

# District of Columbia Orders March 25, 2020 Shutdown for Non-Essential Services and Prohibits Gatherings of More Than 10 People

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Late on March 24, 2020, District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser issued an [Executive Order](#) closing all on-site operations of “non-essential” businesses in the District by 10:00 p.m. on March 25. The Order will be in effect through April 24, 2020, unless extended further.

The Order temporarily ceases all “non-essential business activities,” which includes but is not limited to: touring services, gyms, health clubs, spas, and massage establishments, theaters, auditoriums, nightclubs, hair, nail, and tanning salons and barbershops, tattoo parlors, sales not involved in essential services, retail clothing stores, and professional services not devoted to assisting essential business operations. The Order requires such businesses and organizations to close their brick-and-mortar premises but encourages them to continue operations, where able through remote means.

Businesses identified as “Essential Businesses” are urged to remain open, but shall comply with the Social Distancing Requirements as specified in the Order, which includes separating staff by off-setting shift hours or days, maintaining a separation of at least six (6) feet among and between employees and members of the public, including when customers, clients, or patients are standing in line or sitting in a waiting room, and cleaning high-touch surfaces regularly, to the maximum extent possible.

The list of “Essential Businesses” includes the following categories:

- Healthcare and Public Health Operations;
- Essential Infrastructure (including roads, sidewalks, street lighting, traffic control devices, railways, government facilities and utilities);
- Food and Household Products and Services;
- Social Services Providing the Necessities of Life (including businesses and organizations that prepare and provide food, shelter, and social services);

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- Communications and Information Technology;
  - Energy and Automotive (including all businesses involved in the electricity, petroleum, or propane gas industries);
  - Financial Services;
  - Educational Institutions;
  - Transportation and Logistics (including businesses that ship or deliver food or services directly to residents);
  - Construction and Building Trades;
  - Housing and Living Facilities;
  - Professional Services (including legal, notary, tax, and accounting services, but only when necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities, Essential Businesses, or Essential Government Functions); and
  - Childcare Facilities.

Although the Order is not a stay-in place order, it prohibits “large gatherings,” or any event likely to bring together ten (10) or more people, whether held indoors or outdoors, and further prohibits individuals suspected of or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 from performing essential functions.

The prohibition of more than ten (10) people gathering does not include:

- Essential Businesses;
- Gatherings of people in multiple, separate enclosed spaces in a single building;
- Gatherings on property within the District owned by the federal government;
- Spaces where people may be in transit or waiting for transit;
- Metro Stations; and
- Office space, hotels, or residential buildings (excluding conferences or large gatherings at hotels).

If an individual violates the Order, they may be subject to: (a) a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per violation; or (b) the revocation of an applicable license, permit, or certificate of occupancy.

In issuing this Order, the District of Columbia joins adjoining jurisdictions Maryland (Monday, March 23, 2020 by 5:00 p.m.) and Virginia (Tuesday, March 24, 2020, by 11:59 p.m.) in restricting non-essential business operations.

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