



Stay-at-Home Orders Explained

A COVID-19 Update from Questco – March 26, 2020

Why are Stay-at-Home orders being issued?

A number of states and individual cities are now under “Stay-at-Home” orders. By some estimates, more than 150 million Americans are being told to stay in their homes and limit any trips or activities outside of their house.

Medical and Health experts say the best defense against the coronavirus (COVID-19) is to create separation between people to reduce the spread of the virus. COVID-19 is called a novel virus because it is new; never seen before. This means no one is immune to COVID-19 and without a vaccine there is no way to stop the spread, unless people refrain from gathering in groups.

What does it really mean if my area is under a Stay-at-Home order?

Details may vary from state to state, but fundamentally Stay-at-Home orders means anyone who is not engaged in an essential business (more on this later) should remain at home. In all cases, the order does not prohibit people from going out to grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations, hardware stores or restaurants offering takeout or drive-thru service. People may also leave their house to walk their dog or exercise (but not in groups).

If your area is currently under a Stay-at-Home order, it is very likely most retail stores, shopping malls, movie theaters, barber shops, beauty shops and fitness centers are closed, along with bars and restaurants.

So, what is an essential business?

The Department of Homeland Security has determined what businesses and services are essential. Below is a summary of who may work in an essential business. A full listing can be found in the [Department of Homeland Security memo](#) issued on March 19, 2020.

- Healthcare workers and caregivers
- Mental health and Social Services workers
- Pharmacy employees
- Workers supporting groceries
- Workers supporting retail sales of food and beverage products
- Restaurants workers serving carry out, drive-thru or delivery meals
- Office supply workers
- Farm workers
- Electricity and utility employees
- Critical manufacturing employees (medical, supply chain, energy, transportation, food, chemicals)
- Petroleum, natural and propane gas workers
- Lawn care and landscape workers
- Transportation workers
- Communications and information technology employees



In addition, these business sectors are also considered essential:

- Essential Infrastructure (construction, airport operations, building management & maintenance, highway maintenance, solid waste & recycling management and others)
- Charitable and Social Organizations (food banks, religious organizations, shelters and other services for the needy)
- Hardware and Supply Stores (business that sell office supplies and hardware for home repairs)
- Critical Trades (plumbers, electricians, security, HVAC, painters, moving services and others)

How long will a Stay-at-Home order be in effect?

There is no national date for terminating Stay-at-Home orders; the decision will be up to each state or municipality. Please refer to the Governor's website in your state. The Governors Association maintains a list of [Governor websites](#) for every state.

What happens if someone violates a Stay-at-Home order?

Remember, there are many legitimate reasons to leave your home. Going out for food, medicine or supplies; walking a dog, exercising are all allowed as long as proper social distancing is being practiced. This is not to be considered "house arrest." Stay-at-Home orders are being issued to strongly encourage the population to be diligent about slowing the spread of the coronavirus.

In some areas, law enforcement is using citizen engagement, simply asking people to disperse if they are not out for any of the legitimate reasons stated above. In other areas, law enforcement will issue citations to offenders and in a few cases, law enforcement has been authorized to arrest and fine individuals.

My business is essential. What if my employees are stopped on their way to or from work by law enforcement and asked about being out of their home?

To be safe, it is best to put together a letter on your company letterhead stating that your business is an essential service or provider and the holder of the letter is an employee critical to your operation.

Our Service Team has provided a template of this letter on our [Questco Resource Page](#).

Questco wants you to be informed. Guidelines on effectively dealing with COVID-19 are rapidly changing and evolving. If we can help you untangle the web of information and directives, continue to contact us at any time. We are here to help you today and always.

For those that can, stay home and those on the front lines, thank you for doing your part.

Stay safe and stay healthy.

Jason Randall, CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jason Randall'.