Wyandotte County Stay at Home Order Frequently Asked Questions:

Business Owner FAQs

The Stay At Home Public Health Order issued Saturday, March 21, is now in effect. Use this document to answer many of the questions you may have about what the Stay At Home Order means for your business, your employees and your customers.

Background
On March 21, Mayor David Alvey announced that Dr. Allen Greiner, Chief Medical Officer of the Unified Government, issued a public Health Order requiring residents to Stay At Home. The only exception to this Order is taking care of essential needs.

We understand that these measures are going to disrupt your life and your business – but the number one priority right now is taking any steps necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our region. We know that as part of our business community, you will have questions about the Stay At Home order and how it affects your business and your employees. Here are answers to some Frequently Answered Questions about the Stay At Home period for business owners. If you don't find the answer to your question here, please visit www.wycokck.org or contact 3-1-1.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STAY AT HOME ORDER

Why is the Unified Government doing this?
Issuing a Stay At Home order for Wyandotte County, in conjunction with KCMO, and Johnson and Jackson counties is necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our region. The order enforces intensified social distancing – which is the best way to slow the spread of the disease. The order requires residents to remain in place – people are only allowed to leave their place of residence in order to get the essential things they need like groceries and medications.

It’s important to note that the Unified Government serving Wyandotte County acted in unison with the elected officials and public health leaders of the “Core 4” municipalities that make up the Kansas City metropolitan region – Kansas City, Missouri; Jackson County, Missouri and Johnson County, Kansas.

The reason we’re doing this now is because there is emerging scientific evidence that COVID-19 can be transmitted among people who haven’t yet exhibited the symptoms of the disease – so even if someone doesn't appear sick, they can still be carrying COVID-19 and infect others. Without such efforts, it's estimated that each COVID-19 positive patient could infect between 2.6 to 4 additional people.
That’s why we had to implement the Stay At Home orders immediately. In order to be effective, social distancing strategies must be implemented early in an outbreak such as this – within two weeks of the first case. These measures are critically important to flatten the epidemic curve – which will prevent overwhelming our regional health care system’s ability to care for residents who develop severe symptoms. Early implementation of this strategy is even more important in the context of limited testing. With full community cooperation, this proactive public health order can minimize the impact of COVID-19 in our community.

**What does the Stay At Home Order do?**
The order requires that most people stay at home unless they are engaged in “essential activities” (see below for details.) For most residents of Wyandotte County, that means that you and those you live with should remain at home. You are allowed to leave to make sure you have the necessities needed for da- to-day life, such as getting food and medical supplies.

You’re also allowed to get essential supplies for your pet, or to exercise, as long as you don’t congregate in a group, and you maintain at least six feet of distance between yourself and other people. If you’re sick, you should stay away from others – even those with whom you live. Self-quarantine in a separate room and, if possible, use a different bathroom from other people with whom you live.

**How long does this Order last?**
This order is in effect until **April 23, 2020**. At that time, we’ll evaluate the status of COVID-19 in our community and either rescind or extend the Order as needed.

**Which businesses are open?**
Only essential businesses will remain open. Essential businesses include:

- Hospitals
- Childcare facilities
- Government operations
- Pharmacies, health care supply stores, and health care facilities
- Grocery stores
- Farms
- Gas stations and auto repair facilities
- Banks
- Garbage collection
- Hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences and other essential businesses
- Educational institutions, for the purposes of facilitating distance learning;
- Laundromats, dry cleaners, and laundry service providers
• Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, and goods directly to residences;
• Childcare facilities providing services that enable essential employees to go to work;
• Professional services such as legal or accounting service when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities
• Newspapers, radio, television, and other media resources
• Liquor stores

If you have a question about whether a particular business is remaining open during this period, contact that business directly.

**What are Essential Activities?**
Individuals should only leave their homes to conduct essential activities. Essential activities include:
• Obtaining medicine or seeing a doctor or other health care provider
• Taking a pet to the veterinarian or getting your pet medications from a vet
• Getting necessary services or supplies for themselves, their family or household members, such as food, pet food, and supplies necessary for staying at home
• Obtaining supplies necessary for maintaining a household
• Obtaining supplies necessary for working from home
• Engaging in outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking, or running provided that you maintain at least six feet of social distancing
• Please note: Wyandotte County parks will remain open for the public, but playgrounds will be closed as a safety measure at this time
• Performing work providing essential services at an Essential Business or Essential Government function.
• Caring for a family member or pet in another household
• Working for or getting services from hospitals, clinics, dentists, pharmacies, home health care, mental health providers or related services
• Caring for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons

**QUESTIONS ABOUT ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES**

I’m a small business owner. How do I figure out if I’m “essential” or not?
Read the Stay At Home Health Order at wyckokck.org/COVID-19 and exercise judgment that will keep you, your employees, and the community safe.

I’m the owner of an essential business providing food, personal hygiene products, etc. What if there’s a run on my store and someone becomes violent.
If you have any kind of disruption at your place of business call 9-1-1 immediately.
My business sells food, clothing, sports equipment and hardware items. Providing food is an Essential Business. Are my sales limited to groceries? No, Essential Business specifically includes grocery stores but also includes stores that sell groceries and other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation and essential operation of residences.

How do essential business owners enforce social distancing? We’re asking all businesses to enforce social distancing, which means groups of no more than 10 people in your establishment at a time, and both workers and customers must keep apart by at least six feet at all times.

My business isn’t considered “essential.” Do I have to shut down? All businesses and operations that are non-essential are required to cease all on-site public activities. However, you and your employees can continue to work from home if that’s possible.

I own a business that is not specifically identified as an Essential Business, and my employees are working from home. Can I go to the office to do payroll and receive mail, or a shipment of goods? Yes. The duties you describe are necessary to allow people to work from home. Mail and shipping services are permitted and therefore, so is the receipt of mail and packages. The prohibition of groups of more than 10 people and following social distancing requirements still applies.

I operate a construction business which builds commercial buildings and does interior remodeling. Am I an Essential Business? Only to the extent that you provide services necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation and essential operation of residences or other Essential Business, or if you are involved in Healthcare Operations, Essential Infrastructure or Essential Government Functions.

Can golf courses continue to operate? Yes, but only in limited capacity. Golf Courses allow residents to engage in outdoor activities and are similar to a permitted activity in a park or public area. (3 b (iii))

Clubhouse dining and beverage facilities can only be open for carry-out. (3 e (xiv)) Courses must implement procedures to prevent groups of more than 10 people and comply with Social Distancing Requirements. We encourage that all tee times be made online and in 18-minute increments, and that golf carts are not allowed. If carts are allowed, only one person per cart and they must be sanitized between users.
I own an insurance business. Can I continue to operate, or do I have to close?  
You can continue to operate, and we recommend working from home to the greatest extent possible. If your business location will be open, you must follow the maximum 10 person limit and social distancing requirements (six feet between individuals).

I own a real estate company, showing houses and processing transactions. My business is not listed as an Essential Business, and I work from home. What about related services such as title work, appraisals, insurance and inspections necessary to complete transactions?  
Your activities are limited to those which can be performed at home, so you cannot show houses. The related services would be considered as essential, to the extent that they are required to support financial and mortgage institutions.

I have a lawn care and house-cleaning company and am not listed as an Essential Business. Can I continue to operate?  
Yes. Lawn care and house-cleaning services are necessary for maintaining the safety, sanitation and essential operation of residences. You still need to follow social distancing requirements and maintain a distance of six feet from other people at all times.

Hotels and motels are not listed as an Essential Business. Can they stay open?  
Yes. Hotels and motels provide residential facilities and are considered an Essential Business. Other aspects of their operation are governed by different requirements, such as bars or restaurants.

MORE ANSWERS ON THE STAY AT HOME ORDER

What kind of financial relief can I get as a small business owner?  
There are a variety of resources available to small businesses owners, and the list grows every day. Learn more at wycokck.org/COVID-19 under the “Economic Resources” Tab.

How do I protect my employees and customers from exposure to COVID-19?  
Make sure your employees are practicing social distancing, which mean they are not congregating in groups of 10 or more, and that they are maintaining a distance of at least six feet between each other and customers. Some other tips include:
• Disinfect high-touch areas such as countertops several times a day.
• Wipe down land line phones, keyboards, copy machines, etc., several times a day with disinfectant wipes, or use paper towels moistened with a disinfectant.
• Encourage employees to disinfect their cell phones daily, and discourage them from passing smart phones around to share photos, social media posts, etc.
• Limit the number of employees who can be in common areas such as breakrooms, or if needed, shut down these common areas to discourage employees from congregating in groups of more than 10.
• Post signs in the bathroom to encourage employees to wash their hands with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds, several times a day. This is especially important after they’ve used the restroom or before they touch or prepare food.
• Discourage employees from sharing food in the workplace.
• Encourage employees to clean any food containers promptly and properly.
• Make sure employees have access to soap and hand sanitizer. Encourage them to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer after interacting with customers.
• Remind employees not to shake hands with customers – they must maintain social distancing (at least six feet from others) at all times.
• If you have a lobby area, make sure seating for customers or patients is at least six feet apart to maintain proper social distancing.
• In any area where customers must wait in line (such as at checkout or to get a prescription), use signage or tape on the floor to indicate proper social distancing. Remind customers in line to practice proper social distancing.
• Educate your staff on proper social distancing and any new disinfecting practices.

Do I need to close the break room or cafeteria at my place of business?
Depending upon the number of employees at your business, you might choose to restrict access to common areas such as break rooms and cafeterias. Employees should not be allowed to congregate in groups of ten or more at any time.

How do I let people know we’re still open for business?
You can communicate with your customers via your company’s website, text, telephone or social media.

ENFORCEMENT

Is this just another guideline, or is this mandatory?
The Stay At Home order is a mandatory order designed to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and protect our families, friends and neighbors, and those at higher risk for serious complications from the disease. First and foremost, we hope that our citizens and business community will self-policing and comply with the order because they understand the extremely serious situation we are facing with the spread of COVID-19.

Is the Stay At Home Order enforceable?
The Order is definitely enforceable. Per Section Eight: "Pursuant to K.S.A. 65-129b, and other legal authority, any Sheriff, sheriff deputy, police officer, or other law enforcement officer of the
State of any political subdivision within Wyandotte County is hereby ordered to assist in the execution of this Order.”

How will the Stay At Home Order be enforced?
We have faith in our residents. We believe that they will Stay at Home to stop the spread of COVID-19, except to travel to and from essential jobs or to perform essential errands. Our primary way to enforce the Stay At Home Order is through education.

We understand this is new information and it can be confusing. If we receive a report that a business that should be closed is open, or that a gathering of more than 10 people has formed in one of our neighborhoods, we will respond. Our officers’ first goal is to have a conversation, explain the Stay At Home Order and answer questions so that our residents will comply voluntarily.

Will police be stopping vehicles to be sure they are in compliance? Do I need some sort of documentation?
Our goal is to allow people to carry out tasks that are necessary, while limiting the spread of COVID-19. If you are out to get or deliver supplies or prescriptions for a friend or family member, running to the grocery store, picking up a prescription, going to a job that has been categorized as essential, or driving an essential worker to their job, you won’t have a problem. Simply do your business and return home.

What happens to people who don’t comply?
People who don’t comply with the Order can be cited for a misdemeanor violation. The Order is a legal requirement that individuals must stay at home, and that non-essential businesses reduce their operations.

Our community needs to come together to fight the spread of COVID-19. In the rare cases of non-compliance, the Unified Government can cite non-compliant businesses and people. However, we don’t expect to need that authority since it is in everyone’s best interest that we swiftly and effectively deal with this pandemic.

The intention of this order isn’t to punish anyone – it’s a necessary step in slowing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and protecting our healthcare system and personnel.

How will you determine if someone is not complying?
We understand that people will be out for necessary errands and work that has been deemed essential. We don’t expect the streets to be vacant. Simply being out does not make you suspect. Simply do your business and return home.
Residents who are out and NOT abiding by the guidelines should expect their contact with law enforcement to happen at the business that should be closed or at the gathering that should not be happening. Even in those instances, our first goal is to educate. We want voluntary compliance - if a simple discussion can bring that about, that’s what will happen. However, those who willfully refuse to comply will be issued a citation.

**How do I report an individual, group or business that is willfully refusing to comply with the Order?**

To report any business or individual(s) which you believe is not complying with the Stay at Home Order, please call the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department’s special reporting line at (913) 225-4788. The phone is staffed from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday. When leaving a message be sure to include your name, a call-back number, the address of the business or individual you believe to be non-compliant, a contact name for them (when possible) and the nature of the perceived violation.

If you have further questions about enforcement please visit the KCKPD Facebook page @KCKPolice, or call the non-emergency number at (913) 596-3000.