



FAQs related to Phase 1 reopening of Yuba-Sutter

--What's different with this Order?

LOWER RISK businesses will be allowed to open with appropriate modifications. Lower risk businesses are those deemed to have low-medium risk for contact intensity and number of contacts.

Facial coverings are required to be worn when social distancing is not achievable around people who are not part of your immediate household.

Social gatherings are limited to 10 people or fewer. Social distancing remains key in this plan, so if these groups of 10 or fewer cannot easily maintain a distance of 6 feet or less between all persons at all times, they shall wear a facial covering.

--How are businesses or activities determined to be lower risk?

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, an affiliation of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, published guidance on April 17 for state and local officials to consider when phasing in a reopening of the economy. The Johns Hopkins guidance tabulates business categories based on low, medium, and high risk—based on how many clients and staff would operate, for how long, and the physical proximity these people would share.

The guidance is published in the document “Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening During COVID-19: Guidance for Governors,” and can be found at this link:

<https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/publications/public-health-principles-for-a-phased-reopening-during-covid-19-guidance-for-governors>

--What happened to “essential” vs. “non-essential” activities?

Those terms remain under the governor’s order, but the local order gets rid of the false dichotomy of “essential” vs. “non-essential” and relies instead on risk-based assessments in accordance with the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security’s guidance.

--What else from the Order is notable?

Higher-risk individuals—those 65 years and older, and/or those who have chronic medical conditions – must remain home except to seek medical care, nutrition, recreation, or work. During such essential outings, these individuals should also adhere to protocols such as facial coverings, social distancing and good hand hygiene.

For those needing food delivery, please call 749-7700 on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. For urgent food needs, call the COVID-19 Relief Task Force between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 645-2003.

--What lower risk businesses can operate with appropriate modifications?

Restaurants, retailers, shopping malls, gyms/fitness studios, salons/spas/tattoo parlors are among those allowed to operate. In addition, libraries, playgrounds, athletic fields/non-contact school sports, parks, walking paths, trails, and dog parks may operate.

These modifications include limiting the number of people who can enter a facility at one time to ensure 6 feet of distance is maintained, providing hand sanitizer or soap at or near the entrance of the facility, regularly disinfecting high-touch surfaces, and posted signage on protocol. Failure to comply may lead to closure of non-compliant businesses or organizations.

Certain businesses will be required to adhere to specific duration of close contact service. Read modifications in full in the order.

--What businesses will not be opening during this first phase?

HIGHER RISK businesses shall remain closed. Johns Hopkins defines high-risk settings as traditionally providing an extended duration of interaction, socially interactive by nature and characterized by large gatherings, religious ceremonies, etc. Regardless of modifications, these businesses function on close proximity between clients and providers for prolonged periods.

Businesses that shall remain closed through the first phase of this re-opening include:

- Bars and nightclubs that do not provide food for takeout or delivery
- Movie theaters, bowling alleys, arcades and live performance venues
- Any mass gathering, whether it be: religious, business, political, entertainment or sports-related
- Door-to-door solicitations
- Outdoor and indoor large venues (concerts, sports)
- Schools
- Community centers
- Beaches/piers
- Summer camps, residence halls and other overnight programs

--The Order says beaches and piers should stay closed for this first phase. Can I go to the river?

Riverbanks and boating docks will be opened. Dedicated beach areas will remain closed.

--Why can't you just open everything up at once? Yuba-Sutter has a low case count.

Decisions on re-opening the community are guided by scientific evidence to allow for minimizing the exposure to COVID-19. With no vaccine currently available, the majority of the population will continue to lack immunity to the virus and are at high risk for infection leading to illness and possibly death. We know that the virus is highly contagious, even among carriers with no symptoms.

This order allows for some sense of normalcy to take a first step, but it remains imperative that people's movements are restricted as much as possible to allow for necessary work, sustenance and recreation to maintain physical, mental and economic health.

--When can we expect phase two of this plan, and more businesses to open?

The Health Officer and bi-county Emergency Operations Center, and Department Operations Center will continue to assess the fluid and ever-evolving situation to ensure there are no localized outbreaks that could overwhelm our fragile healthcare system and endanger residents. The Health Officer may issue additional orders and/or review and amend this order as needed to minimize the impact of COVID-19.

--People aren't following the Order anyway. What will the counties do for non-compliance?

As residents of the state of California, we remain under the state's "stay at home" order.

If business owners choose to re-open, there is risk involved from the state. But we are providing common-sense, evidence-based guidance that will minimize exposure to COVID-19. We know that without a vaccine, this virus will be with us for some time.

This is a time for personal responsibility in minimizing our movements and physical interactions. It is up to all of us to show respect for each other's health and safety by adhering to guidance on facial coverings, social distancing, small group gatherings, and good hand hygiene.

What did Dr. Luu base her Order off of?

Bi-County Health Officer Dr. Luu looked to the science evidence to allow for reduction of COVID-19 exposure to each person.

Why does the number of people, proximity, and duration matter? Because in the event of a localized outbreak, each positive case currently has an average of 10 contacts—people with whom they share a home, or with who they recently had close interaction. As more businesses and small gatherings are allowed, the number of contacts will grow.

The goal is to minimize the number of people individuals who may be exposed to the virus unwittingly, in order to keep people from getting sick, and to keep our fragile healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed.

When will this new Order expire? When will more businesses be allowed to open?

This Order becomes effective at 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 4, 2020 and will continue until it is rescinded, superseded or amended by the Health Officer.

The situation is fluid and depends on how well residents follow the Order in keeping themselves and other healthy.