

Sign Industry Guidance – Are Signs Part of “essential infrastructure”?

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As the world struggles to battle this unprecedented and historical Covid challenge, California has issued “stay at home” directives, except for essential infrastructure services – gas stations, banks, pharmacies, food, grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants, etc. Understandably, many in the sign industry are worried about their businesses and livelihood, not only for themselves, but also their employees – and whether signage services fall within “essential infrastructure.”

Bottom Line – Exemptions

Bearing in mind that we are in uncharted territory, while there is no specific exemption for sign manufacturing and installation, the following have been listed in exempt categories:

- ~ Construction Workers who support the construction, operation, inspection, and maintenance of construction sites and construction projects (including housing construction)
- ~ Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, construction material sources, and essential operation of construction sites and construction projects (*including those that support such projects* to ensure the availability of needed facilities, transportation, energy and communications; and support to ensure the effective removal, storage, and disposal of solid waste and hazardous waste)
- ~ Workers who are critical to facilitating trade in support of the national, state, and local emergency response supply chain
- ~ Workers to ensure continuity of building functions

In brief, to the extent your construction activities support essential infrastructure, signage is an essential, critical component and function necessary to identify and locate such businesses, especially for such projects under construction.

We recommend that you provide a copy of this guidance to your workers to keep on hand should they be stopped or questioned by anyone about work under way. In addition, be certain they are utilizing safe jobsite practices at all times.*

Here is the [full list of exemptions](#) of Critical Infrastructure Workers by category with FAQ's.

Here is a [link](#) to other business, OSHA, employment and tax Covid related questions.

Per Governor Newsom's Executive Order:

The supply chain must continue, and Californians must have access to such necessities as food, prescriptions, and health care. When people need to leave their homes or places of residence, whether to obtain or perform the functions above, or to otherwise facilitate authorized necessary activities, they should at all times practice social distancing.

In the words from the California Chamber of Commerce:

A large number of California businesses operate in many different counties or span the entire state so the need for consistency in supply chain operations is critical. The guidelines provided by the Governor's office are an important element of keeping our economy open for essential business during this crisis and for resolving the risk of inconsistent and arbitrary enforcement.

COVID 'STAY AT HOME' FAQ's

Per the Governor's office –

<https://covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/>

The order is in place until further notice. It covers the whole state of California, and it exempts activity as needed to maintain continuity of operation of the federal critical infrastructure sectors, critical government services, schools, childcare, and construction, including housing construction.

What can I do? What's open?

Essential services will remain open, such as:

Gas stations

Pharmacies

Food: Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants

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
Hair and nail salons

Can the Order be changed?

Yes. The State Public Health Officer may issue orders as needed – for example if more information emerges about the public health situation – and issue new orders and directives as conditions warrant.

How does this order interact with local orders to shelter in place? Does it supersede them?

This is a statewide order.

Business and taxes

What businesses and organizations are exempt?

Businesses and organizations that provide critical infrastructure for the state are exempted, including health care and public health, public safety, food and agriculture and media. See the full list of [exempt sectors](#) (pdf).

I run/work at an exempted business or organization, as defined by the Order. Do I need to get an official letter of authorization from the state to operate?

No. If your business or organization is in the list of exempt sectors, it may still operate. You do not need to obtain any specific authorization from the state to do so.

Do I need to pay my taxes?

Yes, state and federal deadlines have been extended. All state taxes are now due on July 15.

Schools and childcare

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.

Health care and helping sick relatives

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 their homes to obtain prescriptions or get cannabis from a licensed cannabis retailer.

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 such as washing hands before and after, using hand sanitizer, maintaining at least six feet 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.

Outdoor recreation

Can I still exercise? Take my kids to the park for fresh air? Take a walk around the block? Walk my dog?

Yes. So long as you are maintaining a safe social distance of six feet from people who aren't part of your household, it is ok to go outside for exercise, a walk or fresh air. Gyms are closed.

Does this order affect hiking? State Parks?

No, you may still go outside so long as you practice social distancing of six feet. California State Parks have closed indoor facilities and campgrounds, but trails and outdoor spaces are still open. Spending time outdoors can lead to a number of overall health and wellness benefits like lessening anxiety, boosting creativity and getting your vitamin D. If you decide to make a trip, remember to keep social distance.

Pets

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.

***Recommended Jobsite Covid Prevention Construction Practices**

- ▶ Require sick employees to stay home.
- ▶ Monitor employee health and remove any ill employees from the worksite. Symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
- ▶ Keep a 6' distance from other workers, even when utilizing a hoist or other conveyance.
- ▶ Do not share tools, equipment, cups, or other personal items with coworkers.
- ▶ Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer.
- ▶ Do not touch your eyes, nose, mouth or any other part of your face with your hands.
- ▶ Use PPE including gloves and safety glasses at all times.
- ▶ Use appropriate cough and sneezing etiquette. Cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, not your hand. Discard tissues immediately.
- ▶ Keep workplace clean.
- ▶ Clean commonly touched surfaces frequently
- ▶ Sanitize vehicle door handles, steering wheel, shift levers, etc.
- ▶ Post Coronavirus [info sheets](#) from Cal Dept of Public Health and [Cal/OSHA](#).