

County of Kings

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Sheltering in Place

- **How does the County’s “Stay in Place” or “Shelter in Place” (SIP) order work and how is it different from the State order?** The Kings County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on March 31, 2020, to direct County residents to follow the State SIP order. Local instances of people ignoring the State order are placing the lives of our citizens at risk unnecessarily due to the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The County order mirrors the State SIP order in that directs compliance with the State order.
- **When does the SIP order go into effect and how long will we stay home?** The State order went into effect on Thursday, March 19, 2020, and covers all counties including Kings. The order is in place until further notice.
- **What does it mean to “shelter in place”?** “Sheltering in place” means that individuals are to stay home or at their place of residence, except as needed to maintain the continuity businesses’ operations essential to critical infrastructure, like the energy grid and water and food supplies, or to access food, prescriptions and health care.
- **What’s open?** Essential services will remain open, such as gas stations, pharmacies, grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, restaurants (take-out and delivery only), banks, laundromats/laundry services. Essential State and local government functions will also remain open, including law enforcement and offices that provide government programs and services.
- **What’s closed?** Dine-in restaurants, bars and nightclubs, entertainment venues, gyms and fitness studios, public events and gatherings, convention centers, tattoo/body art shops, and hair and nail salons.
- **Do I need to pay my taxes?** Yes, State and federal income tax deadlines have been extended. All State taxes are now due on July 15, 2020. County property tax deadlines have not been extended.
- **My school is providing free grab-and-go meals and childcare. Are those still open?** Yes. It is essential to keep children fed and educated. School employees should report to work and focus on distance learning, school meals, and childcare/supervision.
- **Are daycares still open? Can my babysitter still come to the house?** Yes. Daycares are still open, but only for children of parents working in essential sectors. Daycare centers that remain open should employ heightened cleaning and distancing requirements. Babysitters may also come to the house to care for minors of parents working in essential sectors.

- **What if I need to visit a health care provider?** If you are feeling sick with flu-like symptoms, please first call your doctor, a nurse hotline, or an urgent care center. If you need to go to the hospital, call ahead so they can prepare for your arrival. If you need to call 911, tell the 911 operator the exact symptoms you are experiencing so the ambulance provider can prepare to treat you safely.
- **What about routine, elective or non-urgent medical appointments?** Non-essential medical care like eye exams, teeth cleaning, and elective procedures must/should be cancelled or rescheduled. If possible, health care visits should be done remotely. Contact your health care provider to see what services they are providing.
- **May I still go out to get my prescriptions?** Yes. You may leave your home to obtain prescriptions.
- **I am an older Californian who is isolating at home and I need non-urgent assistance. What can I do?** You can call the statewide hotline for older Californians – 833-544-2374 – for your non-urgent medical needs, to get meals delivered, track down prescriptions and more. The most important thing you can do is stay home for your health and wellbeing. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 9-1-1.
- **Can I leave home to care for my elderly parents or friends who require assistance to care for themselves? Or a friend or family member who has disabilities?** Yes. Be sure that you protect them and yourself by following social distancing guidelines and washing your hands before and after, using hand sanitizer, maintaining at least six feet (6') of distance when possible, and coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue and then washing your hands. If you have early signs of a cold, please stay away from your older loved ones.
- **Can I visit loved ones in the hospital, nursing home, skilled nursing facility, or other residential care facility?** Generally no. There are limited exceptions, such as if you are going to the hospital with a minor who is under 18 or someone who is developmentally disabled and needs assistance. For most other situations, the order prohibits non-necessary visitation to these kinds of facilities except at the end-of-life. This is difficult, but necessary to protect hospital staff and other patients.
- **Can I still exercise/Take my kids to the park/Go for walk?** Yes. So long as you are maintaining a safe social distance of six feet (6') from people who aren't part of your household, it is ok to go outside for exercise, a walk or fresh air. While you may go to the park, do not allow your children to play on playground equipment. The surfaces may be contaminated. Gyms are closed.
- **Can I walk my dog/ Take my pet to the vet?** You can walk your dog. You can go to the vet or pet hospital if your pet is sick. Remember to distance yourself at least six feet from other pets and owners.
- **Can people still go running, biking or hiking?** You can walk, run, hike and bike in your local neighborhood as long as you continue to practice social distancing of six feet (6'). This means avoiding crowded trails and parking lots. Some State parks are open as well. Check out <https://www.parks.ca.gov/FlattenTheCurve> for more information.