

Stay Home Order – Frequently Asked Questions

Franklin County Health Officer Dr. Bud Ransom has issued a “Stay at Home” order as the Franklin County community continues efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19. Grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations and healthcare facilities will remain open, as residents are ordered to remain home except for essential needs.

The full order can be found [here](#). Below are some FAQs as a quicker guide:

What is open?

These essential services will remain open:

- County/City government services - police stations, fire stations, hospitals/clinics and healthcare operations, jails, garbage/sanitation, utilities *Please note: some of these facilities are closed for public access but available by other means of communication.*
- Gas stations
- Pharmacies
- Food: Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants
- Hardware stores/plumbers/electricians and those who provide services necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences
- Banks
- Community benefit organizations on a case-by-case basis
- Laundromats/laundry services
- Cemeteries

What is closed?

- Dine-in restaurants (take-out, drive-through and delivery are permitted)
- Bars, taverns, and nightclubs
- Entertainment venues
- Gyms and fitness studios, barber shops, salons and tattoo parlors

Can I leave the County?

It is highly discouraged for you to leave for recreational purposes. We realize that this cannot be avoided in instances of essential business, healthcare priorities, etc.

As an essential worker, do I need an official letter or badge showing that I am allowed to go to work or be outside my home?

No. Badges and letters are not needed. It’s not our intent at this time for people to be cited by law enforcement as they move around the county. We want to assume people’s good intention that they will follow the order and will be out of their homes for permitted reasons. We do encourage people to stay at home unless they need to perform an essential service or have a job with an essential service or business that cannot be done from home. We encourage everyone who can to work from home and encourage businesses to allow for that as much as possible.

Are agricultural jobs considered essential right now?

Agriculture is considered essential, and workers should practice proper social-distancing methods. As with other industries, not all jobs under agriculture would be considered essential. While it is important to have a service department open to repair farming equipment, it is not essential that a sales floor to sell new equipment be open.

Can I operate, work at or frequent a specific business, company or service during this stay at home order?

We would refer you to Franklin County’s Stay at Home [Order](#) to see all of the services and activities that are deemed “essential.” If you see it there, it is exempt from the order and these activities are allowed. We ask that

you keep in mind that we want the public to stay at home unless they need an essential service performed or work at a place that performs essential services, and their work cannot be done from home.

Will grocery stores and liquor stores remain open?

Yes, as long as people do not congregate and stores adhere to the CDC's guidance on social distancing.

How does the order apply to religious organizations or places of worship?

Public gatherings of 10 or more are prohibited. Most places of worship have enacted virtual services for the duration of the order. Drive in services where people remain in their cars would be allowed.

Can I go outside, take a walk or a run, walk my dog, spend time in a park or on a trail? Can I visit a grandchild, check on an elderly parent or neighbor, handle my custody arrangements with my children per normal?

Yes. All of those activities are allowed under Franklin County's order if you follow the CDC guidance of social distancing. Use of parks and other public areas are permitted. However, use of playground equipment is discouraged.

Can I have friends over for dinner or have my child participate in a play date?

No.

Is curbside pickup allowed for retailers to fulfill online or phone orders?

Curbside pick-up is the only option for "non-essential" business, but we would urge people to stay home and exhaust delivery options for items first. This practice is allowed as long as all other appropriate social-distancing practices and protocols are in place.

How does it affect car dealerships?

Repair and body shop operations are deemed essential to make repairs for transportation for essential services and workers, but showroom floors of dealerships are not considered essential and should be closed to the public.

Can I go buy pet food or take my pet to the vet?

Yes.

I receive mental health treatment, can I still go to their office?

Yes, but perform good hygiene practices and social distancing.

How does this affect the schools and universities? Will my student still be able to retrieve their items from the school?

Educational institutions — K-12 schools, colleges, and universities — will be allowed to continue operating in order to support the objective of distance learning and to support essential functions. Schools may follow previous plans for students to retrieve items as long as they abide by the six-foot social distancing guidelines from the CDC.

For other questions or concerns, please email Kaci Brady kbrady@franklincoks.org