

# NC governor issues 'stay-at-home' order

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper ordered people in the state to stay at home for 30 days, until April 29, 2020, in another step to slow the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Cooper's Executive Order No. 121 limits the size of gatherings to 10 people but provides for essential businesses to continue to operate while prioritizing social distancing measures.

The order went into effect at 5 p.m. on Monday. It has the force of law and will be enforced in all 100 counties statewide.

"To continue our aggressive battle against COVID-19, I have signed a Stay at Home Order for the entire state of North Carolina," Cooper said when issuing the order on March 27. "Though it is difficult, we must do this to

slow the disease spread. We need our medical system to be able to care for the friends and family we know will become seriously ill from the virus."

When he issued the order on Friday, Cooper noted that three North Carolinians had died due to COVID-19 and the state had 763 confirmed cases of the virus in 60 counties. Since then, the number of cases in North Carolina has doubled and the number of deaths has risen to at least eight.

Cooper called on all North Carolinians to protect themselves by staying home and following social distancing guidelines. North Carolina is now considered to have widespread transmission of the virus, which means people

who have tested positive cannot trace where they were exposed to the virus.

The order directs people to stay at home except to visit essential businesses, to exercise outdoors or to help a family member. Specifically, the order bans gatherings of more than 10 people and directs everyone to physically stay at least six feet apart from others.

*For more information about health recommendations and who is designated at high risk for becoming seriously ill, please visit the CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) and NCDHHS' website at [www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus).*

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the NC stay-at-home order

### The governor's stay-at-home order permits the following businesses to remain open:

- Restaurants that provide take-out, drive-thru, or delivery
- Grocery stores
- ABC stores and beer and wine stores
- Doctors and other healthcare providers
- Pharmacies
- Hardware stores
- Post offices
- Office supply stores
- Gas stations and convenience stores
- Veterinarians and pet supply stores
- Hotels, airlines, buses, taxis, and rideshare services
- Places of worship
- Media organizations
- Educational institutions providing remote learning opportunities

### What does "Stay at Home" mean?

It means people should stay at their residence and limit social interactions and travel for essential activities or essential business purposes.

### Is this Executive Order mandatory or is it just guidance?

This Order is mandatory. All persons and other entities are required to comply if they do not fall within the exemptions that are specified in the Order.

### How will this Executive Order be enforced?

Gov. Cooper is seeking voluntary cooperation from all state residents and businesses to ensure the health and safety of our communities. If voluntary cooperation is not achieved, state and local law enforcement officers have the authority to enforce the Order.

### Can I leave my home to visit friends or family members?

Individuals may leave their homes to care for a family member or friend, or to help their family member or friend get essential goods or receive necessary health care. Individuals should not visit with friends or family members if there is no urgent need.

### Can I leave my home to exercise?

People are encouraged to maintain healthy lifestyles, including outdoor recreational activity, such as walking pets and jogging. While exercising, individuals should maintain social distancing and continue to take protective measures to maintain their personal health and wellbeing.

### Does this Order prohibit outside group exercise?

As long as the group abides by the mass gatherings provision in the Order (no more than 10 people) and maintains adequate social distancing, this activity is not prohibited, but it is strongly discouraged.

### What if my home is not a safe environment?

Individuals whose residences are unsafe or become unsafe, such as victims of domestic violence, are permitted and urged to leave their home and stay at a safe alternate location, which can include a hotel or shelter.

### Does this Order prohibit operations of child care centers and other child care providers?

No. Although child care providers are urged to remain open for first responders and essential employees, they are also open to the general public. All open child

care providers must follow the NCDHHS emergency child care operations and financing guidance.

### Can I still mail items and get deliveries?

Yes. The postal service and private mail and delivery services are essential businesses and will remain open.

### What is the current number of people that can gather under the mass gathering requirements?

A mass gathering is defined as no more than ten (10) people.

### Are religious functions allowed?

Religious gatherings are subject to the mass gathering ban and may not have more than 10 people. Participants should practice social distancing.

### Are weddings allowed?

Weddings are subject to the mass gathering ban and may not have more than 10 people. Participants should practice social distancing.

### Are funerals allowed?

Funerals are time-sensitive events and may not have more than 50 people. Participants should practice social distancing.

### What are social distancing requirements?

- Maintain at least a six foot distance from other individuals
- Wash hands using soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or the use of hand sanitizer;
- Regularly clean high-touch surfaces;
- Facilitate online or remote access by customers if possible.