

# COVID-19 Task Force

## Virginia's Guidance for the COVID-19 Pandemic

### Venable's COVID-19 Task Force Digest

#### Executive action

Governor Ralph Northam issued Executive Order 51, declaring a state of emergency, on March 12, 2020. On March 23, 2020, Governor Northam issued Executive Order 53, pertaining primarily to businesses and schools. On March 30, 2020, Governor Northam issued Executive Order 55, a “stay-at-home” order, to reinforce the previously issued orders. The orders apply to the entire Commonwealth of Virginia and may be changed, if needed, to address the situation as it evolves. The orders will remain in effect until June 10, 2020, unless amended or rescinded.

VENABLE<sup>LLP</sup>

March 30, 2020

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#### Executive action

Governor Ralph Northam issued a series of executive orders and directives designed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Virginia. The most recent is a “stay-at-home” order.

Executive Orders 51, 53, and 55

#### Highlights of the Executive Orders

##### Stay-at-home

The order urges residents to stay at home, except for trips considered essential, such as going out for food or medicine, providing essential care for the elderly or other at-risk individuals, and similar necessary activities. All nonessential travel outside the home must be limited, to the extent possible. While leaving home is permissible, strict social distancing must be practiced, including staying at least six feet away from other people, except those who reside in the same home. Roads and highways will remain open.

##### Large gatherings

All public and private social gatherings of more than 10 people are banned for the duration of the order. The limitation to 10 people does not apply to employment settings for essential businesses.

##### Religious services

Virginians are encouraged to seek alternative ways of attending religious services, such as virtual online services. If a place of worship continues to conduct in-person services, the gathering must be limited to 10 people.

### Businesses

#### Nonessential businesses

The following recreational and entertainment businesses must close to the public:

- Theaters, performing arts centers, concert venues, museums, and other indoor entertainment centers
- Racetracks and historic horse racing facilities
- Bowling alleys, skating rinks, arcades, amusement parks, trampoline parks, fairs, arts and craft facilities, aquariums, zoos, escape rooms, indoor shooting ranges, public and private social clubs, and all other places of indoor public amusement
- Beauty salons, barber shops, spas, massage parlors, tanning salons, and tattoo shops. Any other brick-and-mortar locations where personal care or personal grooming services are performed that would not allow compliance with social distancing guidelines to remain six feet apart must also close.

#### Nonessential businesses with restricted operations

Nonessential businesses must limit their operations to 10 patrons or fewer, with adequate social distancing. If they cannot limit their operations to 10 patrons or fewer with adequate social distancing, then they must close.

Businesses subject to this restriction include restaurants and other dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, and farmers markets, all of which must close their dining and congregation areas. However, these businesses may remain open for delivery and take-out services. In addition, privately owned campgrounds are limited to reservations of no more than 14 nights. Public beaches are closed, except to fishing and exercising. Businesses in this category must follow all social distancing requirements.

#### Essential businesses

The following types of business are deemed essential:

- Grocery, pharmacy, and other retailers of food and beverage or pharmacy products, including dollar stores and other stores with grocery or pharmacy operations
- Medical supply retailers
- Banks and other financial institutions with retail functions
- Electronic retailers that sell or service cell phones, computers, tablets, and other communications technology
- Retail located within healthcare facilities
- Retail operations at gas stations and convenience stores

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- Automotive parts, accessories, and tire retailers
- Home improvement, including hardware, building material, building supply retailers, and lawn and garden equipment retailers
- Pet and feed stores
- Printing and office supply stores
- Laundromats and dry cleaners
- Beer, wine, and liquor stores

The order does not apply to business sectors that are not cited specifically in the order. However, all categories of business are encouraged to use teleworking, to the extent feasible. If not feasible, businesses must follow the social distancing guidance, use sanitizing measures, and adhere to other guidance from federal and state authorities.

Anyone holding a gathering of more than 10 people can be charged with a Class 1 misdemeanor while the order is in place.

Any violations of the parts of the order requiring the cancellation of in-person college classes, the closure of public beaches, and the closure of short-term stays at overnight campgrounds can also be charged as Class 1 misdemeanors.

## Additional Information

### Construction

Specific guidance for construction and workplace safety can be found here:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Coronavirus-Hazard-Alert.pdf>

### Taxes

The Virginia Department of Taxation has extended the tax payment date for individual and corporate income taxes. While filing deadlines remain the same, the due date for individual and corporate income tax is extended to June 1, 2020. Interest will still accrue, so taxpayers who are able to pay by the original deadlines should do so.