

CASS COUNTY, MISSOURI

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Public Health
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Stay-At-Home Emergency Order FAQ

Why was this order issued?

This emergency order was issued to protect the health and safety of all residents of Cass County, with the goal of limiting the continued community spread of Coronavirus. It was issued based on the guidance of public health experts, as well as consultations with county leadership about the consequences of continued community spread of Coronavirus on health care availability and access.

How long is the order in effect?

The amended emergency order will take effect at 12:01 AM on Tuesday, March 24, 2020, and will remain in effect through 11:59 PM on April 24, 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 experts.

What does this order require?

The order requires Cass County residents to stay at home unless they are engaged in one of the essential activities specified in the order. Essential activities include working in an essential business, obtaining supplies or necessary services (including but not limited to food, medicine, cleaning supplies, and pet food), seeking medical care, caring for a family member or loved one, and exercising and maintaining personal health. Individuals are strongly encouraged to practice social distancing to the extent feasible while engaging in these activities and to stay home if not engaging in one of these specific activities.

Will residents be subject to penalties such as arrests or citations for leaving their homes?

Residents can leave their residences to engage in essential activities, including exercising and maintaining personal health (walking/bicycling/running/etc.), working at an essential business, obtaining supplies or necessary services, or seeking medical care. We strongly urge residents to stay at home if they are not engaged in any of these essential activities as this will greatly aid efforts to stop the community spread of Coronavirus.

Does my business qualify as an essential business as defined in the emergency order?

Major categories of essential businesses defined in the order include but are not limited to:

- Health care operations and essential infrastructure
- Grocery stores and other establishments that sell food and other products necessary for maintaining safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences
- Restaurants and facilities that prepare and serve food and drink (delivery, drive-through, and curbside only)
- Educational institutions (distance learning only, student welfare services)
- Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services for economically disadvantaged individuals
- Gas stations and auto supply, auto repair, and related facilities
- Food cultivation
- Human and animal food processing facilities
- Sanitation (including laundromats, dry cleaners, household and business cleaning services, and supply stores)
- Transportation (including railroads, airports, public transit, taxis and other private transportation providers, and gas stations)
- Financial Services (including banks, insurance providers, and professional services required to comply with legal and regulatory requirements)
- Manufacturing and distribution of supplies and materials for essential businesses (including trucking and other supply chain support functions)
- Maintenance and construction of infrastructure and households
- Child care
- Essential government operations
- Residential facilities and shelters (including hotels and motels)
- Media and communications providers
- Mailing, shipping, and delivery services (including those that deliver food, groceries, or services directly to residences)

A full list of categories of essential businesses is provided in the order.

The county strongly encourages all essential businesses to allow employees to work from home and to maintain social distancing to the extent feasible in continuing to carry out their operations.

My business does not fall under one of the categories deemed essential, can it remain open if health precautions are taken?

Non-essential businesses can continue operations that can be conducted from employees' homes or places of rest. They can also continue minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business's inventory and facilities and to ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions, as well as minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences or places of rest,

provided social distancing is maintained. Any operations that do not meet these requirements must be ceased.

Do businesses and/or employees need formal certification or identification that they qualify as an essential business and/or are employed at an essential business?

No.

I am unclear whether my business qualifies as essential or non-essential. Can I receive a formal recommendation from the county as to whether I qualify?

Currently, guidance is available on a general (industry) basis and not a case by case (specific business) basis. We encourage all business owners to review the order in its entirety if they believe there is ambiguity about whether they qualify as essential or not.

What are the penalties for non-compliance with 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 210 of the Cass County's Code of Ordinances and Section 192.320, RSMo.

How will this emergency order be enforced?

This order will be enforced similarly to other business-related ordinances (building occupancy, health requirements for food preparation, etc.) and violators will be subject to fines and business closure orders, among other penalties.

Is construction activity classified as essential?

Yes, public works, infrastructure, and housing construction are classified as essential. We encourage construction businesses to carry out their work in compliance with social distancing requirements and guidelines to the extent feasible.

Are manufacturing facilities classified as essential?

Any manufacturing operation that supplies goods necessary for the operation of other essential businesses (for example medical equipment, transport equipment, telecommunications equipment, supplies necessary to maintain or build infrastructure, sanitation and cleaning supplies, food or beverages, etc.) is classified as essential.

Are hotels and motels classified as essential?

Yes. We recognize that individuals employed in essential businesses who are traveling (for example medical workers or infrastructure maintenance workers) and/or individuals who find their homes temporarily uninhabitable may need to secure shelter.

Are home repair and maintenance services classified as essential?

Yes, home repair services including plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences and essential businesses are classified as essential.

Are liquor stores and other markets that sell liquor classified as essential?

Yes, businesses that distribute food or drink are classified as essential. We encourage the maintenance of social distancing to the extent feasible in all cases.

Are child care providers classified as essential?

Yes. The county recognizes that many workers in essential industries need access to child care to continue to work. The order includes the following guidance for child care providers and the county recommends that all providers follow this guidance to the extent feasible:

- 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);
- Children should not change from one group to another;
- 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; and
- Childcare providers should remain solely with one group of children.

Are personal services, such as nail salons, hair salons, and tanning facilities classified as essential?

No, businesses that provide personal services are not classified as essential.

Are gyms, workout facilities, or golf courses classified as essential?

No, gyms, workout facilities, and golf courses are not classified as essential. However, individuals are encouraged to use parks and exercise outdoors while they practice social distancing.

Why are schools closed and how long are they closed for?

Schools are closed up through and including Friday, April 24, 2020, because standard school operations pose a risk to health as a potential venue for community transmission. Schools can continue to operate through distance learning and to distribute food or clothing, provide medical care, or perform any other services deemed necessary to protect the life and property of Cass County students.