



# The State of ALASKA COVID-19 Health Mandate

## COVID-19 Health Mandate FAQs

### Health Mandate 011: Social-Distancing & Health Mandate 012: Intrastate Travel

COVID-19 infections are continuing to spread across the country and Alaska. In an effort to slow the spread of the virus and prevent our health care system from being overwhelmed, Alaska is taking steps now.

#### ***Why are the mandates so important?***

The goal is to prevent the spread of COVID-19 which can cause severe illness and death.

#### ***Who enforces the mandates? Can I get a ticket if I'm out for non-essential reasons?***

State and local law enforcement will enforce. However, the focus will be on education, not enforcement. Law enforcement officials will be responding to complaints and educating the public when they notice obvious violations that jeopardize the safety of individuals or the community.

#### ***What if someone isn't complying with the mandates?***

Alaskans are expected to comply with all mandates. These measures have been put in place to flatten the COVID-19 curve and protect the health of all Alaskans. Alaskans who disregard the mandates are putting themselves and their communities at risk. If you feel like you need to report non-compliance, send an email to [investigations@alaska.gov](mailto:investigations@alaska.gov)

#### ***Can the mandates be changed?***

Yes. As the situation changes and more information is available, the governor and public health officials can issue new orders and directives as needed.

## Health Mandate 011: Statewide Social-Distancing

#### ***What is the purpose of mandate 11?***

This mandate's purpose is to restrict the movement of individuals within the State of Alaska in order to prevent, slow and otherwise disrupt the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

#### ***How long does mandate 11 last?***

The social distancing mandate goes into effect at **5 p.m. on March 28, 2020** and remains in effect until the Governor of Alaska rescinds or modifies the order. It will be reevaluated by April 11.

### ***What does mandate 11 say?***

All persons in Alaska, except for those engaged in essential health care services, public government services, and essential business activities, are mandated to remain at their place of residence and practice social distancing. Read the full mandate online at <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>

### ***How do I keep from getting the virus?***

The science is definitive that maintaining six feet or more from other people will greatly diminish your risk of getting the virus. This, and washing your hands, not touching your face, and wiping down surfaces are the best public health guidance about preventing the spread of this virus. Since there are no current vaccination or antiviral treatments, the primary goal is to prevent getting the virus in the first place. Standing six feet away or more from others is the best way to do this.

### ***Should I wear a mask?***

A mask will not necessarily prevent you from catching the virus, however, it will limit YOU from spreading the virus if you are infected, and reduce the projection of a sneeze or cough below six feet.

### ***Does this mandate apply if I don't have any symptoms?***

Yes. This mandate applies to every person (unless specifically exempted), whether or not they have symptoms. It is designed to prevent further community spread of the virus, which has shown to be transmittable from individuals who have no symptoms.

### ***Do immediate family members need to maintain six feet from each other?***

No, immediate family members may still be closer than six feet. However, it's important to know that COVID-19 can quickly pass between family members so it's wise to wash your hands often, especially if someone has left the house on an essential errand. Anyone who is ill and self-isolating at home should be also isolated from family members as much as possible.

### ***Does this change the "10 person" gathering rule?***

No. Gatherings of 10 people or more are still prohibited. When in public you must maintain a distance of six feet or more from other members of the public.

### ***Do I need a permit to move around?***

No. When outside you must maintain a distance of six feet or more from other members of the public.

### ***Can older people leave the house on essential errands?***

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that older adults, age 64 and older, and those with underlying health conditions not leave home at all, even to run errands. The State of Alaska recommends that these more vulnerable populations order food or necessary items using available services from stores and restaurants, or ask for help from a relative, friend or neighbor. For the safety of everyone, stay home.

### ***Can I leave home to care for my elderly parents or friends? Or a family member or friend who has disabilities?***

Yes. Be sure to follow social distancing guidelines to protect them and you. If you are sick with any respiratory illness, stay home and find someone else to help care for them.

***Can I visit loved ones in the hospital, nursing home, skilled nursing facility, or other residential care facility?***

No. This is difficult but necessary to protect facility staff and other patients. There are limited exceptions, such as if you are going to the hospital with someone younger than 18 or who is developmentally disabled and needs assistance. For most other situations, the order prohibits visitation to these kinds of facilities except at the end-of-life.

***What about persons experiencing homelessness?***

This population is exempt from this stay home order, and local communities and nonprofits are working to find appropriate accommodations for our homeless population during this time.

***Can I get groceries?***

Yes, grocery stores remain open but you must maintain six feet of social distancing. Take advantage of grocery delivery or pickup services. All Alaskans are encouraged to limit their number of weekly trips to the grocery store and to shop alone, do not bring the entire family into the store. If you MUST go to the grocery store, you MUST remain six feet away from anyone.

Please keep at least six feet from others when you are out in public, wash your hands often and wipe down frequently-touched surfaces. Do not go grocery shopping if you are ill with a respiratory infection; if you are ill, you should be isolating yourself at home, including from family members.

***Do I need to stock up on groceries? Do we expect to see supply chain disruptions?***

No. It is a good idea to have enough food in your pantry that you don't need to go shopping frequently, but there is no need to hoard large amounts of supplies. Please leave supplies on the shelves for fellow Alaskans who may need them. Alaska's supply chain is intact and no disruptions are expected.

***If I won't be able to buy groceries or pay rent, are there services to help me?***

Yes. You may be eligible for public assistance for food, medical care, rent, and more. Please reach out to the [Division of Public Assistance](#) for program questions.

For unemployment insurance questions, please go to the [Department of Labor and Workforce Development](#).

***Will public transportation be available, like buses?***

Public transportation is only available for those who provide or obtain essential services. The number of riders is being limited to allow for enough physical distance between passengers.

***Can I still go out to pick up my prescription?***

Yes. You may leave your home to visit a pharmacy. If possible, use the drive-thru option to collect your prescription.

***Will restaurants be open?***

Restaurants may be open for takeout, drive-thru and delivery services only.

***Can restaurants still provide take-out services under this mandate?***

Yes, but they must do so while maintaining six feet between people at all times. If there are lines, restaurants must ensure people are adequately spaced. Systems must be implemented to prevent close contact when customers pick up food or pay for their order.

### ***Is commercial construction considered essential?***

Commercial construction is considered essential, as is any public works construction, but they will need to follow distancing and cleaning guidelines as they continue to work.

### ***Are hotels and resorts essential businesses?***

Only for the purpose of providing essential services, such as housing, or for isolation or quarantine.

### ***Do I have to stay home and inside, or can I go outside for exercise and recreation?***

Outdoor activity near your home is OK and encouraged for your health and well-being, but always keep at least six feet between people who do not live in your immediate household.

Social distancing requirements are in effect on paths, trails, sidewalks, riverbanks, beaches, parks, and anyplace outside on private or public property where people might gather. Crowds of 10 people or more are prohibited.

### ***Can I take my child to a playground?***

Playgrounds may still be open, but they are not the safest places to be right now. Children tend to play in close proximity to each other in a playground while adults congregate to watch their children. Choose recreational options that congregate people less.

If you take your child to a playground, bring your own cleaning wipes and hand sanitizer, and be sure to immediately sanitize hands and surfaces to prevent the spread of the virus from surface to surface.

### ***What can I do? What's open?***

**You must stay six feet away from non-family members.** With that said, if you need to go shopping, there are delivery services and pickup options available at most grocery stores. However, if you need to go in person, you must remain six feet from everyone else.

- Health care facilities
- Gas stations
- Pharmacies
- Food: Grocery stores, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants
- Banks and credit unions
- Laundromats/laundry services
- Veterinary services
- Hardware stores
- Limited child care for essential workers
- Essential federal, state and local government functions will also remain open, including law enforcement and offices that provide government programs and services.
- Reference the [Alaska Essential Services and Critical Workforce Infrastructure Order](#) for a full list.

### ***What's closed?***

Many businesses are closed to gathering. Reference the [Alaska Essential Services and Critical Workforce Infrastructure Order](#) for a full list of what is open.

- Dine-in restaurants – except for drive-thru, delivery and carry-out
- Bars and nightclubs
- Entertainment venues

- Gyms and fitness studios
- Public events and gatherings
- Convention centers
- Hair and nail salons
- Reference the [Alaska Essential Services and Critical Workforce Infrastructure Order](#) for a full list.

***Can I call a plumber?***

Yes. Plumbing and other critical home repairs are considered essential businesses. You may call a plumber or other home repair businesses if you need one, but keep physical distance between you and the repair people who come into your home and practice proper hygiene. Non-critical plumbing needs should be delayed.

***Can I drive somewhere to recreate?***

You are not prohibited from driving, but you must stay six feet away from non-family members.

***Can I drive to my cabin and hunker down there?***

Going to your cabin is not prohibited, but you must stay six feet away from non-family members.

***May I go clothes shopping?***

Casual shopping is not encouraged at this time, as you must remain six feet away from everyone. Deliveries of goods and services to your home is recommended.

***What if I'm dating someone who lives in another household? Am I allowed to visit that person?***

You must stay six feet away from anyone who is not a family member. Not doing so endangers the members of the dating partners' families.

***What if I want to have a family celebration for a birthday, graduation or another important milestone?***

We are in the midst of a pandemic. You must stay six feet away from anyone. It is highly advisable that such gatherings be postponed at this time.

**Health Mandate 012: Intrastate Travel  
Limiting travel between communities to critical infrastructure or  
critical personal needs**

***What is the purpose of mandate 12?***

The purpose of this mandate is to control the movement of individuals within Alaska in order to prevent, slow, and otherwise disrupt the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

***How long does mandate 12 last?***

The intrastate travel mandate goes into effect at **8 a.m. on March 28, 2020** and remains in effect until the Governor of Alaska rescinds or modifies the order. It will be reevaluated by April 21.

***What does mandate 12 say?***

All in-state travel between communities, whether resident, worker, or visitor, is prohibited unless travel is to support critical infrastructure; or for critical personal needs. Certain Small Alaskan

communities may implement further travel restriction pursuant to “Alaska Small Community Emergency Travel Order - Attachment B.” Read the full mandate online at <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>

***What does mandate 12 mean?***

Unless you are obtaining or providing an essential service that requires you to be out in the public, Alaskans should not be traveling between communities. Alaskans may go outside to exercise and recreate, but must maintain a distance of six feet or more from other members of the public.

Workers are encouraged to work from home, unless they work in health care, public service or other businesses deemed essential, as defined in the [Alaska Essential Services and Critical Workforce Infrastructure Order](#) (formerly Attachment A).

This mandate covers the entire state. The goal is to eliminate any unnecessary contacts outside of immediate family members to prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, while maintaining essential health care services, public government services, and other essential business activities.

***Are employees of essential services and critical infrastructure permitted to travel?***

Yes, however essential services and critical infrastructure entities are recommended to limit their travel within Alaska to key personnel, in order to mitigate the risk to their own employees and the communities where they operate. However, those entities are required to submit a travel plan or protocol consistent with mandates.

***Does mandate 12 supersede earlier mandates?***

This mandate strengthens and clarifies pre-existing mandates, but does not revoke those mandates.

***Is commercial fishing considered an essential service, and can fishing vessels sail port to port?***

Yes, commercial fishing is an essential service and part of critical infrastructure. Fishing vessels can sail to port to port in Alaska, but have the responsibility to monitor their crew for signs and symptoms, report any issues to the appropriate authorities, and mitigate the risk of exposure to the small communities in which they operate.

***Is oil production, shipping, and refining essential?***

Yes.

***Are airports still open?***

Yes, the public airports in Alaska remain open. Travel is limited to essential travel, and in addition, anyone coming into Alaska from out of state is required to complete a [Travel Declaration Form](#) and self-quarantine for 14 days, per State of Alaska Mandate 10.1. Airport officials are encouraging social distancing throughout airport facilities.

***Can I drive to visit or fly to visit another family member in Alaska?***

No. This is not considered “essential business.”