

Mecklenburg County Stay at Home Order – Frequently Asked Questions

What does this order mean?

It means that movement is restricted for all residents of Mecklenburg County to stay at their place of residence except that they may leave to provide or receive essential services or engage in essential activities and work for essential businesses and government services.

It restricts travel upon public streets, alleys, or roadways or other property except by those in need of medical assistance, food or other commodity or service necessary to sustain the well-being of themselves or their families or some member thereof.

What is the purpose/goal of this order?

To ensure the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible, while enabling essential services to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the maximum extent possible.

How does this order change the previous executive order prohibiting mass gatherings of 50 people or more?

This Proclamation supersedes the restrictions outlined the Public Health Order to Restrict Mass Gatherings, which prohibited mass gatherings of 50 people or more.

What is and not allowed?

YOU CAN

- Go to the grocery, convenience or warehouse store
- Go to the pharmacy to pick up medications and other healthcare necessities
- Visiting a health care professional for medical services that cannot be provided virtually (call first)
- Go to a restaurant for take-out, delivery or drive-thru
- Care for or support a friend or family member
- Take a walk, ride your bike, hike, jog and be in nature for exercise – just keep at least six feet between you and others
- Walk your pets and take them to veterinarian if necessary
- Help someone to get necessary supplies
- Receive deliveries from any business which delivers

YOU SHOULD NOT

- Go to work unless you are providing essential services as defined by this Order
- Visit friends and family if there is no urgent need
- Maintain less than 6 feet of distance from others when you go out
- Visit loved ones in the hospital, nursing home, skilled nursing facility or other residential care facility, except for limited exceptions as provided on the facility websites
- Travel except for essential travel and activities

What is the difference between “Stay at Home” and “social distancing”? Stay at home is a stricter form of social distancing. Stay at home means:

- Stay home (stay unexposed and do not expose others)
- Only go out for essential services
- Stay 6 feet or more away from others
- Don't gather in groups

When will this order be lifted?

The order is valid through April 16, 2020 but will be regularly reviewed and evaluated and can be revised, amended, or extended based on recommendations from Mecklenburg County Public Health Director and/or Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management.

Activities and businesses/travel that are considered essential.

Activities that are considered essential.

- For health and safety
- To get necessary supplies and services
- For outdoor activities (walking, hiking, golfing, running, cycling, using greenways)
- For work for essential businesses/operations
- To take care of others

Businesses and types of work are considered essential.

- Healthcare, public health, law enforcement, public safety and first responders
- Food, beverages, and agriculture (manufacturing, production, processing, cultivation including farming, livestock, fishing, baking, distribution of animals and good for consumption, providing food, shelter, and other necessities for animals)
- Stores that sell groceries and medicine (including liquor stores)
- Organizations that provide charitable and social services (businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations including food banks, when providing food and shelter, social services, and other necessities for life for economically disadvantaged or needy individuals, individuals who need assistance, and people with disabilities).
- Energy
- Water and wastewater
- Transportation and logistics (including airports and ridesharing companies such as Uber and Lyft)
- Public works
- Communication and information technology
- Media
- Gas stations and businesses needed for transportation (gas stations and auto-supply, auto-repair, and related facilities and bicycle shops and related facilities)
- Financial institutions (banks, currency exchange, consumer lenders, including but not limited, to payday lenders, pawnbrokers, consumer installment lenders and sales finance lenders, credit unions, appraisers, title companies, financial markets, trading and future exchanges, affiliates of financial institutions, entities that issue bonds, related financial institutions, and institutions selling financial products)
- Hardware and supply stores
- Critical trades (building and construction – plumbers, electricians, exterminators, cleaning and janitorial staff for commercial and governmental properties, security staff, operating engineers, HVAC, painting, moving and relocation

services, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, essential activities, and essential businesses)

- Mail, post, shipping, logistics, delivery, and pick-up services (post offices and other businesses that provide shipping and delivery services, businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services to end users or through commercial channels)
- Laundry services
- Restaurants for consumption off-premises (in-house delivery, third-party deliver, drive-through, curbside pick-up, and carry-out)
- Supplies to work from home
- Supplies for essential businesses and operations (see #14 in the order for details)
- Transportation (airlines, taxis, public transportation, vehicle rental, logistics)
- Home-based care and services (home-based care for adults, seniors, children, people with disabilities)
- Residential facilities and shelters
- Professional services (legal, accounting, insurance, real estate, restricted to appraisal and title services)
- Childcare centers (for specific employees – first responders, healthcare workers, public health, etc)
- Manufacture, distribution, and supply chain (see #20 for details)
- Hotels and motels
- Funeral services
- Other community-based government operations and essential functions including human services
- Other community-based human service operations
- Critical manufacturing
- Hazardous materials

Can religious institutions continue to live stream services?

Yes – faith-based organizations are still allowed to live stream services provided that they abide by the restriction of 10 or less people physically on-site, while practicing proper social distancing practices.

I live outside of Mecklenburg County. How does this affect me?

If you work in Mecklenburg County, then your business/employer must comply with this order. You are allowed to travel through Mecklenburg County and conduct essential activities within Mecklenburg County and to return home.

If you live in Mecklenburg County but work in a different county at a business that is non-essential, you are to remain home.

What are minimum basic operations?

The minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the businesses' inventory, preserve the condition of the business's physical plant and equipment, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions.

The minimum necessary activities to facilitate the employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences.

What is considered essential travel?

- Any travel related to the provision of or access to essential activities, essential governmental functions, essential businesses and operations, or minimum basic operations.
- Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons
- Travel to or from education institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and other related services

- Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction
- Travel required by law enforcement or court order, including to transport children pursuant to a custody agreement
- Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside the County. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of the County remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel

Am I allowed to travel?

You are allowed to travel for purposes of essential business and essential activities.

Am I allowed to go outside to exercise?

Yes – but maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from all others.

What are the requirements for social distancing?

Required measures include:

- Designate 6 foot distances
- Hand sanitizer and sanitizing products
- Separate operating hours for vulnerable populations
- Online and remote access

Enforcement Activities

Can I get arrested for violating this order?

CMPD is continuing to enforce the order through education, dialogue, and seeking voluntary cooperation from all residents and businesses. If voluntary cooperation is not achieved CMPD is equipped to enforce these restrictions through citations or misdemeanor charges.

Any person violating any prohibition or restriction imposed by this order shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor in accordance with G.S. 14-288.20A.

How do I report a violation of this order?

Call 3-1-1 or visit the City of Charlotte's website – see the COVID-19 updates page

I live in (Huntersville/Cornelius/Davidson/Pineville/Matthews/Mint Hill) – does this order apply to me?

Yes – this order applies to all residents within Mecklenburg County

Does this order apply to the homeless?

No – homeless are exempt from this restriction but are urged to find shelter.

Non-essential business and travel

What does this mean for non-essential businesses?

Non-essential business and operations must cease – all businesses and operations in the County, except Essential Businesses and Operations are to cease all activities within the County except minimum basic operations. Businesses may continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own residences (i.e., working from home).

What do I do if my business is considered non-essential but is requiring me to report to work?

Confirm that your company is indeed considered non-essential. If you have questions, you can call the help line at 704-353-1926 from 8:00a.m. to 8:00p.m. Monday through Friday. Violations of the Stay at Home order can be reported to 311 or via the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department form found at charlottenc.gov.

The order says I am allowed to go outside – can I take my children to parks/amusement centers?

All places of public amusement where people may gather, whether indoors or outdoors, including but not limited to, locations with amusement rides, carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, aquariums, zoos, museums, arcades, fairs, children's play centers, playgrounds, recreation centers, funplexes, theme parks, bowling alleys, movie and other theaters, concert and music halls, and country clubs or social clubs shall be closed to the public.

Can I visit a loved one in a hospital/nursing home/etc.?

Owners, administrators, operators, staff, contractors, and volunteers of nursing homes, long term care and assisted living facilities are prohibited from allowing a person to enter the facility and visit a resident unless each of the following criteria are met: (1) the visitor is an adult; (2) the resident has not already had a visitor that day; and (3) the visit takes place in the resident's room. **This prohibition does not apply to end of life situations.**

Landscaping

As outlined in the Stay at Home Orders - Essential Businesses and Operations for critical trades, Landscape companies are permitted to mow the grass at residencies and businesses but not do any beautification. They are permitted to remove yard waste or debris such as downed tree limbs that would be considered safety issues. They are not to have face-to-face interactions with homeowners and must be paid remotely via mail or online resources. Landscapers also must practice social distancing and must operate as individuals not in close proximity to others.