

Maine Moves Toward Fully Reopening After Statewide COVID-19 Closures

Article By:

Steven Silver

Despite recently [extending a state of emergency](#) due to [COVID-19](#) through June 11, 2020, [Maine](#) Governor Janet Mills gave the green light for more businesses to open in all counties on June 1, 2020, as part of the second stage of the governor's [Restarting Maine's Economy](#) plan.

Maine launched stage 1 on May 1, 2020, by permitting golf courses, barber shops, hair salons, dog groomers, car washes, and auto dealerships to reopen with strict social distancing and mask-wearing guidelines.

That limited reopening gave way to an expanded [rural reopening plan](#) according to which retail businesses and restaurants in 12 of Maine's 16 most rural counties (Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Piscataquis, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington) could reopen with added health and safety precautions on May 11 (retail) and May 18 (restaurants). The stage 2 reopening permits additional businesses to reopen and public gatherings of 50 or fewer people in all counties effective June 1, 2020, once Governor Mills's "[Stay Safer at Home](#)" [Executive Order](#) expires on May 31, 2020. The state has issued industry-specific [COVID-19 prevention checklists](#) as summarized below with which employers may want to familiarize themselves before reopening.

[Retail](#)

The state's guidance contains several requirements, including: employees must wear cloth face coverings and remain six feet apart when practical; employers must prohibit any gatherings or meetings of 10 or more employees during working hours; and retailers must regulate the number of customers in stores based on the square footage of the store. The state recommends that customers wear face coverings. However, customers may not use reusable shopping bags or try on clothing in fitting rooms.

[Restaurants](#)

The state's guidance recommends heightened sanitation and maintenance of social distancing for employees and takeout and dine-in customers. The guidance also states that restaurants should "[p]rovide only single use condiments" and "[s]uspend salad bars and buffets." On May 20, 2020,

Governor Mills updated the guidance to permit “kitchen staff to wear face shields in lieu of masks when the kitchen or weather is warm.” The revised guidance also states that restaurants should maintain records of customers (i.e., one customer name and contact information per party, and the server’s name) for at least 21 days for contact tracing purposes.

Lodging

Under the governor’s [April 3, 2020, executive order](#), which established a 14-day quarantine restriction on travelers entering Maine, lodging establishments were prohibited from accepting new reservations with the exception of [essential workers](#) and vulnerable populations, including those fleeing domestic violence and homeless individuals. However, on May 14, 2020, [Governor Mills announced that lodging providers can begin accepting reservations](#) for stays with an arrival date on or after June 1, 2020, for Maine residents and for nonresidents who comply with the 14-day quarantine requirement. Exercise facilities within lodging establishments should remain closed; however, pools may permit single swimming lanes.

Campgrounds/RV Parks

Maine’s more than 200 campgrounds and RV parks may open to Maine residents on May 22, 2020, and to out-of-state residents who completed the 14-day quarantine on June 1, 2020. Advanced reservations are required as the state is not permitting walk-in site rentals at this time.

Community Sports

The state’s guidance recommends recreational sports be limited to outdoor competition, while “keeping small, distinct cohorts of participants whenever possible.” Therefore, “travel teams or scrimmages between teams in the same community are strongly discouraged.” Spectators must maintain at least “[six] feet of physical distance between themselves and other spectators as well as players.” Indoor pools may open for single-lane swimming, but the guidance discourages the use of hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, and water parks. Swimming in the ocean, lakes, and ponds is permitted.

Overnight Summer Camps

Although camps may not open until July 1, 2020, staff may arrive prior to opening. All out-of-state staff and campers must quarantine for 14 days prior to arrival. The duration for single-session camps must be greater than two weeks. The minimum duration of a multi-session camp session must be two weeks, “and sessions should not overlap.” In addition, the state recommends that overnight camps not host international staff or campers in 2020.

Gyms and fitness centers, tanning salons, and nail salons were scheduled to reopen on June 1, 2020. However, on May 19, 2020, Governor Mills delayed reopening those facilities indefinitely due to a [new study](#) from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that raised concerns about COVID-19 transmission in such settings. Maine gyms and fitness centers can currently “conduct outside classes of less than 10 participants and one-on-one instruction inside.”

As part of stage 2 (effective June 1, 2020), Maine will allow [large social gatherings](#) and religious gatherings consistent with the state’s size limitations and added health and safety precautions.

Absent a new spike in COVID-19 cases, Maine's third and final reopening phase would permit bars, tattoo parlors, and spas to reopen on July 1, 2020, in all counties.

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