating and drinking during meetings.
- 1.11.** If the Office Facility permits Personnel to eat onsite, the following requirements apply:
 - 1.11.1.** The Office Facility must notify employees that they are advised against eating indoors to the greatest extent possible. Where feasible, Office Facilities should provide an outdoor area where Personnel can eat their meals. If Personnel must eat indoors, Office Facilities must encourage Personnel to eat away from others, including at their own desk. Office Facilities must discourage Personnel from congregating in cafeterias or breakrooms to eat.
 - 1.11.2.** Personnel may remove their Face Covering to eat, but only if nobody else from outside their Household is within six feet of them. Personnel must replace their Face Covering as soon as they have completed their meal.



- 1.11.3.** Office Facilities that have indoor spaces designated for eating meals, such as employee breakrooms or cafeterias, must limit the number of people in those spaces to the lesser of: (a) 25% of the maximum occupancy; or (b) the number of people that can safely maintain at least six feet of distance from each other at all times.
- 1.11.4.** Post signage in any breakrooms or cafeterias stating the following. Sample signage is available at <https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19>.
- 1.11.4.1.** A sign bearing the message that: (1) COVID-19 is transmitted through the air, and the risk is generally higher indoors, and (2) seniors and those with health risks should avoid indoor settings with crowds.
- 1.11.4.2.** A sign informing Personnel that they must remain at least six feet away from others outside their Household at all times.
- 1.11.5.** Office Facilities that provide onsite food service to Personnel must operate in accordance with Health Officer Directives 2020-05 (Food Preparation for Essential Delivery Businesses) and 2020-16c (Indoor and Outdoor Dining) and any amendments to those directives. Office Facilities must strongly encourage Personnel to take food items to-go and eat outside or in areas away from other Personnel. Consider limiting offerings to pre-packed and grab-n-go style meals.
- 1.12.** Develop a strategy and implement sanitization requirements, including:
- 1.12.1.** Instruct all Personnel to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and to wash hands or use hand sanitizer (provided by the Office Facility) before and after touching high-touch surfaces, such as copy machines or shared office tools, equipment or materials.
- 1.12.2.** Ensure Personnel have access to cleaning supplies so that they can clean surfaces as needed on their own when custodial staff is not available.
- 1.12.3.** Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces in common areas at least once daily, or more frequently if required by industry standards. Common areas include, but are not limited to the following common-use area: lobbies, lounge or seating areas, meeting rooms, entry ways, hallways, bathrooms, elevators, and stairwells. Clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces and devices found in common areas such as door handles, railings, faucets, toilets, elevator buttons, furniture, computers, telephones and other devices that are touched by many people in a single day. Clean and disinfect the Office Space at the end of a lease and prior to occupancy by a new lessee of the Office Space.
- 1.12.4.** Wait until all people leave their office or personal workspace for the day before cleaning that area. Where feasible, wait at least one hour after the space is vacated before cleaning the area. If possible, Personnel should also wait an hour after the space has been cleaned before returning to the workspace.
- 1.13.** Where feasible, prohibit Personnel from sharing equipment, such as phones, tables, file cabinets, copy machines, or desks. Any work furniture, tools or equipment that must be used by more than one individual must be cleaned and disinfected in a manner that complies with the requirements contained in the Social Distancing Protocol.



- 1.14.** Minimize non-essential travel for Personnel between worksites and for business travel outside of San Francisco.
- 1.15.** Office Facilities with gyms or other exercise equipment may only operate if they are also able to comply with all of the requirements of the applicable Health Officer directives for gyms and fitness centers (Directives 2020-27 and 2020-31).
- 1.16.** If Personnel or a member of the public refuses to comply with the Face Covering Order or other provision of this Directive, then the Office Facility must refuse entry to the facility or request that the individual leave the facility. Nothing in this Directive is intended to alter the obligations an Office Facility may otherwise have under applicable law to provide reasonable accommodations to Personnel or members of the public.
- 1.17.** Office Facilities that also maintain privately owned public open spaces must comply with the Social Distancing Protocol for such spaces. Office Facilities must also place high-touch equipment and furniture in their open spaces, such as tables, benches, and chairs, off-limits by either removing the items or by using signage and physical barriers, as appropriate.
- 2. Section 2: Requirements Specific to Office Facilities that are Not Classified as an “Essential Business”**
- 2.1.** Office Facilities that are not Essential Businesses may expand operations beyond the Minimum Basic Operations, as set forth in the Stay-Safer-At-Home-Order, but only to the extent the Office Facility strongly encourages Personnel to telecommute to the maximum extent possible and only as necessary to ensure business operations.
- 2.2.** Office Facilities that are not Essential Businesses must adjust their maximum occupancy rules based on the size of the Office Facility to limit the number of people (including Personnel and members of the public), as follows:
- 2.2.1.** Businesses with fewer than 20 Personnel must reduce their maximum occupancy to the number of people who can maintain at least six feet of physical distance from each other in the Office Facility at all times.
- 2.2.2.** Businesses with 20 or more Personnel must reduce their maximum occupancy to the **lesser** of: (1) 25% the Office Facility’s normal maximum occupancy, or (2) the number of people who can maintain at least six feet of physical distance from each other in the Office Facility at all times.

Health Officer Directive No. 2020-18c (Exhibit B) Health and Safety Plan (issued 3/23/2021)

Each Office Facility 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:

Facility Address:

Contact telephone:

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

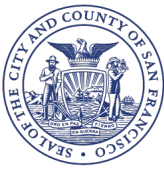
- Office Facility is familiar with and complies with all requirements set forth in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-18, available at www.sfdph.org/directives.
- Completed any necessary adjustments to the layout of the Office Facility to allow for proper social distancing.
- Plumbing is functioning and, if the Office Facility was dormant, the pipes are flushed.
- Completed any necessary improvements to the ventilation of the Office Facility.
- Require Personnel to comply with social distancing requirements and to limit the number of people in the Office Facility at a given time, consistent with the requirements in the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.
- Modified policies for using elevators and stairs, including placing signage regarding any applicable limits on use of elevators.
- Added all required signage to entrances and employee break rooms.
- Personnel and members of the public who enter the Office Facility are required to wear Face Coverings as provided in the Face Covering Order.
- Implemented daily COVID-19 symptom self-verifications for all Personnel as required by the Social Distancing Protocol.
- Implemented sanitization requirements.
- Personnel have access to cleaning supplies so that they can clean surfaces as needed on their own when custodial staff is not available.
- High touch surfaces in common areas are cleaned and disinfected at least once a day.

Additional Requirement Applicable to Non-Essential Businesses:

- Adjusted maximum occupancy rules based on the size of the facility to limit the number of people (including Personnel and members of the public) in the Office Facility.

Additional Measures

Explain:



ALERT: Remain Cautious

In alignment with the State’s recommendations, San Francisco is reopening at the State’s Orange Tier starting March 24, 2021. The decision to reopen balances the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission with the public health risks of economic and mental health stress.

Even though COVID-19 case rates have come down, and more people are vaccinated, there **remains a risk that people who you come into contact with may have COVID-19**. Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms of illness. We also have confirmed there are new, more contagious virus variants in the San Francisco Bay Area and that **some of these variants are more likely to cause serious illness and death in unvaccinated people**. We don’t yet know exactly how these variants will impact vaccine effectiveness, although clinical trial and real world data are reassuring that they will still work as intended. The opening of sectors does not necessarily signify that these activities are “safe.”

We have made our best efforts to create guidance to help these activities and sectors provide safer environments for workers and the public. However, this requires that everyone do their part to make these activities as safe as possible, including: wearing a well-fitted masks that covers your mouth and nose especially when talking, avoiding indoor settings to the extent possible, maintaining at least 6 feet distance from those you don’t live with, getting tested and isolating if you are ill, complying with additional health protocols required of open businesses. People at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 — such as unvaccinated older adults and unvaccinated people with health risks — and those who live with or care for them are urged to defer participating in activities with other people outside their household where taking protective measures of wearing face masks and social distancing may be difficult, especially indoors or in crowded spaces.

If you are fully vaccinated (i.e., 14 days have passed since your final shot), you can feel safer about your own health risks when participating in activities permitted by our state and local health departments. However, please consider the possible risk your exposure may have on those around you, especially those you live with and those who are unvaccinated, when you take part in activities that involve people outside your household.



Guidance Notices of Suspension or Restrictions of Indoor and Outdoor Activity

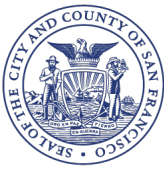
San Francisco continues to experience a rapid and significant surge in COVID-19 cases with current projections to exceed our capacity and healthcare systems. In accordance with the State’s Orange Tier status as of March 24, San Francisco will suspend or restrict certain indoor and outdoor activities. The suspension or restriction of these activities is necessary to reduce the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission. The suspension or restriction of these activities is necessary to reduce the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission. The suspension or restriction of these activities is necessary to reduce the public health risks of COVID-19 transmission.

Activity or Activity	Business, Expo/Event and Activities Table	Change of effective date
Bar/Club	Bar/Club	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor)	Bar/Club (Outdoor)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor)	Bar/Club (Indoor)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Seating) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Outdoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020
Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	Bar/Club (Indoor) (Standing) (Alcohol) (No Alcohol) (No Alcohol)	100% capacity, November 15, 2020

Business Capacities and Activities Table or BCAT

The Health Officer ordered suspensions or restrictions on capacity limits of the activities as shown in the table. These suspensions or restrictions amend any related orders, directives, or guidance. All impacted people and entities are required to adhere to these new limits and must otherwise continue to monitor and comply with all applicable [Health Orders](#) and [Directives](#).

Refer to the BCAT ([English](#), [Chinese](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Russian](#)) for all current restrictions, limitations and suspensions.



Tips and Frequently Asked Questions for Opening Office Facilities During COVID-19

UPDATED March 23, 2021

The following guidance was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) and is posted at <https://www.sfdcph.org>. This interim guidance may change as knowledge, community transmission, and availability of PPE and testing change.

AUDIENCE: Businesses who bring Personnel back to office facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic in compliance with Directive 2020-18b.

PURPOSE: This document addresses major points in, but does not replace, the Directive.

Summary of revisions since previous versions

- Review the [Business Capacities and Activities Table \(BCAT\)](#): any restrictions shown in the BCAT take precedence if there is conflicting information in this document
- Added additional resource links for vaccinated individuals on quarantine and safer social interactions.

COVID-19 Information

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 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.

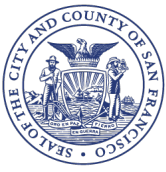
Smaller droplets or infectious particles. These can float in the air for a period of time and/or travel beyond 6 feet on indoor air currents, especially in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation. People sharing the same space are infected when they breathe in these smaller droplets and particles or the 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), however this is less common.

COVID-19 Prevention

[Wash your hands often with soap and water.](#) If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70 % isopropanol.

[Avoid Close Contact.](#) To the greatest extent, maintain at least six feet of social distancing between yourself and the people who don’t live in your Household.



[Wear a Face Covering](#). Cover your mouth and nose with a Face Covering in public settings and when around people who don't live in your Household.

[Routinely clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces.

[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.

CA Notify - Help Slow the Spread the COVID-19

CA Notify (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 were 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 for more information.

COVID-19 vaccine is here

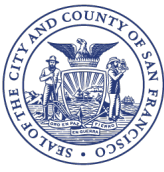
The vaccine is one of the most important ways to end the pandemic. The FDA, CDC, and California's own Scientific Safety Review Workgroup have reviewed data from clinical trials to ensure the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines. **We strongly encourage all persons to get vaccinated.** The first vaccines approved in the US are about 95% effective in preventing sickness from COVID-19, however we do not know how well they prevent infections that do not cause symptoms. While the vaccine probably prevents some of these "asymptomatic infections", so far we do not know how well they do that. This means that we do not know if those who get the vaccine could still carry the virus and transmit it to others, including [those who have increased risk for severe illness or death](#). 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: wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose when outside your home, avoid get-togethers/gatherings, avoid being indoors with people you don't live with, stay at least 6 feet away from others, and wash your hands after touching shared objects or after touching your face. Find out more about the vaccine, including where and when to get it at: sf.gov/covidvax

If you have received the COVID-19 vaccine, please read more about whether you need to quarantine at: www.sfcddcp.org/quarantineaftervaccination.

If you have received the COVID-19 vaccine, please read more about safer social interactions at: www.sfcddcp.org/lifeaftervaccine

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. Strongly encourage all personnel to get a flu shot. Post signage to encourage flu vaccine among customers, visitors, and others.



Indoor Risk

Scientists agree that the risk of transmitting COVID-19 is generally much greater indoors than outdoors. Consider the increased risk to yourself and your community while planning for office opening or expansion. Any increase in the number of people indoors or the length of time spent indoors increases risk. Small rooms, narrow hallways, small elevators, weak ventilation all increase indoor risk. Each activity that can be done outdoors, remotely, by teleconference reduces risk. Consider outdoor covered walkway to avoid line to check in. Consider having a single person come to the office to represent a group that teleconferences.

The Role of Ventilation

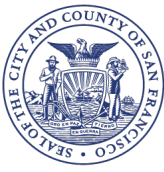
Good ventilation controls droplets and infectious particles to prevent COVID-19 transmission by:

- 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

Make Necessary Ventilation Improvements, if Feasible, Including:

- Open windows to increase natural ventilation with outdoor air when health and safety allow. When possible, consider also leaving room doors slightly open to promote flow of outdoor air through the indoor space.
 - Do not prop or wedge open fire doors. Continue to follow fire and building safety requirements.
 - If open windows pose a risk of falls for children, use window locks to keep windows from opening more than 4 inches, or other safety devices to prevent falls.
- If your location has an HVAC system (sometimes called mechanical ventilation, forced air, or central air), follow the recommendations in [SFDPH Ventilation Guidance](#). Prioritize maximizing the intake of outdoor air and minimizing recirculated air during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recommendations include:
 - Make sure the HVAC system is checked by a professional and is working properly.
 - Open outdoor air dampers and close recirculation dampers ("economizers"). This will maximize the amount of outdoor air that the HVAC system takes in and minimize the amount of indoor air that is recirculated.
 - If you can use higher-efficiency air filters without reducing airflow or damaging your HVAC system, use air filters rated MERV13 or better.
 - Disable "demand-control ventilation controls" so fans keep running even when a room doesn't need to be heated or cooled.
 - Keep the HVAC system running even when the building is not being used, if you can. If your HVAC system has a timer, set it to run, at a minimum, from 1-2 hours before the building opens until 2-3 hours after everyone has left the building, including custodial staff.
- Consider using 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 visit sfcdcp.org/COVID-ventilation



All indoor operations must:

- Review the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) Ventilation Guidance (<https://www.sfdcp.org/COVID-ventilation>) and keep an annotated copy available. Ventilation guidance from recognized authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control, ASHRAE, or the State of California may be used instead.
- Post 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

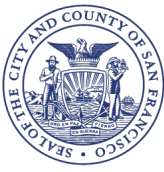
Doors and Windows required to be kept closed for fire/life safety purposes are exempt. For example, fire doors must remain closed. Make sure open windows do not create falling hazards especially for children.

Sign templates can be found at: <https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19>

Conference Rooms and Meetings

Conference and meeting rooms may open up to posted capacities on the [Business Capacities and Activities Table \(BCAT\)](#), and no more than the number of people who can safely maintain six feet of physical distance at all times.

- Face to face meetings increase risk and are highly discouraged in indoor environments.
- Video and phone conferencing are significantly safer.
- Video conferencing also allows full participation by workers who are off site.
- If a meeting cannot be avoided, notify participants in advance that socializing before and after the meeting is an unacceptable risk.
- Limit the number of in-person invitees by integrating video and phone conferencing.
- Eating and drinking are prohibited in meetings because face covering are removed.
- Activate conference room ventilation 1-2 hours before people enter the room. Open doors and windows if possible.
- Post COVID-19 occupancy and safety signs in conference and meeting rooms.
- Conspicuously post signage about ventilation and safer use of breakrooms as required by [Section 4.i. of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order](#).
- Strongly emphasize hand hygiene, by providing ongoing access to hand washing stations and hand sanitizers for both staff and clientele.
- Conference and meeting rooms that are used should be cleaned and disinfected at minimum daily or at industry standards, whichever is more frequent.



Eating in the Cafeteria, Break Room, Outdoors or at a Desk

Review the [Business Capacities and Activities Table](#) to see if office cafeterias may be open. When allowed, office cafeterias must follow the [COVID-19 dining guidance](#). In addition, employee cafeterias should:

- Strongly encourage outdoor dining,
- Limit capacity to the number of people allowed per the [Business Capacities and Activities Table](#), but no more than the number who can maintain six feet of physical distance,
- Post signage about ventilation, occupancy, face coverings, social distancing, and hand hygiene,
- Offer grab-and-go food if possible,
- Do not allow socializing or group dining,
- Provide sheltered outdoor space if at all possible.
- Use scheduling, furniture and signs to eliminate lines and crowding, and to reduce the time that anyone spends in the cafeteria or eating area.

Eating requires removing face coverings, placing people at increased risk. Stay safe while eating by:

- Eating outdoors, weather permitting and with at least six feet of space in every direction
- Opening doors and window whenever possible
- Eating at your desk or alone in a room/office
- Not socializing while eating
- Replacing face covering as soon as you are done eating.

During COVID-19, eating in break rooms should be avoided when others are present. Be sure there is six feet of physical distance between people, good ventilation, good hygiene and appropriate dining signage.

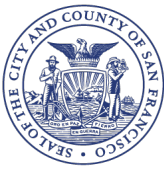
Mandatory Signage Requirements and Resources

Add all COVID-19 related signage to the Office as required by [Sections 4.g and 4.h of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order](#). Complete signage requirements are described starting with Best Practices [Section 1.5 of Health Officer Directive 2020-18](#).

The [Outreach Toolkit](#) includes printable resources including many of the signs required or suggested to open offices. Signs about proper hygiene, social distancing, Face Coverings, health screening, the risks of indoor transmission, testing and getting vaccinated for the flu are all available.

Promoting Workplace COVID-19 Safety

Employers and management should actively promote safe COVID-19 habits. Businesses have successfully used small incentives such as decorative face coverings and public recognition to reduce COVID-19 transmission. Intervening and noticing lapses may well prevent costly illness. An educational approach to confrontation has generally been the most successful. Recognition and intervention work best when done at both a group level and an individual level. Managers and supervisors should always model safe practices.



Contact Tracing

The San Francisco Department of Public Health, in partnership with community, including businesses and offices, helps identify those who have had close contact with anyone who has COVID-19. People can transmit the virus 48 hours before they develop symptoms. Some people never develop symptoms and can still transmit the virus. 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. We do this whenever there is an outbreak of infectious diseases like measles, tuberculosis, and others to protect the community's health.

Help ensure the health of your personnel, clients and our community. Retain the attendance/schedules of all personnel at your organization for up to three weeks. It is recommended that organizations maintain a list of visitors willing to voluntarily provide their name and contact information for contact tracing purposes. Any lists should be discarded after three weeks. Visitors who are not employees are not required to provide contact information.

If personnel or visitors test positive for COVID-19, you must assist the Department of Public Health in identifying other Personnel or visitors to your office who may have been exposed.

Cover your face, test early, and trace! Find out more at [covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing](https://www.covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing)

Scheduling and Commuting

To manage occupancy in the office and ease pressure on the transit system, offices should provide information and flexibility to help Personnel make the best choices for commuting to work. Effective measures to reduce individual risk of COVID-19, limit community transmission and aid in economic recovery include:

- Allow employees to continue working remotely as much as possible;
- Adopt alternative work schedules so Personnel are not all in the office at the same time;
- Stagger working hours to shift travel to off-peak times;
- If applicable, encourage Personnel to use alternative transportation such as walking or biking;
- Provide flexibility to Personnel who may be late if they need to wait for a less crowded public transit vehicle.

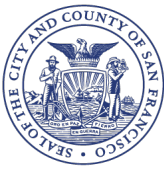
For information and resources visit [sfmta.com/TransportationGuidance](https://www.sfmta.com/TransportationGuidance)

FAQ

What do I need to do in order to comply with the Directive?

Before returning employees to the office, be sure you have read the entire Directive and best practices and take at least the following steps: complete adjustments to the layout of your office to be sure employees can remain at least six feet apart at all times; check plumbing to be sure it is functioning properly and flush pipes if necessary; make any necessary improvements to ventilation; add necessary signage to elevators, stairs, break rooms, and cafeterias; implement daily COVID-19 self-verifications for all personnel; and implement sanitization protocols.

You are required to create and consistently implement the following two documents, which will help you ensure you are following all the mandated steps.



- Health and Safety Plan (see [Exhibit B of Directive No. 2020-18](#)) which may be amended.
- Social Distancing Protocol (see [Appendix A of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Health Order C19-07](#)), which may be amended. You will need to ensure these documents are available for all Personnel. They should be posted at the entrance to the office site. If other Directives apply to your business, you may need to complete more than one Health and Safety Plan.

I've created the plans, so am I done now?

At least on a weekly basis, think about how your Business and Personnel are doing, how well you are complying with your Health and Safety Plan and your Social Distancing Protocol, and what changes are needed to improve your response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Look for new guidance from the SFDPH Communicable Disease Control and Prevention site (<https://www.sfdcp.org/covid19>) or the frequently updated page at <https://sf.gov/topics/business-during-coronavirus-pandemic> which has comprehensive resources for businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

May all of my staff return to my non-essential office facility if I can keep them socially distanced?

It depends on how many staff members you have. You must limit the number of staff to the current restrictions in the [Business Capacities and Activities Table](#), and no more than the number of people who can safely maintain six feet of physical distance at all times. Telecommuting should be strongly encouraged whenever feasible.

Is my employee required to wear a Face Covering while in their private office alone, or while sitting at their desk around which I have installed Plexiglas dividers?

You do not need to wear a Face Covering if you are alone in a private office that is not shared with others and is not likely to be visited by others without prior warning, such as an office with a closed door. If another person enters the area, both of you must immediately put on a Face Covering during the interaction.

What should I do if Personnel answer "Yes" to any of the [daily screening questions](#)?

The Health and Safety Plan should include your plan for safe transport of Personnel who become sick while at work to home or a healthcare provider. Further information is available on:

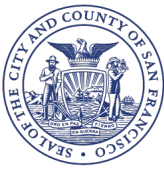
- [what to do if personnel have a positive COVID-19 test](#),
- [when personnel can return to work](#) after COVID-19 symptoms, testing, or close contact, and
- [duration of quarantine](#) after close contact for those who have been vaccinated.

If my employee tests positive for COVID-19 will SFDPH tell me? If they test positive in a county outside of SF will I be notified?

SFDPH or another county health department may contact employers to trace contacts, but the identity of the person who has tested positive for COVID-19 is protected health information, and typically cannot be shared except in select circumstances.

What should I be prepared to tell SFDPH to assist with contact tracing if my employee tells me that they have tested positive for COVID-19?

You should determine the last day that the person who was diagnosed with COVID-19 was present at the workplace. Be prepared to identify any close contacts the person had at the workplace. In an office setting, close contacts are defined as someone who was within 6 feet of the person diagnosed with COVID-19 for more than 10 minutes while the person with COVID-19 was not wearing a facemask.



Can I provide more business space outdoors?

Outdoor work environments generally have much less risk of COVID-19 transmission. Some businesses have been able to use patios, awnings, canopies, tents and covered walkways to expand space while reducing risk of indoor transmission. SFDPH has developed [guidance for creating outdoor shelters](#) that may be useful for offices.

Resources

- Information for businesses at sfdcp.org/businesses
- How to [get tested for COVID-19 in San Francisco](#)
- Downloadable [signage to print](#) yourself, or to request [printed posters](#)
- Information from the [San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development about COVID-19](#), such as employer requirements, employee benefits, and resources; [Avoiding discrimination and retaliation during COVID-19](#).
- CAL OSHA [information on protecting workers from COVID-19](#)
- AIHA- Reopening: [Guidance for General Office Settings](#)
- CDC: Resuming Business Toolkit: [CDC Resuming Business Toolkit](#)
- [CDC Return to Work Guidance](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings](#)