

Essential Businesses & Operations Frequently Asked Questions

UPDATED 4/9/20

Executive Order 20-10 requires all non-essential businesses and operations to cease all activities except for minimum basic operations. Non-essential businesses may also continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors working from home.

What businesses and operations are considered essential?

EO 20-10 identifies the following as essential businesses and operations:

- Healthcare and Public Health Operations (includes businesses in the supply chain)
- Human Services Operations
- Essential Infrastructure
 - Food production, distribution and sale; construction, building management and maintenance, airports, utilities, distribution centers, transportation.
- Essential Government Functions
 - First responders, emergency personnel, law enforcement, safety and welfare.
- Stores that sell groceries and medicine
- Food, beverage and cannabis production and agriculture
- Charitable and social services
- Media
- Gas stations and businesses needed for transportation
- Financial institutions
- Hardware and supply stores
- Critical trades
 - Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, cleaning and janitorial staff, security, etc.
- Mail, post, shipping, logistics, delivery and pick-up services
- Educational institutions
- Laundry services
- Restaurants for consumption off-premises
- Supplies to work from home
- Supplies for essential businesses and operations
- Transportation (airlines, taxis, ride-sharing)
- Home-based care and services
- Residential facilities and shelters
- Professional services (legal, accounting, insurance, real estate)
- Day care centers for employees exempted by the Executive Order
- Manufacture, distribution, and supply chain for critical products and industries
- Critical labor union functions
- Hotels and motels
- Funeral services



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My business falls within one of the categories. Can I require my employees come to work?

- The intent of the EO is to ensure that the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence. Even essential businesses and operations should promote telecommuting whenever possible.
- Consider alternating work schedules to minimize the number of employees in the office at the same time.
- To the greatest extent feasible, essential businesses and operations shall comply with social distancing requirements, including maintaining six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public at all times. They must also take the following practice measures wherever possible:
 - Designating with signage, tape, or by other means six-foot spacing for employees and customers in line to maintain appropriate distance;
 - Having hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers;
 - Implementing separate operating hours for elderly and vulnerable customers;
 - Posting online whether a facility is open and how best to reach the facility and continue services by phone or remotely.

I'm not sure if my business falls within one of those categories

Please read the Executive Order as it provides much more information of what businesses and operations are essential. If after this review you still are not sure, you can reach out to DCEO at 1-800-252-2923 or CEO.support@illinois.gov. Please be prepared to answer the following questions:

- What general industry are you in?
- What products do you make/what services do you perform?
 - What is the end use and who are the end users of your products or services?
 - Which specific medical or other essential business do you supply products or provide services to?
 - Is there a pending order or a routine schedule for shipments?
 - If you produce durable equipment, has demand for that equipment by essential businesses increased?
- Can any of your business functions be performed remotely?
- How many employees do you have?
 - Can your employees work remotely?
 - If some or all of the employees must be at the place of business, can operations be modified so that employees work in shifts (one week at home; one week at the place of business)?
- What is the physical layout of the facility where people work?
 - How will you be able to ensure proper distancing?
 - Do you have hand sanitizer available?



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- Are restrooms cleaned frequently and stocked with soap?
- Where do employees eat? Is that cleaned frequently and is there room to social distance?
- Explain why you believe your business falls within one of the essential business categories.

My business is not considered an “Essential Business,” does this order require the business to shut down my facility?

- You and your employees are allowed to perform “Minimum Basic Operations” at your work place, so long as employees maintain a distance of six feet from one another to the greatest extent feasible. Minimum Basic Operations include maintaining the value of inventory, payroll, ensuring security, and ensuring that employees can work remotely. Other than to maintain “Minimum Basic Operations,” employees can only work remotely from their residences.

My technology company provides products and services that the public needs to access critical services. Is my company being completely shut down?

- No. However, most employees of such companies will need to work from home. Anyone who must work onsite to maintain “Essential Infrastructure” for the community or to maintain “Minimum Basic Operations” as described in the Order may continue to work in the workplace so long as they are maintaining social distancing.

Are companies that sell only CDB products and/or nutritional supplements, but not medicine or other medications not requiring a prescription, considered essential businesses?

- No. Companies that only sell these products do not fall within Section 12(a) of the Executive Order and must temporarily cease operations apart from “Minimum Basic Operations.”

Can people who reside in Illinois but perform manufacturing or supply chain work outside the state (where there is no such order in place) be able to travel to their jobs?

- Yes. This order covers businesses in Illinois and their operations; it does not cover businesses that are located outside of Illinois.

My business is non-essential. Can I have one person come in on a daily basis to pack up online orders and take them to the post office?

- Yes. Maintaining inventory is considered a minimum basic operation that non-essential businesses can continue to perform. However, non-essential businesses are not permitted to have in-store pickup. The inventory must be taken to the post office or otherwise shipped. The business cannot deliver the product to the purchaser’s home.



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My business is non-essential. Can I have an employee come to the building each day to pick up the mail?

- Yes. Retrieving mail is considered a minimum basic operation that non-essential businesses can continue to perform.

Can a personal trainer have exercise training sessions with 5 or fewer people?

- No. Professional services such as a personal trainer is not considered essential business under the restrictions contained in the executive order.

Would manufacturers that produce products for the transportation and construction sectors qualify under Sec. 12(t) of Essential Businesses? (e.g. supply products or parts for street/highway signs and construction sites)

- This depends on how directly and closely linked the manufactured products are to critical infrastructure, public health, and/or essential businesses. You will need to answer additional questions such as: what products are you producing? Do you currently have orders to supply an essential business such as a restaurant, grocery store, or health care facility? Do you currently have orders to supply firms or governments that are building or maintaining critical infrastructure such as roads, railroads, airports, or electrical power plants? If after conducting an analysis guided by the questions above you are still not sure, you can reach out to DCEO at 1-800-252-2923 or CEO.support@illinois.gov.

Can golf courses stay open?

- No; recreational sports businesses including golf courses are not considered essential businesses under the executive order.

Are car dealerships considered essential businesses?

- Car dealerships can remain open for repair services. They can also remain open for car sales on an appointment-only basis. Showrooms must remain closed.

Can residential and commercial lawn service remain open?

- Yes. Many landscape projects will fit under an exemption such as construction, agriculture, or public works. Outdoor landscape projects generally will provide for good social distancing that poses little risk of transmission, but it still is important to ensure the ability to wash or sanitize hands and take other precautions.



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Is residential remodeling an essential business?

- Generally yes, residential remodeling falls within Section 9 of the Executive Order. However, residential remodeling companies must ensure social distancing compliance during their work.

Are car washes considered an essential business?

- Exterior automated car washes, both free-standing and those connected with a gas station, are permissible. Full-service car washes are not permissible. Interior cleaning is prohibited. Self-service vacuums are also prohibited.

Are moving companies considered essential?

- Yes. They fall under Section 12(i) as shipping, delivery and pick-up services.

Are sprinkler contractors considered “essential business”?

Yes. Sprinkler contractors fall within Section 9 of the Executive Order as essential infrastructure (construction and building maintenance).

Are fire alarm system contractors and fire protection/suppression system contractors considered “essential businesses”?

Yes. Fire alarm and fire protection/suppression systems are deemed critical trades under Section 12(h) of the Executive Order as they ensure the safety of residences, Essential Activities and Essential Businesses and Operations

Are building security systems contractors considered “essential businesses.”

Yes. Building security systems contractors are deemed critical trades under Section 12(h) of the Executive Order as they ensure the safety of residences, Essential Activities and Essential Businesses and Operations.

Are businesses licensed under the Private Detective, Private Alarm, Private Security, Fingerprint Vendor, and Locksmith Act deemed essential?

Yes. Section 12(h) provides that "security staff" is a critical trade and an essential business and operation that may continue in operation and is not subject to the stay-at-home directive. The Department deems private detectives, private detective PERCs, private alarm contractors, private alarm contractor PERCs, private security contractors, private security contractor PERCs, fingerprint vendors, canine handlers,



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locksmiths, locksmith PERCs, and security officers of a registered armed proprietary security force holding active licenses under the Private Detective, Private Alarm, Private Security, Fingerprint Vendor and Locksmith Act to be "security staff" as referenced in Section 12h of the Executive Order and not subject to the stay-at-home directive.

What about greenhouses, garden centers, and nurseries?

Our original guidance provided that “stores that sell supplies that assist with either (a) agriculture; or (b) products for landscaping can continue to sell those products to the public, provided adequate social distancing is complied with.” This guidance remains valid.

We recently expanded our guidance so that all garden stores, garden centers, and nurseries (even those that did not fall within our original guidance above) are allowed to sell products for delivery or pick-up. That expanded guidance states: “Garden stores and greenhouses can remain open for purposes of maintaining inventory, and to fulfill online and phone orders for pick-up or delivery only.” This guidance applies to both standalone stores as well as garden centers that are part of a larger store (such as a garden center that is part of a hardware store or big box stores such as Lowe’s or Home Depot).

Are tobacco/vape/CBD shops considered essential?

No. Retail tobacco, CBD and vape stores are not considered essential under the Executive Order.

Are bicycle shops considered essential?

Yes. Bicycle shops are deemed essential under 12(e) of the Executive Order.

Can doggy daycares remain open?

Yes. Kennels are deemed essential under section 12(b) of the Executive Order and doggy daycares, by extension, are also deemed essential.

What about pet grooming services?

No. Pet grooming is not an essential business.

Is candy manufacturing allowed?

Food and beverage manufacturing is considered essential under 12(b) of the Executive Order. While candy manufacturers thus are encompassed by the Executive Order, they are encouraged to consider whether a voluntary pause in operations during the emergency would be the better course in the interest of public health and safety.



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Are real estate open houses and showings permitted?

It depends. Open houses are not permitted. Showings of occupied rental properties are not permitted. Showings of vacant or owner-occupied units are permitted if necessary and scheduled in advance (virtual showings are preferred) but limited to no more than 4 people.

For additional guidance for Real Estate Licensees, [click here](#).

Are stores that sell primarily cosmetics and beauty supply stores considered essential?

No. Stores that sell primarily personal care products are not considered essential under Section 12(a).

Are campgrounds and KOAs deemed essential?

Generally no. Campgrounds and RV parks (Kampgrounds of America) are considered recreational activities and are not essential. However, if a campground or RV park is your primary residence, then the campground or RV park can remain open.

Are power washing businesses permitted?

Yes. Power washing businesses are considered essential. The business assists with sanitation of structures for owners.

Can I alternate my “staying at home” between my primary home and my vacation property?

No – traveling back-and-forth to a vacation home is not Essential Travel.

Are chiropractors considered essential?

Yes. Chiropractors are included in Section 7 of the Executive Order (Healthcare and Public Health Operations).

Are massage therapists considered essential?

No, unless the massage treatment is being performed pursuant to a physician’s order.

Are people permitted to go boating during the shelter-in-place order?

Boating is a recreational activity in which groups of people are gathered in small spaces. This is not an essential activity under the EO. Only Minimum Basic Operations will be permitted at boat yards and marinas.



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Who is responsible for enforcing the Executive Order?

State and local law enforcement are charged with enforcing the Executive Order.

Are firefighting and EMT trainings essential services?

Yes.

Are people permitted to go boating during the Stay-at-Home Order?

Boating is a recreational activity in which groups of people are gathered in small spaces. This is not an essential activity under the EO. Only minimum business operations will be permitted at boat yards and marinas.

Energy Sector FAQs

Will public utilities and other utility service providers be subject to movement and business operations restrictions?

- The energy sector maintains multiple types of facilities that must remain operational for the remainder of the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation.
- Individuals may leave their residence to provide any services or perform any work necessary to offer, provision, operate, maintain and repair “Essential Infrastructure,” including the operations and maintenance of electrical generation, provided that they carry out those services or that work in compliance with Social Distancing Requirements.
- The definition of Essential Businesses and Operations in Governor Pritzker’s Executive Order is meant to encompass the workers identified in the Memorandum issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency, on March 19, 2020, which can be found here: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>
- Utilities should prioritize essential services and use best judgement when deciding to proceed with infrastructure upgrades and movement and business operations.

How should essential employees identify themselves? Will they be able to present their company badges to law enforcement and allowed to proceed home or to work? How will this be communicated to local law enforcement?

- Law enforcement officials should not stop residents who are on their way to or from work.



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- To preserve public health and safety throughout the state and ensure that our healthcare delivery system is capable of serving those who are sick, we recommend that utilities identify absolutely essential staff – those who ensure basic power plant operations and cannot do their work remotely.
- Individuals that are not subject to movement and business operations restrictions should wear appropriate badging (where available) and carry company identification (if available).
- Individuals may also display other documentation or orders that clearly indicate their role or purpose matches the exceptions to any movement and business operations restrictions.

Is the state prioritizing power plants with supply chain needs, for items such as cleaning supplies and surgical masks?

- The state's reserve of personal protective equipment (PPE) is currently prioritized for health care workers and first responders.

What is the protocol for commercial transportation if mechanical equipment is needed for power plant operations?

- “Essential Travel” includes any travel related to the provision of or access to Essential Activities.
- Individuals engaged in any Essential Travel must comply with all Social Distancing Requirements as defined in the Executive Order.
- Transportation of mechanical equipment necessary for plant operations will still be allowed.

Will rail carriers be subject to the movement and business restrictions?

- Individuals employed by, contracted with, or operating on behalf of railroads are not subject to the movement and business operations restrictions when providing products and services necessary to maintain safe and efficient train operations in the furtherance of community relief and sustained supply chains.

Will the vendors or contractors relied upon by public utilities and other utility service providers be subject to movement and business operations restrictions?

- Individuals employed by or working on behalf of establishments that provide parts, repair and service, fuel, security, or other products or services necessary for the operation of “Essential Infrastructure” or electrical generation are not subject to these restrictions.
- This includes, but is not limited to, individuals employed by entities that sell any of the following to essential businesses or infrastructure: IT and telecommunication equipment; electrical, plumbing and heating material; automotive fuel; domestic fuel.



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What other guidance do you have for utility companies and their workers?

- If you must do work at a customer's home, practice social distancing.
- If you are sick and have respiratory symptoms, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, stay home unless you need medical attention. Remain in your home until you feel better and have no symptoms.
- Keep in mind there is no treatment for COVID-19 and people who are mildly ill can isolate at home. While at home, as much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people.
- Those who need medical attention should contact their health care provider who will evaluate whether they can be cared for at home or need to be hospitalized.
- Additional guidance can be found on IDPH's site: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>

Will collateral recovery agencies be subject to the movement and business restrictions?

- Yes. Under the Governor's Executive Order 2020-16, repossession of vehicles has been deemed contrary to the interest of preserving public health and should be suspended while the Order is in effect.
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Will relocation towing be subject to the movement and business restrictions?

- Relocation towing from private property may only occur in relation to maintaining the essential operation of residences, activities, and businesses and operations as defined under the Executive Order.

Will safety towing of damaged or disabled vehicles from public roadways be subject to the movement and business restrictions?

- No. Towing damaged or disabled vehicles from public roadways is necessary for essential travel.