

Staying at Home in West Virginia

To prevent COVID-19 from spreading further, numerous communities and even entire states across the country have ordered their residents to stay home.

West Virginians should already be taking such common-sense steps as limiting non-essential travel and maintaining social distancing.

West Virginia residents should now follow the rules of the “Stay-at-Home” order issued by Gov. Jim Justice.

It is important to remember that this Stay at Home order:

- **Is NOT martial law**
- **Is NOT a lockdown**
- **Does NOT involve any sort of curfew**
- **Does NOT close West Virginia roads, bridges or borders**
- **Does NOT prevent West Virginians from leaving the state**
- **Does NOT prevent West Virginians from returning from out-of-state.**

Questions and Answers about West Virginia’s Stay-at-Home order:

Q: When did this Stay-at-Home order take effect?

A: Gov. Justice’s order took effect **8 p.m. Tuesday, March 24**. It remains in effect until terminated by subsequent executive order.

Q: What does this Stay-at-Home order require me to do?

A: The Stay-at-Home order requires West Virginians to remain in their homes and residences and leave only for essential services or activities. It is mandatory, and not merely guidance or advice.

Staying at home will help preserve public health and safety, and help West Virginia’s healthcare system so it can serve all citizens in need and especially those at high risk and vulnerable to COVID-19

Q: When can I leave my home? What is an essential activity or service?

Essential activities include going to the grocery store or gas station; picking up a prescription or receiving non-elective medical care; attending a place of worship; checking on relatives; and getting outdoor exercise for yourself, your children and your pets. They also include working jobs to provide essential services.

Q: What jobs are considered essential?

A: Residents can leave their homes for jobs that provide or support essential services and activities.

The governor's order specifically includes multiple categories of "Essential Businesses and Operations." **They are outlined at the bottom of this FAQ.**

The Stay-at-Home order also relies on essential workforce guidance provided by the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), found here: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>.

The order allows home-based businesses to operate, with any employees working from their own residences.

Small businesses not normally open to the general public can also continue to operate **if** they have five or fewer employees and can maintain social distancing and hygiene requirements.

Q: What will be closed as non-essential?

A: Businesses and workplaces that do not fall under these essential categories or are otherwise designated as essential shall close.

Those closed by other Executive Orders include:

- Dine-in restaurants
- Bars and nightclubs (except take-out)
- Entertainment venues including casinos and performance halls
- Barber shops and hair and nail salons
- Gyms and fitness centers
- State park lodges, cabins and restrooms.
- Hatfield-McCoy Trails

The Stay-At-Home order specifically prohibits from remaining open:

- Amusement facilities including carnivals, zoos, fairs, arcades and those with rides
- Entertainment facilities including movie and other theaters
- Activity venues including playgrounds, bowling alleys, pool halls, and racetracks
- Bingo halls, social clubs and adult entertainment venues

Q: What about working from home?

A: Working from home is encouraged wherever possible.

Q: What if I'm told to report to a job that is non-essential?

A: If you believe your business is nonessential but are still being asked to show up to work, you should discuss that with your employer.

Q: How will this Stay-at-Home order be enforced?

A: Law enforcement officials will **not** stop residents on their way to or from work or from obtaining essential services as outlined above, including recreation. People gathering in any size group will be asked to social distance or go home. ***The West Virginia National Guard will not be involved in enforcing any Stay-at-Home order.***

Q: How will the Stay-at-Home order affect travel and transportation?

A: West Virginians can drive themselves when possible, or walk. Public transportation and ridesharing will be for essential travel only. The same goes for air travel. ***Roads, bridges and borders will remain open.***

Q: Can I visit family and friends?

A: The Stay-at-Home order allows visits to the home of family members, and to other homes involved in the terms of a parenting or visitation plan or similar agreement. During such visits, interactions should be minimized as much as possible.

Q: What help is available for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities?

A: Services for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities are considered essential and will continue under the Stay-at-Home order. The Bureau for Medical Services can provide additional information: (304) 558-1700.

Q: What if my home is not a safe environment?

A: Anyone who is not be safe in their residence while under a Stay-at-Home order should find an alternative safe place. The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence can help. Visit <http://wvcadv.org> or contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 799-SAFE (7233).

Q: What about people who are homeless?

A: State, county and local government agencies and officials have partnered with W.Va. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (WV VOAD) and other community organizations to ensure safe shelter for our homeless population.

Essential business and operations

(full details are available in the Executive Order)

• **Health care**

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Doctor's offices
- Other medical practices including dental and eye care
- Pharmacies and over-the-counter drug retailers
- Substance use disorder and mental health services
- Home-based health and care providers
- Medical goods suppliers including eyewear and contact lens providers

- Organizations collecting blood, blood products and other needed materials
- Health insurance providers and managed care organizations

- **Food**
 - Grocery stores
 - Convenience stores
 - Take-out and delivery restaurants
 - Farmers markets
 - Food bank and food pantries
 - Take-out and delivery meal services, including school-based
 - Agricultural operations
 - Providers of livestock, seafood, baked goods and other food sources
 - Livestock, farming and other agricultural feed and supply businesses

- **Housing**
 - Hotels and motels
 - Nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
 - Residential facilities for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities
 - Inpatient mental health and substance use disorder facilities
 - Shelters for adults, seniors and children
 - Animal shelters, kennels and rescue centers

- **Public safety**
 - Police stations
 - Fire stations
 - Ambulance services
 - 911 and emergency dispatch centers
 - Correctional facilities and operations
 - Hazardous materials responders

- **Essential government functions**
 - Legislative function
 - Judicial functions
 - Programs and services that support essential operations and functions
 - Hotlines or helplines, including for Medicaid, SNAP benefits, etc.
 - Contacted services in support of government operations

- **Human services**
 - Child protection and child welfare organizations
 - Day care centers and homes
 - Social services agencies and organizations

- **Transportation**
 - Gas stations
 - Public transit

- Road, rail and air services
- Shipping and delivery services
- Vehicle rental services
- Taxi and rideshare providers such as Uber and Lyft
- Auto dealers and repair services

- **Essential infrastructure**
 - Utilities including water, sewer, and natural gas
 - Coal-fired and other means of electrical generation
 - Coal mining and production or distribution of other raw materials including oil and natural gas
 - Hardware and supply stores
 - Businesses that manufacture, produce, prepare, build, store, sell and distribute the materials and facilities needed to respond to this public health emergency
 - Building, construction and other trades that support essential infrastructure
 - Communications infrastructure and services, including media
 - Cyber and other security operations and services
 - Flood control and solid waste, recycling and sanitation collection and removal
 - Firearm and ammunition suppliers and retailers

- **Financial institutions**
 - Banks and credit unions
 - ATM services
 - Lending services
 - Insurance providers
 - Financial support services including appraisers, title companies and underwriters

- **Other**
 - Schools and other educational institutions providing distance learning
 - Places of worship
 - Funeral homes and related services
 - Legal, accounting and other professional services
 - Laundromats, dry cleaners and laundry services
 - Outdoor public spaces including parks and trails not specifically closed by executive order

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