KCMO Reopens FAQ

This FAQ goes into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, May 31, 2020. View the current FAQ.

Why is the city still under an emergency order?
COVID-19 is present throughout the greater Kansas City region and continues to spread throughout our community. Because of this sustained transmission, it is necessary to continue these efforts to protect the health and safety of all Kansas City residents. The latest version of Mayor Lucas's emergency order allows for certain business activities to resume while ensuring necessary public health measures remain in place.

When will the new emergency order take effect and how long will it be in place?
The updated order will take effect at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, May 31, 2020, and will remain in effect until at least Sunday, July 5, 2020. The order will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and may be modified as circumstances change, based on guidance from public health officials and other medical experts.

What has changed from the previous version of the emergency order?
Beginning Sunday, May 31, businesses are now subject to a 50 percent occupancy limit (as opposed to the 10/10% occupancy limit previously in place).

There is no longer a distinction between an essential and non-essential business. All business operations are allowed, provided they limit the number of occupants allowed to no more than 50 percent of building occupancy and ensure customers and staff maintain at least six feet of social distancing.

Businesses that are generally open to the public where social distancing cannot be maintained at all times (such as salons, restaurants, bars, and taverns) must maintain six feet of distance between areas of service – such as tables, booths, or chairs – and must require all service providers to wear masks while providing services.

Gatherings, such as religious services, weddings, funerals, lectures, and performances, are limited to 50 percent of listed occupancy, provided social distancing is maintained.

Are religious and non-religious social gatherings allowed?
Gatherings – including, but not limited to, religious services, weddings, funerals, lectures, and performances, of 50 percent of building occupancy may resume, provided social distancing is maintained.

Event organizers should consider maintaining a record of customers who are seated on the premises or in contact with stationary furniture, fixtures, or other equipment at a facility for a period of longer than ten (10) minutes. Attendees are not required to provide their names or contact information at any gathering. Providing contact information will help enable faster notification should someone be exposed to COVID-19 at an event. All data will remain confidential and will be used only to address public health concerns and to contact individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Why should businesses consider maintaining customer records?
One of the primary means for transmission of COVID-19 is in-person interactions that last more than a few minutes. While not required, by recording customer names, businesses will enable the Kansas City Health Department to more quickly trace, test,
and isolate individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 if an employee or customer had the virus at the time they frequented the business. **All data will remain confidential and will be used only to address public health concerns and contact individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.**

**How long should businesses keep records?**
A minimum of 30 days. All data will remain confidential and will be used only to address public health concerns and to contact individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

**What are additional guidelines restaurants, taverns, and bars should follow to ensure safety?**

- Patrons who are exhibiting symptoms should not be allowed to dine.
- Employees who are exhibiting symptoms shall not be allowed to work.
- All patrons are to be seated while eating and/or drinking. Six-foot distancing shall be maintained between tables, except when bench seating is fixed, and six-foot social distancing shall be maintained between different parties, as measured from back of chair to back of chair. This includes booths, which may necessitate closing off every other booth space in certain layouts.
- Buffet style food service is not permitted. In addition, all self-service food operations are not permitted.
- All employees are required to wear protective face coverings when in all areas open to the public.
- All dining surfaces, including tables, chairs and highchairs must be cleaned and sanitized between customers.
- Cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces like doors, door handles, service counters, restrooms and waiting areas must be completed at a minimum of every 90 minutes.
- Patio and outside dining service is allowed with social distancing of six feet between parties; however, no food preparation may take place outside the City-permitted kitchen.
- Restaurants must adhere to all requirements set forth in the Kansas City Missouri Food Code, including handwashing frequency, employee health guidelines and proper sanitization of surfaces.
- Restaurants are encouraged to continue carry-out, delivery and drive-thru services if feasible, to minimize contact among people.
- Restaurants are strongly encouraged to maintain a log of all customers who spend more than 10 minutes seated at the establishment. Logs are to be kept for 30 days at the establishment before discarding/deleting. Log records will be kept confidential and will only be used to aid efforts to notify customers and staff about potential COVID-19 exposure.
- Patrons of restaurants are encouraged to wear protective face coverings while in the restaurant unless seated at a table.
- Single-service menus that can be thrown away after one use are encouraged, but if cost-prohibitive, all menus are to be cleaned and sanitized between every customer.

**What are general guidelines businesses can follow to keep employees and customers safe?**

- **Require all employees and customers to wear masks or other face coverings.**
- Allow employees to maintain at least six feet of distance from each other and customers as much as feasible.
- Implement sick leave policies which allow any employee who shows any signs of COVID-19 infection (fever, cough, shortness of breath) to remain home until at least 3 days after symptoms have abated.
- Send home any employee who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms while at work.
- Provide easily accessible hand sanitizer for employees and customers. • Encourage employees to regularly wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds.
- Regularly disinfect commonly used surfaces such as door handles, counters, and payment terminals.
- Limit cash exchanges.

The Mid-America Regional Council has produced a guide to help businesses plan for returning to work safely. Additional information on protecting businesses and employees is available on the CDC website.

**What are the penalties for non-compliance of this order?**
Violations of any provision of this order constitutes an imminent threat, creates an immediate menace to public health, and shall be considered a violation of Section 50-155 of the City’s Code of Ordinances. These can include fines, orders to suspend business operations, and other penalties.

**How will this emergency order be enforced?**
The order will be primarily enforced by the Health Department, with support from other city regulatory agencies such as the Kansas City Police and Fire Departments and the City’s Regulated Industries Division. If your business is informed that it must shut down by someone who claims to represent the city but does not have credentials identifying them as such, please contact the police department.

**Must all employees report to work?**
No, employers should reasonably accommodate employees that have underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of COVID-19 and/or need to care for a minor or sick family member.

The City strongly encourages all employers to continue to allow individuals to work from home to the extent feasible, and to make accommodations for individuals at high risk for serious complications from COVID-19.

If you are being forced to work in conditions without appropriate PPE, please contact the Health Department’s Environmental Health Division through email or calling 816-513-6315.

**Can public facing businesses refuse service to customers who are not wearing masks?**
The Health Department strongly recommends businesses which require close customer/employee interaction to refuse service to customers who do not wear masks. All businesses can refuse entry and service to customers who are not wearing masks.

**I do not wish to operate my business or wish to impose more strict regulations around occupancy. Can I do so?**
Decisions about re-opening are up to individual business operators, and the City cannot compel any business to reopen. Business operators are welcome to impose additional regulations to keep employees and staff safe, such as requiring customers to wear masks or limiting the number of individuals allowed in an establishment.

**I’m worried that there are clearly sick individuals at a workplace or other location. How can I report this?**
Please contact the Health Department’s Environmental Health Division through email or calling 816-513-6315.

**Are businesses in the Clay or Platte County portions of Kansas City subject to this order? What about businesses in Kansas or other parts of the region that aren’t in Kansas City?**
The entirety of the City of Kansas City –including parts of the city in Platte and Clay Counties—is subject to this order.
Individuals and businesses in jurisdictions outside of Kansas City will need to contact their officials for clarifications about regulations in their communities.

**I live in Kansas City but work in a neighboring city or county. Which guidelines should I follow?**
Guidelines are determined by the geographic location of your place of employment. If you work outside of Kansas City, the rules governing the place of your employment will be determined by that jurisdiction. Similarly, individuals who live outside of Kansas City but work or operate businesses inside Kansas City must follow city regulations for their businesses and places of employment.

**Can education, youth activities, and childcare facilities resume operations?**
Yes, education, youth activities, and child-care operations can operate, subject to the following guidelines:

1. Education, youth activities, and childcare should be carried out in stable groups, preferably with 10 or fewer (“stable” means that the same 10 or fewer children are in the same group each day);
2. Children should not change from one group to another;
3. If more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group should be in a separate room. Groups should not mix with each other;
4. Childcare providers should remain solely with one group of children;
5. Youth activities shall endeavor to maintain social distancing between and among staff and youth to the extent feasible.

**Will parks and other outdoor recreational facilities be open?**
City parks and outdoor recreational facilities remain open, provided users follow social distancing guidelines. While community centers remain closed for the time being, the Health Department has released guidance for privately operated swimming pools and aquatic facilities.

Due to ongoing health concerns, KC Parks has decided it will not open any of the 14 Pools or 14 spray grounds this season. After much deliberation and consultation with the City’s Health Department, KC Parks feels this is the best decision for our community. KC Parks has reopened dog parks, shelter reservations and tennis / pickleball courts with distancing guidelines, and our 221 parks, miles of trails and golf courses remain open as well.

**My business and/or my job has been impacted by COVID-19. Where can I go to get help?**
KCMO.gov/coronavirus includes information on both health/safety and financial resources for businesses and employees. The City, local philanthropies, and faith-based organizations are actively working on additional support measures and will share more information as it becomes available.

If you are an individual needing resources now, please contact United Way 211 by dialing 211 to reach trained, caring professionals seven days a week, 24 hours a day, or visit 211kc.org.

**When will this order be updated?**
The City will continue to monitor health indicators to evaluate when to further relax these restrictions. These indicators include:

- Sustained declines in the average number of new daily reported cases, both in Kansas City and across the broader metropolitan region;
• Hospital utilization and ICU availability;
• Testing capacity;
• The ability to trace, test, and isolate individuals who are potentially exposed to the virus, also known as contact tracing.

The general framework the City will use to make decisions about how and when to relax these orders further is still under development. The City expects to move through several “phases” of reopening, and restrictions will gradually be more relaxed at each phase. This framework will be based on local trends, national best practices, and lessons learned from other jurisdictions.

It is important to note that the City does not have a specific timeframe for when to begin the next phase of reopening, as that decision will be made based on the above indicators and the guidance of public health professionals.

**I have a question that isn’t covered by this FAQ. How can I get an answer?**

We encourage everyone to review the Order in its entirety. If that does not resolve your question, please contact the City’s 311 service.