

# Coronavirus in the US: How all 50 states are responding to this public health emergency

April 1 2020, by Jorge L. Ortiz

---



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C., on Monday joined the fast-growing list of jurisdictions mandating their residents to remain at home as much as possible to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Despite its large population of seniors, who are most susceptible to the harshest effects of COVID-19, Florida continues to resist calls to follow suit on a statewide basis, although it has imposed some limitations. On Monday, Gov. Ron DeSantis directed people living in the southeast part of the state to shelter in place.

At least 30 states have such orders in place, although they go by different names—often shelter in place or stay at home—and they have exceptions for essential tasks such as grocery shopping, visiting a doctor and exercising, as well as some jobs deemed critical.

Altogether, approximately 250 million Americans—about 75% of the country—have been told to remain sheltered and, when engaged in essential activities, maintain at least six feet of distance from those who are not members of their immediate household.

Here's what the new orders look like in each state as of Monday:

## **Alabama**

Gov. Kay Ivey has tried to straddle the line between ordering and encouraging the state's residents: "These are uncertain times, for sure. So now, and for the foreseeable future, please, please consider staying safe at home," she said in a March 30 video.

Alabama's largest city, Birmingham, has mandated residents to stay at home, but so far there's no statewide directive.

## **Alaska**

The Last Frontier on March 27 implemented what it's calling a "social distancing" mandate, which is similar to a shelter-in-place order. Gov.

Mike Dunleavy directed residents to stay at home and banned most travel within the state.

"We crossed a line today for Alaska," Dunleavy said after the state's first death linked to the coronavirus.

## **Arizona**

Gov. Doug Ducey's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy, Stay Connected" order, announced March 30, was set to go into effect the next day at 5 p.m. and extend until April 30.

## **Arkansas**

Gov. Asa Hutchinson has directed residents not to gather in groups larger than 10 but has not forced them to stay in. "I do not want to go to a shelter-in-place environment," Hutchinson said.

## **California**

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a statewide shelter-in-place order on March 19, and identified 16 critical infrastructure sectors to remain open—including those providing food, health care and energy.

"This is a dynamic situation," Newsom said. "I don't expect this to be many, many months, but for the time being, we are recognizing the next eight weeks" as especially important.

## **Colorado**

Gov. Jared Polis on March 25 issued a statewide stay-at-home order that went into effect the next morning and will run until April 11. The order

stipulates that Coloradans should leave their homes only for "critical activities."

"Now is the time to stay at home," Polis said. "You have the chance to be a hero and save thousands of lives by staying at home. The lives of many Coloradans hinge on your ability to be able to stay at home for the next couple weeks to the most of your ability ... Now is not the time to die."

## **Connecticut**

Gov. Ned Lamont announced an executive order March 20 that directed all nonessential businesses and not-for-profit entities to prohibit all in-person functions if possible. The order excludes essential business, such as health care, food service, law enforcement and similar critical services.

The order recommended that people maintain social distancing, limit outdoor recreational activities to non-contact and limit the use of public transportation, among other items.

## **Delaware**

Gov. John Carney ordered residents of The First State to stay at home and closed nonessential businesses in the state, effective March 24.

## **Florida**

Gov. Ron DeSantis' "Safer at Home" order applies to Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe and Palm Beach counties, and extends until April 15. Nearly 60% of the state's cases of coronavirus have been concentrated in those four counties. Other counties have issued their own orders, and some of the state's beaches have closed their parking lots to discourage

large gatherings.

## **Georgia**

The city of Atlanta and Cobb and Gwinnett counties have ordered residents to stay home, but Gov. Brian Kemp has not done so on a statewide basis.

## **Hawaii**

Gov. David Ige signed a stay-at-home order March 23 that went into effect two days later, prohibiting gatherings of more than 10 people. The order will be effective through April 30.

Residents can leave home "only for essential activities or to engage in the essential businesses and operations." As long as social distancing is practiced, "ocean activities such as surfing and swimming" are also exempted.

## **Idaho**

Gov. Brad Little on March 25 signed an "Order to Self-Isolate" that became effective immediately and will run for three weeks. The order exempts residents who need to leave for essential activities. Little also signed an "extreme emergency declaration" and mobilized the Idaho National Guard "to support civil authorities and local jurisdictions."

## **Illinois**

Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced a "stay-at-home" order March 20 that began the following day and will last until at least April 7.

All nonessential businesses must close, and all people who can work from home must do so, Pritzker said. All Illinois schools will stay closed until at least April 8.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot said the order "is not a lockdown or martial law." Pharmacies, grocery stores, clinics and airports remain open and garbage is being collected.

## **Indiana**

Gov. Eric J. Holcomb told state residents on March 23 to stay at home until at least April 7, asking "Hoosiers to hunker down" in an executive order.

The order gives Indiana State Police and local law enforcement the authority to enforce violations.

## **Iowa**

Gov. Kim Reynolds has not mandated that Iowans stay home, saying an informal guidance that they do so is "equivalent" to an order, although it does not have law-enforcement power.

## **Kansas**

After citing models that predicted a possible increase of local cases in Kansas to 900 over the following week, Gov. Laura Kelly signed an executive "stay home" order March 28. The order became effective March 30 and will run until April 19. It allows Kansans to leave their homes for essential activities.

"I know this is hard, and I can't tell you how much I wish it weren't

necessary," Kelly said. "But we have a small window to ensure that Kansas does not suffer the same terrible fate of other hard-hit states like New York and Missouri."

## **Kentucky**

Gov. Andy Beshear on March 25 signed an order encouraging residents to remain "Healthy at Home," which he later said amounts to a directive to remain in the house except for essential activities. While many medical facilities have complied with a request to cease elective procedures, it became a mandate starting Monday.

He further tightened restrictions, and on March 30 signed an executive order telling Kentuckians they cannot travel outside the state with a few exceptions. If they do, they'll need to self-quarantine for 14 days.

## **Louisiana**

Gov. John Bel Edwards issued a statewide stay-at-home order March 22 for nonessential workers and businesses. The order went into effect the next day. All public schools and many businesses, such as bars and gyms, were already closed by previous executive orders, but the order expanded the closures. On March 30, he extended the order through at least April 30.

## **Maine**

The state's largest city, Portland, ordered residents to stay home starting March 25, but Gov. Janet Mills has not. She did ban gatherings of more than 10 and mandated that most nonessential businesses close.

## **Maryland**

As part of a virtual shutdown of the capital region, which has a population of 15 million, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan tightened restrictions in ordering residents to stay home. Maryland is grappling with a major outbreak in one of its nursing homes.

## **Massachusetts**

Gov. Charlie Baker on March 23 announced a stay-at-home advisory for all unnecessary activities. The order will run until April 7.

"We're asking everyone to use their common sense, think about the impact this virus is having on the sick and elderly, and to limit their interactions with other people," Baker said.

## **Michigan**

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on March 23 signed a "Stay Home, Stay Safe" executive order that runs through April 13. Violating the order is a criminal misdemeanor and could bring fines and also result in businesses being shut down.

"I know this will be hard, but it will be temporary," Whitmer said. "If we all come together, get serious, and do our part by staying home, we can stay safe and save lives."

## **Minnesota**

Gov. Tim Walz signed an executive order March 25 that directs residents to stay in their homes and limit movement to essential activities. It runs until April 10 at 5 p.m. The order was based on models released by the Minnesota Department of Health and University of Minnesota that predicted more than 70,000 residents could die if no



action was taken.

## **Mississippi**

Gov. Tate Reeves tweeted on March 29: "This is a deadly disease that we all must take seriously. Stay at home. Follow our rules against gatherings. More news tomorrow. Stay safe."

So far, however, there are no mandates for state residents to stay home.

## **Missouri**

On March 21, Missouri's two largest cities, Kansas City and St. Louis, issued stay-at-home orders. Several counties have done the same, but Gov. Mike Parson has not taken statewide action.

"This situation will only get worse, much worse, if we don't act right now," Mayor Lyda Krewson of St. Louis said.

## **Montana**

Gov. Steve Bullock issued an order March 26 that went into effect two days later, directing residents to stay at home and closing nonessential businesses.

"I'd rather be accused of overreacting than having a health care system overwhelmed and unable to help our most-at-risk Montanans when they need it the most," Bullock said.

## **Nebraska**

Gov. Pete Ricketts said the state has been proactive in responding to the

coronavirus pandemic and does not need to order residents to stay at home.

## **Nevada**

Gov. Steve Sisolak signed a public directive March 24 that prohibits gatherings of 10 or more people. The directive does not, however, prohibit people from leaving their homes, as long as social distancing is practiced.

"This is not to prevent your household members from going for a walk," Sisolak said. "If you live inside together, you can be outside together."

## **New Hampshire**

Gov. Chris Sununu released an emergency order on March 27 mandating the closure of all nonessential businesses and requiring Granite Staters to stay home.

The order is expected to be in place until May 4. The state saw its first death from the virus just days before Sununu's order.

## **New Jersey**

On March 21, Gov. Phil Murphy ordered residents to stay at home. He also canceled gatherings of any number, including parties, weddings and religious ceremonies.

"We have to change our behaviors," Murphy said, adding the restrictions would not change "anytime soon" and could continue for weeks or months.

## **New Mexico**

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham issued a public health order Monday that calls for nonessential businesses to be closed until at least April 10.

The order said residents "should stay at home and undertake only those outings absolutely necessary for their health, safety or welfare." The order also prohibits gatherings of more than four people.

## **New York**

Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced March 20 that all New York residents must stay home "to the maximum extent possible."

Cuomo called the order the "New York State on PAUSE" plan, and it bans all nonessential gatherings of individuals "of any size for any reason."

Residents can leave their homes for solitary exercise or to obtain essential services or items, including trips to the grocery stores.

## **North Carolina**

After some counties mandated that their residents stay home, Gov. Roy Cooper extended the order statewide on March 27. Calling the decision "a matter of life or death," Cooper said the order will extend until April 29.

## **North Dakota**

Gov. Doug Burgum shut down all nonessential businesses but has not ordered residents to stay in the house: "It's not about staying home, it's

about avoiding contact," Burgum said.

Most Indian reservations in the state have either imposed curfews or stay-at-home orders.

## **Ohio**

Gov. Mike DeWine imposed a mandate for Ohio's residents to stay at home, an order that went into effect March 23.

The order will last until at least April 6 and will be reassessed as necessary, DeWine said. The order can be enforced by local health and law enforcement departments, the governor said.

## **Oklahoma**

Gov. Kevin Stitt's "Safer at Home" order only applies to elderly people and those with immuno-deficiencies. However, mandates by the cities of Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Norman apply to all their residents.

## **Oregon**

Gov. Kate Brown told residents on March 20 to stay home, calling the directive "both an order and a public awareness campaign."

"I am directing Oregonians tonight to stay home to stay healthy. Social distancing done well and done early can save lives," Brown said.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler said on Twitter: "This is not a lockdown. This is a 'stay at home unless it's absolutely necessary to go out' order."

## **Pennsylvania**

On March 23, Gov. Tom Wolf issued stay-at-home orders for seven counties in Pennsylvania that have been hit hardest, including the areas surrounding Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, its two largest cities. Philadelphia, Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Monroe and Montgomery are the affected counties.

On his verified Twitter account, Wolf wrote that "residents must stay home unless someone's life depends on leaving."

## **Rhode Island**

Gov. Gina Raimondo on March 28 ordered residents to stay at home until April 13, with some exceptions. Her order also restricts gatherings to no more than five people and requires two-week quarantines of visitors from other states.

## **South Carolina**

Gov. Henry McMaster issued an executive order that grants law enforcement the authority to ban or disperse public gatherings of more than three people.

"We must all assume we have the virus and we must all assume the people we are talking to have the virus," McMaster said.

While urging people to stay home, McMaster added on his verified Twitter account that "this is not a shelter-in-place order but another measure aimed at containing the virus by controlling crowds, so that we do not have to shelter in place."

## **South Dakota**

Gov. Kristi Noem has not imposed severe restrictions, but several cities and counties have taken action, including Sioux Falls and Huron. Noem has said she does not believe some of the limits applied to cities work well in smaller towns.

## **Tennessee**

Gov. Bill Lee on March 30 followed the lead of the mayors of cities like Nashville, Memphis and Knoxville and issued a "Safer at Home" order that imposes restrictions on residents' movement and requires nonessential businesses close.

## **Texas**

Gov. Greg Abbott has left decisions on stay-at-home restrictions to local governments rather than issuing a statewide edict.

The most populous counties in the state have taken action, directing their residents to stay home. Among them: Dallas County, Harris County—which includes Houston—Bexar County—which includes San Antonio, Collin County, El Paso County, Tarrant County, Austin and Hunt County.

On March 29, Abbott expanded the state's mandatory self-quarantine order for travel from coronavirus hot spots, including noncommercial road travel out of Louisiana. The expanded order also includes travelers on flights from Miami, Atlanta, Detroit, Chicago and anywhere in California and Washington state. Abbott's previous quarantine order applied to air travelers from airports in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and New Orleans.

## **Utah**

On March 29 with Utah's number of coronavirus cases up to 719, Salt Lake County ordered a number of businesses closed and told residents to only venture outside the home for "essential activities." There is no statewide mandate in place from Gov. Gary Herbert.

## **Vermont**

An order by Gov. Phil Scott requiring that residents stay home went into effect March 25 and is expected to be extended past its current April 15 expiration date.

"I need you to stay home," Scott said. "Doing so will save lives. It's just that simple."

## **Virginia**

A week before joining forces with Maryland and Washington, D.C., in their stay-at-home decrees, Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam had signed an executive order mandating all schools to be closed through the end of the academic year and many nonessential businesses to close for at least 30 days.

The order also banned any public or private gatherings of 10 or more people. "I have said repeatedly, 'Stay at home unless it's essential that you go out,' " he said.

## **Washington**

The Evergreen State became the first in the country to suffer an outbreak. On March 23, Gov. Jay Inslee signed an order that prohibits Washingtonians from leaving their homes except for essential tasks.

"This is a human tragedy on a scale we cannot yet project," Inslee said. "It's time to hunker down in order to win this fight."

## West Virginia

Though West Virginia was the last state in the U.S. to report a confirmed [coronavirus](#) case, Gov. Jim Justice issued a stay-at-home order March 23. The order also shut down all nonessential businesses and will last until a subsequent order terminates it.

## Wisconsin

Gov. Tony Evers signed a "Safer at Home" order March 24, banning all nonessential travel.

"Issuing a 'Safer at Home' order isn't something I thought we'd have to do and it's not something I take lightly, but here's the bottom line: folks need to start taking this seriously," Evers said.

## Wyoming

Gov. Mark Gordon said March 30 he doesn't plan to order residents to stay at home, as the number of cases in the state climbed near 100.

"If we're going to issue a shelter-in-place or stay-at-home order, it will not have multiple exemptions. It will be a true stay-at-[home](#) order," said Gordon, who has shut down schools and several businesses through April 17.

©2020 USA Today

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.



Citation: Coronavirus in the US: How all 50 states are responding to this public health emergency (2020, April 1) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-coronavirus-states-health-emergency.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.