

South Carolina Begins to Reopen

Article By:

Phillip A. Kilgore

S. Michael Nail

South Carolina has joined the growing number of states that have begun to reopen their economies following weeks of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic. On May 1, 2020, Governor Henry McMaster announced that he would lift certain mandatory provisions of his April 6, 2020, statewide “[home or work](#)” order and the state would restore health and safety standards to voluntary status effective May 4, 2020. Governor McMaster issued [Executive Order No. 2020-31](#) confirming these changes on May 3, 2020.

Specifically, the new executive order lessens restrictions concerning individuals’ movements outside their places of residence. The governor has substituted the following voluntary language for the mandatory language present in his April 6, 2020, “home or work” order:

I hereby urge any and all residents and visitors of the State of South Carolina to limit social interaction, practice “social distancing” in accordance with [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)] guidance, and take every possible precaution to avoid potential exposure to, and to slow the spread of, COVID-19, and further encourage residents and visitors of the State of South Carolina to limit their movements outside of their [Residence] ... for purposes of engaging in Essential Business, Essential Activities, or Critical Infrastructure Operations

Previously, South Carolina residents and visitors were required to practice such limitations and precautions.

Other aspects of the “home or work” order, however, remain in effect, including the closures of what are still deemed “non-essential” businesses (i.e., entertainment venues and facilities, recreational and athletic facilities and activities, and close-contact service providers). Governor McMaster had previously [removed retail establishments](#) from the list of non-essential businesses on April 20, 2020.

Under Executive Order No. 2020-31, effective May 4, 2020, restaurants throughout South Carolina may provide outdoor customer dining service in addition to existing takeout, curbside, and delivery services. If restaurants choose to open for outdoor seating, they should adhere to applicable health and safety guidelines for their employees and guests, along with [requirements provided by the South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association](#). Restaurants that currently have not implemented outdoor seating and choose to utilize open areas and/or temporary tents also must adhere to the

guidelines.

Through a separate [executive order](#), the governor also lifted two previous executive orders, effective immediately:

- [Executive Order 2020-14](#). Individuals traveling to South Carolina from CDC-identified hot spots with substantial community spread of COVID-19 will no longer require self-quarantine for two weeks.
- [Executive Order 2020-19](#). Short-term rentals, vacation rentals, and other lodging accommodations will be allowed to accept new reservations from individuals traveling from CDC-identified hot spots.

Other stages of the state's movement to reopen are expected soon. As businesses plan and begin to reopen, they may want to consider guidance for ensuring safe workplaces and complying with applicable local, state, and federal laws.

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