

Governor Wolf and Health Secretary Issue ‘Stay at Home’ Orders to 7 Counties to Mitigate Spread of COVID-19

March 23, 2020



PRESS RELEASE, PUBLIC HEALTH

Order Effective at 8:00 PM in Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Monroe, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties

[Governor Wolf's Order](#)
[Secretary of Health's Order](#)
[Stay at Home Guidance](#)

Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine today issued “Stay at Home” orders to Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Monroe, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties, as the state seeks relief to save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19.

This order takes effect at 8:00 PM on Monday, March 23, 2020, and will continue until April 6, 2020.

[All schools statewide](#) will also remain closed through at least April 6, 2020.

“I remain deeply concerned about this public health crisis and we must continue to take careful but critical steps now to mitigate the spread of COVID-19,” Gov. Wolf said. “We are issuing these orders because Pennsylvanians’ health and safety remains our highest priority.”

“The number of cases continues to grow and so we must take further steps to stop the spread of this contagious and dangerous novel virus to protect the public’s health and mitigate the risk to our hospital system,” Dr. Levine said. “There is one way to make sure people don’t need to be hospitalized and we don’t strain our health care system: Stay calm. Stay home. Stay safe.”

Individuals may leave their residence only to perform any of the following allowable individual activities and allowable essential travel:

- Tasks essential to maintain health and safety, or the health and safety of their family or household members (including pets), such as obtaining medicine or medical supplies, visiting a health care professional, or obtaining supplies they need to work from home
- Getting necessary services or supplies for themselves, for their family or household members, or as part of volunteer efforts, or to deliver those services or supplies to others to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences
- Engaging in outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking or running if they maintain social distancing
- To perform work providing essential products and services at a [life-sustaining business](#)
- To care for a family member or pet in another household
- Any travel related to the provision of or access to the above-mentioned individual activities or life-sustaining business activities
- Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons
- Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services
- Travel to return to a place of residence from an outside jurisdiction
- Travel required by law enforcement or court order.
- Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the commonwealth

The following operations are exempt:

- Life-sustaining business activities
- Health care or medical services providers
- Access to life-sustaining services for low-income residents, including food banks
- Access to child care services for employees of life-sustaining businesses that remain open as follows: child care facilities operating under the Department of Human Services, Office of Child Development and Early Learning waiver

process; group and family child care operating in a residence; and part-day school age programs operating under an exemption from the March 19, 2020 business closure Orders.

- News media
- Law enforcement
- The federal government
- Religious institutions

Individuals experiencing homelessness are not subject to this order but are strongly urged to find shelter and government agencies are urged to take steps needed to provide shelter for those individuals.

International students, foster youth, and any other students who would otherwise experience displacement or homelessness as a result of campus closures are exempt and may remain in campus housing.

At this time, law enforcement will be focused on ensuring that residents are aware of the order and informing the public of social distancing practices rather than enforcement. To report a noncompliant business, contact your local law enforcement agency's non-emergency number or the nearest Pennsylvania State Police station. Please do not call 911 or the Department of Community and Economic Development to file reports. Law enforcement officers should refer to Business Closure Order Enforcement Guidance available [online](#).

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, Pennsylvanians should visit: <https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/>.