



Consistent with the State’s Framework for a Safer Economy, San Francisco is allowing certain businesses and other activities to reopen starting March 3, 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, 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 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 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. 2020-31c

**DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF
THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO REGARDING REQUIRED BEST
PRACTICES FOR INDOOR GYMS OR FITNESS CENTERS**

(PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTIVE)
DATE OF DIRECTIVE: March 2, 2021

By this Directive, the Health Officer of the City and County of San Francisco (the “Health Officer”) issues industry-specific direction that indoor gym or fitness centers, 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 Sections 4.e and 11 of Health Officer Order No. C19-07t issued on March 2, 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. Wednesday, March 3, 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, children, their families, and the community.



Health Officer Directive No. 2020-31c

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 and managers of indoor gyms or fitness centers operating under subsection 16 of Appendix C-1 of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order (“Indoor Gyms or Fitness Centers”).**
- 2. Attached as Exhibit A to this Directive is guidance from the Department of Public Health for Indoor Gyms or Fitness Centers (“Guidance”). All Indoor Gyms or Fitness Centers must comply with all applicable requirements listed in the Guidance.**
- 3. Each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center 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. Each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center must (a) make the Health and Safety Plan available upon request to all Personnel working on site and to the patrons, customers or members it serves, (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 online and at the entrance to any other physical location that the Indoor Gym or Fitness Center operates within the City. Also, each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center must provide a copy of the Health and Safety Plan and evidence of its implementation to any authority enforcing this Directive or the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order upon demand.**
- 5. Each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center subject to this Directive must provide items such as Face Coverings (as provided in Health 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 Indoor Gym or Fitness Center’s Personnel. If any Indoor Gym or Fitness Center is unable to provide these required items to Personnel or otherwise fails to comply with required Guidance, then it must cease operating until it can fully comply and demonstrate its strict compliance. Further, as to any non-compliant operation, any such Indoor Gym or Fitness Center is subject to immediate closure and the fines and other legal remedies described below, as a violation of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order.**
- 6. For purposes of this Directive, “Personnel” includes all of the following people who provide goods or services associated with the Indoor Gym or Fitness Center 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.**
- 7. This Directive 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 Indoor Gyms or Fitness Centers must stay updated regarding any changes to the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order and this Directive by checking the Department of Public Health website**



**City and County of
San Francisco**

**Department of Public Health
Health Officer Directive**

Health Officer Directive No. 2020-31c

(www.sfdph.org/healthorders; www.sfdph.org/directives) regularly.

8. **Implementation of this Directive augments—but does not limit—the obligations of each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center 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. Each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center 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 2, 2021



Interim Guidance: Gyms, and Fitness Centers (Indoor and Outdoor) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

UPDATED March 2, 2021

ALERT: Remain Cautious

In alignment with the State’s recommendations, San Francisco is reopening at the State’s Red Tier starting March 3, 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, 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**. 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 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, avoiding get-togethers and gatherings to the extent possible, if you must gather minimize the amount of time you spend with people you don't live, getting tested and isolating if you are ill, and 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 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.

AUDIENCE: Gyms and Fitness Centers operating indoors and/or outdoors, and their patrons. Patrons of Gyms and Fitness Centers should read this because it conveys the risks associated with indoor exercise versus outdoor exercise and relays best practices to help keep patrons and Personnel healthy and safe.

NOTICE: The following guidance was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) for use by Gym and Fitness Centers and will be posted at <http://www.sfdph.org/businesses>. 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**. Please see the associated changes in the **Business Capacities and Activities Table (BCAT)** at the top of this document: any changes made on the Table override the conflicting information in this document.

BACKGROUND: The Stay Safer at Home Health Order (C19-071) authorizes Outdoor Gyms and Fitness Centers and Indoor Gyms and Fitness Centers to operate. Outdoor and Indoor Gyms and Fitness Centers are required to adhere to these guidelines and must monitor forthcoming Health Orders and Directives which are posted at <https://www.sfdph.org/healthorders> and <https://sfdph.org/healthdirectives>.

Summary of Changes since the 1/27/2021 Version

- Minor format changes

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KEY POINTS

The number of people inside a gym is limited to the capacity listed in the Business Capacities and Activities Table (**BCAT**).

- No one under the age of 18 is permitted

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**.

Flu vaccines

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 patrons, visitors, etc.

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. This means that we do not know how common it is for a person who got the vaccine to carry the virus and transmit 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.sfcddp.org/quarantineaftervaccination

CA Notify – another way for us to stop the spread

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.

Additional Requirements for Gyms/Fitness Centers

Indoor activities with people outside of your household have a much higher risk of COVID-19 transmission to you and your community than outdoor activities. You must consider the impact of this increased risk on yourself and your community. Gyms and Fitness Centers are **strongly encouraged to prioritize and use outdoor space** whenever feasible and may use outdoor AND indoor space as conditions allow under the current Order.

Please see Indoor Risk During the COVID-19 Pandemic at <https://www.sfcddp.org/indoorkisk>

- Exercising increases rate and intensity of exhalation and the risk of viral transmission. For ANY activity that may increase breathing rate and/or intensity (including but not limited to cardio/aerobic activities or weight-lifting), facilities **must** ensure individuals are **at least 12 feet apart** from all others while engaging in those activities when **indoors** and at least six feet apart when outdoors. **The greater the space** between patrons who are breathing heavily, **the safer**.
- Maintain at least six feet distance for stationary activities that do not increase breathing rate or intensity, such as stretching, gentle yoga or meditation.

- Ensure everyone is wearing a face covering at all times except while hydrating with normal breathing intensity.
- Keep the space clean with **enhanced** disinfecting and sanitation procedures.

Fitness Centers and Gyms may be allowed to open with limitations (refer to the BCAT) and must adhere to the requirements relayed in this guidance. Gyms in locations such as apartment buildings, condominiums or offices may operate if they can be staffed to ensure adherence to all indoor gym protocols and comply with current restrictions listed in the Business Capacities and Activities Table.

PLANNING – Applicable to Outdoor and Indoor Establishments

Indoor and Outdoor Gyms and Fitness Facilities must fill out the applicable Health and Safety Plan outlining how the facility will implement the requirements in this guidance and any relevant Health Officer Directives or Orders. This plan must be shared with Personnel, patrons, and other members of the facility. Gyms and Fitness Facilities operating indoor and outdoor must complete and post a Health and Safety Plan for each space being utilized. Health and Safety Plans can be found at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-health-directives.asp#31>

- Post the Health and Safety Plan in a highly visible location for Personnel and patrons
- All mention of “Personnel” shall include but is not limited to salaried and hourly staff and independent vendors and contractors
- The Health and Safety Plan must also be posted on any gyms or fitness center’s public facing website.
- Prepare and post the Social Distancing Protocol (see Appendix A of the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order, posted at www.sfdph.org/healthorders). The Social Distancing Protocol must also be posted on any gym or fitness center’s public facing website.
- Designate a COVID-19 staff liaison to be the single on duty point of contact at each site for questions or concerns around practices, protocols, or potential exposure. This person will also serve as a liaison to SFDPH.
- Assign a **designated site safety monitor** to ensure patrons’ compliance with all aspects of the Health and Safety Plan and this guidance, such as wearing masks, **monitoring space capacity limits**, preventing congregation or crowding, and generally maintaining social distance. When the designated Site Safety Monitor is not on duty (off work, sick or on vacations), assign another staff member to ensure compliance.
- It is strongly recommended that a reservation system be established to manage capacity for gym access and high-use equipment. Facilities should determine in advance how they will monitor in real time the capacity inside the facility and the steps to be taken to make sure it is not exceeded.
- Equip the front desk area with Plexiglas or other impermeable barriers, if feasible, to minimize the interaction between reception workers and patrons.
- Implement virtual, touchless check-in tools, if possible, so that patrons do not have to utilize the reception space.
- Train staff on health and safety practices that must be followed. Share information on [COVID-19, how to prevent it from spreading](#), and which [underlying health conditions](#) may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.

- All Personnel must wear face coverings AT ALL TIMES while in the gym and/or fitness center. [See the Face Covering Health Order No. C19-12c.](#)
- All Personnel must be screened prior to entering the facility every day. See www.sfdcp.org/screening-handout.

All Personnel must maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from others who are not exercising and 12 feet from patrons performing any indoor activity that increase their breathing rate or intensity. Consider having all staff development meetings remotely by using electronic means, such as email and teleconferencing, to the extent possible.

Metering System - Enforce Capacity Limits

Implement a **Mandatory Metering System** to ensure maximum Capacity Levels specified in the Business Capacities and Activities Table are not exceeded.

- Develop and implement a written procedure to track the number of persons entering and exiting the facility to ensure at or below allowable capacity.
- Consider designating personnel to monitor store capacity.
- Consider increasing the number of on-premises staff to prevent crowding situations during busy seasons.

Indoor retail spaces within an indoor fitness center are **limited** to current use and **capacity limitations**. View **restrictions** in the **BCAT**. In addition, all protocols detailed in Health Officer Directive 2020-17 must be followed. Any indoor workspace such as offices or employee break rooms that are physically part of the facility and required to operate the facility may be used (if current restrictions allow) but must follow all protocols detailed in Health Officer Directive 2020-18. All office functions that can be done remotely must continue to be done so to the maximum extent possible. The number of workers counts towards the current capacity limit for the facility. View restrictions in the BCAT.

Personal care services, such as **massage therapy**, must follow all protocols detailed in Health Officer Directive No. 2020-30.

MANDATORY SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS

Indoor Gyms/Indoor Fitness Centers

Effective November 17, 2020, **all businesses operating indoors must:**

- Review the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) Ventilation Guidance at <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.
- Indoor Gyms and Fitness Centers must conspicuously post signage, including at all primary public entrances and break rooms, indicating which of the following ventilation systems are used at the facility:
 - 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>

- Post all applicable COVID-19 related signage to the establishment 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>. Industry specific signage for gyms and fitness centers can be found here: <https://sf.gov/resource/2020/reopening-guidance-gyms-and-fitness-centers>.
- Display a set of clearly visible rules for patrons and Personnel at the entrance that are to be a condition of entry. The rules must include instructions to wear facial coverings at all times except when hydrating; maintain 6 feet of distance, and at least 12 feet of distance from anyone exercising indoors; no eating; wash hands or use hand sanitizer; disinfect equipment; and to go home if you're sick. Whenever possible, these rules must also be available on the public facing website.
- Post signage in break rooms or other Personnel common areas informing Personnel they can confidentially report violations of health orders by calling 3-1-1.

FACE COVERINGS

Heavy breathing increases the risk of spreading and contracting the virus that causes COVID-19. Face coverings protect the wearer AND those around them and are critically important in Gyms and Fitness Centers.

Face masks and other cloth face coverings keep people from spreading the virus to others by trapping respiratory droplets before they can travel through the air. The most recent research shows that face coverings ALSO protect the wearer by reducing amount of virus that reaches the wearer and thus decreases the risk of severe illness in the wearer. Face coverings are one of the most important measures to protect Personnel and patrons from COVID-19.

All patrons **MUST wear face coverings AT ALL TIMES** while at the gym and/or fitness center except while hydrating with normal breathing. See the Face Covering Health Order No. C19-12c. Gyms must post signage reminding patrons that they must comply with the following rules. Sample signage is available at <https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19> .

- Heavy exertion. Patrons must avoid exerting themselves to the point where they may want to remove their face covering. They must be able to wear the face covering continuously while exercising and should be advised to check with their health care professional if they are unsure what activities they can safely participate in while continuously wearing a face covering.
- Hydration. Patrons should slow their breathing to a regular intensity before temporarily removing their face covering to hydrate and should then immediately replace their face covering, and wash or sanitize their hands if they touch their face.
- Eating. Eating is not allowed in the gym or fitness center because it provides additional time that patrons may remove their face covering which leaves those around them at higher risk.
- Replacing soiled face coverings. Recommend patrons bring a replacement face covering in case their face covering becomes wet or soiled. Patrons are only allowed to remove and replace their face covering outdoors and they should wash or sanitize their hands afterward.

Soiled face coverings should be disposed of in a lidded container or impermeable bag like a sealed/tied plastic bag.

- Face covering with vents are not permitted. The facility must indicate in their Health and Safety Plan how they will train Personnel to monitor and respond to patrons wearing face coverings with vents.

Consider providing face coverings for free or available to purchase for patrons.

Face covering quality signage must communicate the following

Best protection

- Surgical mask or multi-layered cloth mask
- If using multi-layered cloth mask it should be tightly woven or high thread count cotton or cotton blend
- Good fit – securely fits over nose, mouth, and under the chin

Good protection

- Single-layer cloth mask
- Double-layered neck gaiter

Not recommended

- Masks that are loosely woven/loosely knit, folded bandana, single-layer neck gator
- Unbreathable material such as plastic or leather
- Overly porous material such as nylon or fleece
- Poor fit – does not securely fit over nose, mouth, and under the chin

GOOD VENTILATION CAN REDUCE COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

The Role of Ventilation

All indoor gyms and fitness centers 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.sfdcp.org/COVID-ventilation>.

Ventilation is important to prevent transmission. Rooms or spaces which are known to have poor ventilation, such as squash courts, are prohibited. Indoor courts and fitness rooms can be utilized only for activities currently permitted in an indoor gym setting IF physical distancing requirements can be maintained at all times, face coverings are worn continuously, the room is not known to have poor ventilation, and listed as currently allowable in the **BCAT**. Each separate room must also adhere to currently allowed capacity and restrictions. Having poor ventilation in a shared space that is used for exercise, even if the exercise is non-aerobic, can substantially increase the risk of transmission.

- Outdoor Gyms may, subject to any applicable permit requirements, conduct their operations under a tent, canopy, or other sun or weather shelter, but only so long as not more than one side is closed, allowing sufficient outdoor air movement. Ventilation is key to mitigating the spread of COVID-19

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 program 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 COVID19 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.

Email Ventilation questions to: dph.doc.ventilation@sfdph.org

Contact Tracing

The San Francisco Department of Public Health, in partnership with community, including gyms and fitness centers, 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, patrons, 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 patrons willing to voluntarily provide their name and contact information for contact tracing purposes. Any lists should be discarded after three weeks. Patrons are not required to provide contact information.

If Personnel or a patron tests positive for COVID-19, the organization must assist the Department of Public Health in identifying other Personnel or patrons who may have been exposed.

Cover your face, test early, and trace! Find out more at <https://covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing>.

SETTING UP THE SPACE

The Guidance below must be followed for Indoor **AND** Outdoor facilities **except** for when clearly stated. Review the **BCAT** when preparing your space. Refer to this table frequently as it will be updated as we follow the State's [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#).

Physical Distancing

Physical exertion from exercising can increase exhalation rate and intensity, making physical distancing even more important to lower the risks of transmitting the virus that causes COVID-19.

- 12 feet is the minimum distance required around patrons performing any activity that increases breathing rate or intensity for indoor exercise and at least six feet of distance for outdoor exercise.
- Six feet is the minimum distance that is required between those who are not performing exercise that increases breathing rate or intensity.
- Whenever possible increase the distance.

- The maximum number of people, including Personnel and Patrons, allowed inside the indoor facility at any time is limited to the capacity listed in the **BCAT**, or the number that can maintain at least six feet of physical distance at all times AND 12 feet physical distance around exercising patrons, whichever is less.
- The capacity limit applies to discrete spaces within the facility. For example, a gym's 10% capacity for an entire facility may be 25 people, but 10% capacity for a smaller room or space within the gym may only be two or three people.

Physical Distancing for Outdoor Gyms and Fitness Center

Evaluate the outdoor space to determine the number of people (including patrons and Personnel) who may safely fit in the Outdoor Gym area.

- Patrons must maintain physical distancing of at least six feet from people outside their household at ALL TIMES AND 12 feet around patrons engaged in indoor exercise that increases breathing rate or intensity. Use signage, floor tape and/or directional guidance to help to ensure physical distancing as Personnel and patrons move around the space.
- Use signage and on-going monitoring to ensure that individual rooms and spaces within a facility and the outdoor space do not exceed their capacity.
- Arrange the space and/or develop processes to monitor and maintain required physical distancing at all times. Consider one or more of the methods below:
- Arrange equipment at least six feet apart (for example, for stretching) or 12 feet apart (for example for stationary bike usage) where required by indoor activity.
- Arrange equipment in an "X" pattern to provide greater distancing.
- Block off every other machine or move equipment so that they are farther apart.
- Develop a monitoring plan for which machines are in use at any time to maintain 12 feet of distance where needed for indoor establishments and six feet for outdoor establishments. Implement a reservation or sign up system for individual machines.
- Physical barriers can be helpful to minimize exposure between patrons and Personnel or to segregate exercise areas but should not significantly block overall airflow in the space.

Outdoor Gyms Regulations

Outdoor gyms must address potential hazards and comply with state and local laws, regulations and permitting requirements.

- For more information about setting up your outdoor space please visit San Francisco's Shared Spaces Program at <https://sf.gov/shared-spaces>.
- Outdoor Gyms must be in compliance with the [Cal/OSHA Guide to Electrical Safety](#) and the [Cal/OSHA standards for heat illness prevention](#).
- Patrons may engage in self-directed fitness. For example, patrons may individually use free weights or other fitness equipment. Patron pathways to and from equipment must allow required physical distance be maintained at all times (for example, 12 feet of distance is required for a pathway that passes a cardio machine indoors and six feet for outdoors).

- One-On-One Personal Training is allowed when at least six feet of physical distancing can be maintained, or 12 feet if any indoor activity that increases breathing rate or intensity is performed. View current restrictions in the **BCAT**.
- Patrons are not permitted to engage in activities that require others to be within 6 feet for safety reasons or otherwise, such as spotting while lifting weights.

Activity and Space Considerations

Self-directed fitness

For patrons using self-directed fitness equipment (excluding climbing walls which are subject to separate cleaning requirements, above), disinfectant spray and wipes must be conveniently located and available for patrons to wipe off equipment between usage by patrons (see Sanitizing and Disinfecting section, below). Take steps to ensure that another patron does not begin using self-directed fitness equipment before it has been disinfected. Personnel should monitor compliance with disinfecting self-directed fitness equipment and the availability of disinfecting supplies. Patrons and Personnel should be provided information, by signage or other means, about how to inform the facility's designated COVID-19 monitor of safety concerns in real time.

Climbing Walls

Climbing Walls may be permitted with additional requirements listed below. View current restrictions in the **BCAT**.

- Patrons must wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol before and after each climb (Patrons do not have to wash or disinfect hands when repeating a climb if no one outside of their Household used the same holds or equipment between climbs)
- Climbing walls must be separated by tape or other visual cues so climbers stay in their "lanes" and maintain required six feet of distance
- No shared chalk
- Renting equipment to patrons is allowed. All equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between each use with procedures effective against the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in accordance with the guidelines found in Section 5 of Appendix C-1 of the latest update to the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order ([Health Order C19-07](#)), which may be modified by the Health Officer as new information becomes available
- Encourage climbers to limit their climbing partners to a select few
- Highly recommend belay partners or spotters wear eye protection and encourage facilities to provide and sanitize between use. Small businesses can request free PPE from the City. See this link for more information: <https://oewd.org/free-ppe-available> Sanitize climbing walls as often as feasible.

Group Classes

Group cardio/aerobic fitness classes (such as spinning, kickboxing, etc.) are not permitted at this time. View current restrictions in the **BCAT**. High contact activities that require close contact of less than six feet in distance are not allowed unless otherwise permitted under the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order. This

would include activities such as group sporting events, organized intermural activities, pick-up basketball, handball, or organized races.

Amenities

- Locker rooms, benches, lockers, showers, saunas, steam rooms and other amenities must remain closed at this time. Patrons may access a locker room only to access a restroom. Please refer to the [BCAT](#) for current capacity limitation in indoor gyms. Businesses are encouraged to monitor use of restrooms by either requiring a key to access or stationing a restroom/locker room attendant nearby.
- Childcare spaces, indoor playgrounds, and/or sensory walls/stations/tables. Access to these areas are subject to posted limitations in **BCAT**.
- Closed areas/amenities must be made inaccessible to patrons by locking doors or using tape or other barriers to block off the area. At the entrance to each closed area and on each closed amenity, signage must be posted telling patrons that the area/amenity is off-limits.
- Gyms and fitness studios are encouraged to **set aside spaces or times** for use by **community members** who are **vulnerable** to poor health outcomes from COVID-19.
- Wherever possible, install **touchless**, automatic water dispensers for use with personal, reusable water bottles or single-use, disposable paper cups. Display signage reminding Personnel and patrons that the bottle or cups should not touch the water dispenser. If a touchless water dispenser is not feasible, remind workers and patrons to wash their hands or use proper hand sanitizer before and after touching the water release button on drinking fountains.

HEALTH SCREENINGS OF PATRONS

- Facilities must screen all patrons entering the indoor and/or outdoor facility with the questions about COVID-19 symptoms and exposure to COVID-19. Facilities must ask the questions and relay the information found at: <https://www.sfcddcp.org/screeningvisitors>

Facilities **must exclude** those who answer **yes to any of the questions** on the above form.

SANITIZING AND DISINFECTING

Gyms and Fitness Centers must develop a plan and implement sanitation requirements that exceed standard industry requirements. Protocols should include but are not limited to the following:

- All Personnel and patrons must **wash** or **sanitize** their **hands** upon entering the indoor and/or outdoor facility. Patrons must wash or sanitize their hands between before and after use of shared equipment.
- Facilities **must provide** a washing station, hand sanitizer, or sanitizing wipes for patrons and Personnel.
- Require Personnel to **regularly clean** and **disinfect high touch areas** and surfaces, such as **doorknobs, handles, rails, light switches, restrooms, sinks, toilets, benches, front desk areas, keyboards, computers, phones, fitness machines, gear, accessories, sanitation stations**, and other equipment throughout the day following CDC guidelines found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

- Require **patrons** to **disinfect** any **fitness machine**, accessories, or other **equipment** before and after each use. Post signage to remind patrons of this requirement (climbing walls exempted). Make disinfectant spray and wipes available for patrons at convenient locations. Ensure that lined, non-touch trash receptacles are available.
- If a patron is unable to wipe/disinfect equipment after exercise, provide “**Ready to Clean**” tags for members to place on equipment after use to alert Personnel that the equipment must be sanitized before the next patron may use the equipment.
- Take steps to ensure that another patron does not begin using self-directed fitness equipment before it has been disinfected. **Personnel** should **monitor** compliance with disinfecting self-directed fitness equipment and the availability of disinfecting supplies. Patrons and Personnel should be provided information, by signage or other means, about how to inform the facility’s designated COVID-19 monitor of safety concerns in real time.
- Disinfecting products must be approved for use against COVID-19. An approved list can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if someone at my Gym or Fitness Center tests positive for COVID-19?

People may be able to transmit the virus 48 hours before they develop symptoms of COVID-19. Some people never develop symptoms and can still transmit the virus. See SFDPH guidance on [What to do if Someone at the Workplace Has COVID-19](#) which can be found at: www.sfdcp.org/covid19-positive-workplace.

Some of our patrons use gloves for weightlifting and other exercise activities. Are they allowed?

Patrons may wear their gloves while working out but should be reminded about disinfecting and hand washing. Gloves do not replace disinfecting, hand washing or other sanitizing protocols.

What about towels?

Encourage guests to bring their own towels. If your establishment decides to provide towel service, used towels will need to be stored in a lidded container. Launder items according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely. Towels, whether provided by the establishment or brought by the guests, do not replace the requirement to disinfect fitness machines, accessories, or other equipment used by the patrons.

Should we encourage the use of face shields?

Highly recommended for belay partners and spotters using climbing walls. There is currently no recommendation that the general public wear eye protection for most day to day activities. However, your eyes can theoretically be a route of infection for COVID-19. A face shield or goggles (but not regular glasses) could provide protection against these types of exposures. Therefore, individuals, particularly those at high risk of exposure or serious disease from COVID, may decide to wear eye protection in addition to face covering as an extra layer of protection against acquiring COVID-19 infection.

RESOURCES

Stay informed. Information is changing rapidly. Useful resources can be found at:

- San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFPDH)
<https://www.sfgdcp.org/covid19>
- Printable resources from SF.GOV for businesses, Including signage
<https://sf.gov/outreach-toolkit-coronavirus-covid-19>
- California Blueprint for a Safer Economy issued by the State of California
<https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/#reopening-data>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Industry Guidance for Fitness Facilities
<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness.pdf>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
List of Guidance documents (searchable)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance-list.html>
Using Gyms, Fitness Centers, or Studios
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/personal-social-activities.html#gyms>

Health Officer Directive No. 2020-31c (Exhibit B) Health and Safety Plan (issued 3/2/21)

Each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center 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:

Email / telephone:

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

- Prepared and posted onsite and online the Social Distancing Protocol (see Appendix A of the Shelter in Place Health Order, posted at www.sfdph.org/healthorders)
- Designated a COVID-19 staff liaison to be the single on duty point of contact at each site for questions or concerns around practices, protocols, or potential exposure. This person will also serve as a liaison to SFPDPH. More than one staff member may be designated to cover various shifts or blocks of time.

Name(s): _____

- Trained staff on health and safety practices that must be followed.
- Personnel screened prior to entering the facility every day. See <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/C19-07-Personnel-Screening-Attachment-A-1.pdf>.
- Completed any required adjustments and plans (including layout of the business, posted signage, and developing compliance monitoring plans) to ensure proper physical distancing and maintenance of 10% capacity limits. Please note **six feet** is the **minimum distance** that is required **between everyone** in the facility, and **12 feet** is required around anyone performing activities that increase breathing rate or intensity.
- Completed any necessary adjustments to the business to clarify unpermitted spaces and activities, including (1) posting all signage required by the Stay-Safer-At-Home Order and Health Officer Directive 2020-31c including signage regarding which ventilation system the Indoor Gym is using and (2) removing, taping off, or blocking unpermitted spaces. See Guidance for Indoor Gyms and Fitness Centers available at www.sfcddcp.org/businesses for a list of unpermitted spaces and activities and required signage.
- Review <https://www.sfcddcp.org/COVID-ventilation> and implement all appropriate ventilation best practices in the facility.
- Plumbing is functioning and, if the facility was dormant, then the pipes are flushed.
- Require patrons to wear a Face Covering at all times except when hydrating with normal breathing intensity. Personnel are required to wear Face Coverings according to the [Face Covering Health Order No. C19-12d](#).
- Trained Personnel in the requirements of the Health Officer Directive 2020-31c and attached DPH guidance and this Health and Safety Plan (HSP), including their obligation to monitor patron compliance with Face Covering requirements.

Health Officer Directive No. 2020-31c (Exhibit B) Health and Safety Plan (issued 3/2/21)

Each Indoor Gym or Fitness Center must complete, post onsite, and follow this Health and Safety Plan.

- Ensure daily COVID-19 symptom self-verifications are completed for all Personnel as required by the Social Distancing Protocol. Ensure that all Patrons complete COVID-19 screening before entering the gym or fitness center space. Anyone who answers “yes” to a screening question must be prevented from entry. See <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/C19-07-Non-Personnel-Screening-Attachment-A-2.pdf>.
- Provide hand washing stations or hand sanitizer at convenient locations throughout the gym or fitness center space.
- Implement all sanitization requirements as described in the Guidance for Indoor Gyms and Fitness Centers available at www.sfdph.org/directives, including requirement that patrons clean equipment before and after use.
- Personnel and patrons have access to cleaning supplies so that they can clean surfaces as required.
- High touch surfaces in common areas are cleaned and disinfected routinely throughout the day.

Additional Measures: