

County of Santa Clara

Department of Environmental Health

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March 17, 2020

NOTICE OF MARCH 16, 2020 COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER AND ITS EFFECT ON FOOD FACILITIES

Dear Permit Holder:

On March 16, 2020, the Santa Clara County Health Officer issued the attached mandatory legal order (“Order”) directing all individuals living in the County to shelter at their place of residence and to self-isolate to the maximum extent feasible. This Order is necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19 in this region. This Order is in effect from 12:01 am on March 17, 2020 through 11:59 pm on April 7, 2020. This Order supersedes the March 13, 2020 Health Officer Order imposing moratoriums on certain gatherings. Identical orders are in effect across the six most populous counties in the Bay Area, including in Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Contra Costa, and Alameda Counties and the City of Berkeley.

How Does the Order Affect Food Facilities and Their Workers?

The intent of the Order is to ensure that, during the shelter-in-place period, individuals can continue to access essential goods and services, including groceries, prepared foods, and household consumer products, and to engage in essential activities. The Order thus contains the following exemptions and provisions, among others, which may apply to your facility:

- Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and similar food retail establishments are encouraged to remain open to provide food and pet supplies to the public. This includes stores that sell groceries as well as non-grocery products, such as cleaning and personal care products.
- Restaurants, bars, cafes, mobile food facilities, and other establishments that prepare and serve food to the public are prohibited from operating except for the purposes of preparing meals and providing them to customers via delivery and carry out only. We encourage these facilities to stay open for carry out and delivery service. Patrons and delivery services may visit these establishments to pick up and take away meals. But dining in or around the food facility is prohibited.
- Schools, soup kitchens, food banks, and other charitable feeding entities that provide free or reduced priced food goods or meals to students or other members of the public are encouraged to remain open to continue providing these critical services. However, food

Board of Supervisors: Cindy Chavez, Mike Wasserman, Dave Cortese, Susan Ellenberg, S. Joseph Simitian
County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

provided by these establishments to the public may not be eaten on the premises but must instead be delivered or taken away for consumption.

These and other essential businesses must comply with social distancing requirements specified in the Order and described below to the maximum extent feasible.

The Order also contains exemptions to facilitate the continued operation of these facilities and protect their supply chains. Among them, the Order allows for the continuation of food cultivation activities, including farming, livestock, and fishing. It allows for the continued operation of businesses that supply other essential businesses, such as food retailers and restaurants, with the support or supplies necessary to operate, and it allows businesses to continue shipping or delivering groceries, foods, and other goods to residences. Employment of in-home care providers for children and operation of certain daycare facilities is permitted as necessary to facilitate the functioning of food retailers and other essential businesses. Employees may travel as necessary, including by public transit, to perform their work for food retailers and other essential businesses, and members of the public may leave their residences to buy food, meals, and other supplies.

How Can You Help?

Serve the Public

Ensuring that the public has access to secure and healthy food, meals, and nutrition is especially critical during this time of mandatory self-isolation and increased health threat. The County urges food retailers to remain open and continue doing your critical work to meet nutritional needs in the County. This includes establishments that serve free and reduced-price food and meals to vulnerable members of the public, who may face a heightened risk of food scarcity during this period.

Inform your patrons that you will remain open to prevent hoarding behavior.

Protect the Public

To the maximum extent feasible, adhere to Social Distancing Requirements specified in the Order and additional guidance in the attached *COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Measures for Food Facilities* to maintain sanitation and hygiene and prevent the transmission of COVID-19 among employees and patrons.

To implement social distancing requirements, you should:

- Strive to maintain at least six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public, including when any customers are standing in line. Consider rearranging your venue to facilitate social distancing.
- Require employees to wash their hands as frequently as possible with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Require employees to cover coughs and sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands)

- Regularly clean and sanitize high-touch surfaces. These may include food preparation surfaces, door knobs, touch screens, cash registers, faucet handles, cabinet/drawer pulls, menus, and other items and surfaces frequently touched by patrons or employees.
- Instruct employees not to shake hands.

Additional risk mitigation measures include:

- Instruct employees experiencing any fever and respiratory symptoms to stay home for at least 3 days after they are symptom-free. Maximize flexibility in use of sick leave to facilitate such time off.
- Minimize bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food.
- Instruct employees to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth and to minimize touching phones or other personal items.
- Provide hand sanitizer for patrons.

See the attached *COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Measures for Food Facilities* for additional details.

Stay Up To Date

This Order may be modified or extended and others may be issued. For up to date COVID-19 information and mandates, visit the SCC Public Health Department website at <http://sccphd.org/coronavirus>. Please send specific questions related to food service operations to dehweb@cep.sccgov.org. For additional updates, follow us on Facebook at @cepascc and @sccpublichealth.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Respectfully,



George Han, MD, MPH
Deputy Health Officer
Public Health Department



Michael Balliet, CHMM, REHS, REPA
Director
Department of Environmental Health

enclosure: COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Measures for Food Facilities
March 16, 2020 County Health Officer Order to Shelter in Place -
Available at <http://sccphd.org/coronavirus>