



FAQ on rescinding the local Stay-at-Home Order

1. Why was the local Nevada County stay-at-home order rescinded?

On Thursday, March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an Executive Order requiring Californians to stay home in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19, except for essential needs. The Nevada County Health Officer issued a local stay-at-home order on April 27, 2020 as a complement to the state order and to align with regional jurisdictions. This local order was rescinded on May 8, 2020.

The rescinding of the local Order aimed to remove any confusion over areas of difference between the state Order. This transition will allow a local focus on planning for a phased reopening in partnership with local governments, health care, business and other stakeholders, as well as regional and state partners. The statewide order still applies to Nevada County.

2. What does the expiration of the local health officer's stay-at-home order mean?

Because Governor Newsom's statewide order still applies to Nevada County, residents must continue to stay home except for essential needs. However, the Governor has announced 4 stages of re-opening or relaxing the stay-at-home order. This is allowing for re-opening of certainly businesses and activities little by little, with guidance from the state and with timing determined by the local health department. The re-opening process is a balance process and will move forward incrementally. It is still very important to maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from non-household contacts as the COVID-19 virus is still actively circulating, most people are susceptible to the infection, it can be serious and deadly, and it can be transmitted by people who have no or few symptoms.

3. Is the state Order mandatory or just guidance?

The state Order is mandatory.

4. What is the difference between “staying at home” and “social distancing”?

Staying home is a rigorous form of social distancing. Staying at home means:

- Only going out for “essential activities,” to work for an “essential business,” or for “essential travel” as those terms are defined in the Order. This includes travel for retail activities.
- Stay 6 feet or more away from others (physical distancing)
- No formal gathering

The other principles of social distancing and mitigative hygiene should continue to be applied whenever feasible. These include washing hands, using hand sanitizer, disinfecting surfaces, and not going out if sick.

5. Am I allowed to leave my home at this time?

Yes. Individuals may leave their place of residence to get necessities such as food, prescriptions, and health care, and for exercise and to pick up retail products. Gatherings of people other than households are still not allowed, with the exception of places of worship with the modifications and restrictions provided by the state. Travel for tourism is also not allowed at this time.

6. How do I know if my business is allowed to open under the state Order?

Now that Nevada County’s local health order has been rescinded and residents will be guided by the governor’s Executive Order to stay at home, please see answers to frequently asked questions about the state order by visiting [covid19.ca.gov](https://www.covid19.ca.gov). If a business or sector is allowed to open statewide across California, it can be open in Nevada County. If it is a business or activity that a “variance county” can open, please check Nevada County’s [Reopen Plan](#) to see local allowable business and activities.

7. What about short-term rentals?

The Nevada County Short Term Rental Order still stands. Also, under the governor’s Executive Order, which remains in effect until further notice, vacation lodging is not on the list of allowed business operations. These

restrictions apply to the commercial use of short-term rentals.

8. Can the county "reopen"?

The state Order applies statewide, including Nevada County, since March 19. Nevada County's local Order was rescinded but the state Order remains in place, and applies to Nevada County.

The governor has announced four stages around how California may modify the statewide stay-at-home Order in the future, as part of a "Resilience Roadmap." On May 7th the state released a process for jurisdictions to apply for a variance to move through Stage 2 at a different pace than the statewide Order. Nevada County received approval for that Stage 2 variance and is now considered a "variance county." That has allowed us to move more quickly through Stage 2 than the state as a whole. That said, Nevada County cannot open sectors or activities that the state has not given variance counties the specific approval to open. [updated 6/1/2020]

9. What about preventive and other deferred health care services?

[Per the state](#), preventive care services and other deferred services can now take place if hospitals have enough capacity and protective equipment to do so safely. Dental care can take place, including preventive care, if the providers follows [the guidelines provided by CDPH](#). [updated 5/11/2020]

10. Do I have to wear a face covering?

The health officer continues to recommend that residents wear face coverings when maintaining 6 feet of physical distance in public is not possible. Businesses may require employees who can cover their face to do so as well as requiring that of customers.

11. Can I attend a political protest?

The state has provided guidance related to political protest gatherings and that guidance applies to Nevada County. That guidance, as of 6/1, is reproduced below. However, we encourage you to check the [state's FAQ](#) to find the most up-to-date guidance on political protest gatherings and other COVID-19-related questions.

From the State of California's COVID-19 FAQ (6/1/2020):

Can I engage in political protest gatherings?

Yes, as explained below, although in-person protests present special public health concerns.

Even with adherence to physical distancing, bringing members of different households together to engage in in-person protest carries a higher risk of widespread transmission of COVID-19. Such gatherings may result in increased rates of infection, hospitalization, and death, especially among more vulnerable populations. In particular, activities like chanting, shouting, singing, and group recitation negate the risk-reduction achieved through six feet of physical distancing. For this reason, people engaging in these activities should wear face coverings at all times.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that those exercising their right to engage in political expression (including, for example, their right to petition the government) should utilize alternative channels, such as the many online and broadcasting platforms available in the digital age, in place of in-person gatherings.

However, state public health directives do not prohibit in-person protests as long as (1) attendance is limited to 25% of the relevant area's maximum occupancy, as defined by the relevant local permitting authority or other relevant authority, or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower, and (2) physical distancing of six feet between persons or groups of persons from different households is maintained at all times. Failure to maintain adequate physical distancing may result in an order to disperse or other enforcement action. Face coverings are strongly recommended.

Participants must maintain a physical distance of six feet from any uniformed peace officers and other public safety personnel present, unless otherwise directed, and follow all other requirements and directives imposed by local health officers and law enforcement, or other applicable authorities.

This limitation on attendance will be reviewed at least once every 21 days, beginning May 25, 2020. This review will assess the impacts of these imposed limits on public health and provide further direction as part of a phased-in restoration of gatherings that implicate the First Amendment.

[added 6/1/2020]

12. If the county is able to attest for a variance, will that allow movement into California's Stage 3?

The state is slowly allowing for specific activities and sectors in Stage 3 to reopen, if they reopen under the state's guidelines specific to that activity/sector. Slowly moving in to Stage 3 does not mean that all of Stage 3 is automatically allowed. This is a process that the state is allowing little by little. Current sectors that are grouped in Stage 3 and are **not currently permitted** include personal services such as nail salons, tattoo parlors, gyms and fitness studios, bars, wineries, entertainment venues like movie theaters, public pools, playgrounds and picnic areas, nightclubs and hotels/lodging for leisure and tourism. We will continue to amend our county's [Reopening Plan](#) as the state allows for additional sectors in Stage 3. [updated 6/1/2020]