FAQs on what is allowed to open and required to stay closed in Anne Arundel County

Updated Friday, November 20, 2020

County Executive Steuart Pittman’s Executive Order 38 can be found HERE.
County Executive Steuart Pittman’s Executive Order 37 can be found HERE.
County Executive Steuart Pittman’s Executive Order 33 can be found HERE.
County Executive Steuart Pittman’s Executive Order 32 can be found HERE.
County Executive Steuart Pittman’s Executive Order 29 can be found HERE.
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County Executive Steuart Pittman’s Executive Order 25 can be found HERE.
Anne Arundel County Health Department COVID-19 updates can be found HERE.

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1. **When is a face mask or covering required?** As the county moves toward recovery from COVID-19 and in an effort to keep Anne Arundel County open, everyone needs to continue to wear face coverings. Face masks or coverings are required to be worn in the following situations:

   - **Outside in public spaces when you cannot keep 6 feet away from others who are not in your immediate household**
   - **Inside at all times when you are face to face with the public**
   - **In retail establishments**
   - **At a restaurant or bar (including outside dining) when you are not eating or drinking**
   - **When providing or receiving personal services at a hair salon, tattoo parlor or nail salon**
   - **In a business that does not serve the public, a face covering is recommended when you are not in an office alone with the door shut OR you cannot keep 6 feet away from others**

   In Maryland, face coverings are mandated by the [Governor's Executive Order 20-09-28-01](pages 9 &10). More information on face masks can be found [HERE](#).

2. **Are churches, places of worship, and religious facilities open?** Yes. Based on meeting social distance, large gatherings and face mask requirements, all houses of worship in Anne Arundel County may hold services inside and outside, at 50% of that facility's maximum occupancy, and operate under specific guidelines outlined [HERE](#).

3. **Can Funeral Homes hold funeral services?** Yes. Indoor and outdoor funeral services may be held based on meeting social distance, capacity, and face mask requirements. Funeral Home services should adhere to the same guidance as churches as outlined in the document found [HERE](#).

4. **Are senior centers open?** No. Senior Centers remain closed as required by the [Governor's Executive Order 20-09-28-01](page 11).
5. **Can addiction recovery groups meet in person?** Yes. Fellowship Addiction Recovery meetings are permitted, including, without limitation, Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, with a capacity limit of 50% of the Maximum Occupancy of the facility where the meeting is held or 100 persons, whichever is less, provided all persons present comply with Mandatory Health & Safety Protocols.

**BUSINESSES / RETAIL / ENTERTAINMENT**

6. **Are retail businesses open?** Yes. Under County Executive Order No. 32, the total number of persons permitted in a Retail Establishment at any one time shall not exceed 50% of that Retail Establishment’s Maximum Occupancy. Businesses are required to have protective measures in place regarding physical distancing. Face coverings will be required for everyone in the store, with exemptions for those with medical conditions.

7. **Are movie theaters open?** Yes, starting at 9 a.m. on Friday, September 25th and under Executive Order 32 indoor theaters and outdoor entertainment venues (where live performances occur or motion pictures are shown) may open to the general public at 50% capacity, or 100 people, whichever is less with appropriate health and safety protocols in place.

8. **Are casinos, racetracks and simulcast betting operations permitted to open?** Yes. Effective Friday, June 19 at 5:00 p.m. these facilities resumed operations at 50% capacity of the gaming facility’s maximum occupancy. Effective Friday, November 20th at 5 p.m. food service at casinos must close from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

9. **Are shopping malls open?** Yes. Effective Friday, June 19 at 5:00 p.m. malls were permitted to open following the required face mask guidelines in retail and food establishments and other applicable guidance.

10. **Where am I allowed to go inside a mall?** The access inside a mall should be used exclusively as access into interior stores. In an effort to reduce spread, congregating inside the mall is not allowed. Food courts inside malls may operate at 50% capacity and must follow all of the spacing and other guidelines for food service establishments.
11. **Are gyms or fitness centers or dance studios allowed to be open?** Yes. Effective Friday, June 19 at 5:00 p.m. these facilities were permitted to open at 50% capacity and following State guidance found [HERE](#).

12. **Are barber shops and hair salons open?** Yes. In accordance with County Executive Order 24, barber shops and beauty salons in Anne Arundel County are open based on meeting social distance, large gatherings and face mask requirements. These requirements will stay in effect until further notice. Refer to the Guidance Document found [HERE](#).

13. **Are nail salons, tanning salons, tattoo studios, or massage studios permitted to open?** Yes, in accordance with County Executive Order 24, personal service establishments including tattoo parlors, tanning salons, massage parlors and establishments that provide esthetic services in Anne Arundel County are open based on meeting social distance, large gatherings and face mask requirements. These requirements will stay in effect until further notice. Refer to the Guidance Document found [HERE](#).

14. **Are pet groomers allowed to open?** Yes. Occupancy is required to be 50% of the establishment’s maximum permitted occupancy and follow retail/non-essential business guidelines.

15. **Are photography studios allowed to be open?** Yes. They are open but must adhere to the retail/non-essential guidelines, including the capacity limitation of 50% of the maximum permitted occupancy.

16. **What non-essential businesses are permitted to be open?** Non-essential businesses including offices, car dealerships, financial institutions, specialty vendors, construction and warehouses in Anne Arundel County are open based on meeting social distance, large gatherings and face mask requirements.

17. **Can manufacturing and warehousing businesses and facilities open?** There is no change to prior orders, these businesses can continue to be open with social distancing and face masks.
18. Are restaurants/bars/social clubs open for on-premise dining? Yes. Foodservice establishments, which include restaurants, bars, and social clubs with dining facilities, may serve food and beverages for on-premise consumption in indoors and outdoor seating areas in accordance with state guidance. **Effective Friday, November 20th at 5 p.m. indoor seating may not exceed 25% and outdoor seating may not exceed 75% of the Foodservice Establishment’s POSTED Maximum Occupancy FOR INDOOR SPACE. Also, INDOOR AND OUTDOOR AREAS of Foodservice Establishments MAY NOT BE OPEN TO [must close to] THE PUBLIC [on-premise dining] from 10 p.m. - 6 a.m. daily, EXCEPT FOR CARRY OUT, DRIVE THROUGH, OR DELIVERY.**

The Office of Planning and Zoning will authorize outdoor seating for food and beverage service uses as a temporary use for up to 180 days commencing at 5:00 p.m. on 5/29, until or unless the emergency is lifted or revised by Executive Order. Executive Order 35 extended the period to 360 days. A permit application is not required for this temporary use, if it complies with the specific criteria. Specific details and guidance are available [HERE](#).

19. What social clubs are permitted to open? Social and fraternal clubs (including without limitation, American Legion posts, VFW posts, and Elks Clubs) are permitted to open.

20. Is there a maximum capacity for indoor dining? Yes, effective on Friday November 20th at 5 p.m. the total number of persons allowed in the indoor area must not exceed 25% of the POSTED maximum capacity FOR THE INDOOR SPACE of the facility.

21. Are temporary tents considered “outdoors?” To be considered “outdoors” two of the sides of the tent or other temporary structure (or at least 50% of the tent sides) must be open at all times while patrons or staff are present. These sides may be closed at night or when the space is not otherwise being used. If the tent/structure is a square then any two sides may be open. If the tent/structure is a rectangle then at least one of the longer sides must be open. If the tent is not a rectangle or a square then the food service establishment must measure it so that at least 50% of the sides are open.
22. **Is there a maximum capacity for outdoor dining?** Yes, the total number of persons allowed in the outdoor area must not exceed 75% of the POSTED maximum capacity FOR THE INDOOR SPACE of the facility. This is in addition to the 25% capacity that is allowed to be served inside. Separation of tables and groups are still to be observed at 6 feet.

23. **Do cooks, servers, and other staff count towards the capacity calculation of the food service establishment?** Yes, when calculating the capacity (25% indoors and 75% outdoors) all persons present in that area of the restaurant or bar are to be included.

24. **Can food service establishments serve alcohol in their outdoor dining areas?** Yes, as long as they already have a valid liquor license for indoor dining. The hours that they are allowed to serve liquor do not change. Nothing in either the Governor’s nor the County Executive’s orders grant a liquor license to an establishment that did not previously have one.

25. **Is there a 10 p.m. closing time for on-premise dining at food service establishments?** Yes. All customers must leave the indoor and outdoor dining areas by 10 p.m. daily. All food service establishments must close to on-premise dining from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. per [Governor Hogan's Executive Order](https://www.governor.maryland.gov/).

26. **Do indoor and outdoor dining areas need to stop serving customers at 10 p.m. or do these areas need to be cleared by 10 p.m.?** All dining areas must be cleared by 10 p.m. It should be treated as a "closing time" for on-premise dining. It is recommended that the facility consider treating it like the closing of the restaurant/bar as normal with a last-call or ending of orders before 10 p.m. so as to allow patrons to finish and leave by closing time.

27. **Can I still dine outside after 10 p.m.?** No, all customers must leave the indoor and outdoor dining areas by 10 p.m. daily. All food service establishments must close to on-premise dining from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. per [Governor Hogan’s Executive Order](https://www.governor.maryland.gov/).

28. **Can I order food for carry out or get delivery after 10 p.m.?** Yes, individuals get carryout or delivery after 10 p.m. depending on the food service facilities hours of operation.
29. **Does the requirement to close all dining areas by 10 p.m. also apply when such businesses are being used for private parties/banquets/events?** Yes, if the private party/banquet/event is serving food or alcohol then it is viewed the same as a restaurant and should end by 10 p.m.

30. **Why is this new guidance mainly for indoor dining and indoor bars?** We are focussing on reducing the spread of COVID-19 in enclosed facilities with many congregates. Therefore, the first step is to focus on individuals dining indoors for food or beverage consumption. Contact tracing has indicated there is high risk for exposure and transmission of the virus at indoor dining and bars.

31. **Are restaurants still keeping up with cleaning protocols for outside?** Restaurants should maintain cleaning protocols inside and outside their facility. Wiping down tables, using clean utensils and regularly cleaning common high-touch areas such as doorknobs, condiments, and armrests should be practiced.

32. **Are face masks or covers still required outside?** Yes, face masks or covers must be worn, but can be taken off while eating or drinking. When eating or drinking, face covers should be put on when encountering a server or staff person, who should also be wearing a properly fitted mask or face cover. Please see the full FAQ on face coverings [HERE](#).

33. **Does this apply to the City of Annapolis?** While Governor Hogan’s executive order gives each political jurisdiction - including the City of Annapolis - the authority to enact their own local COVID restrictions, Mayor Buckley has indicated the City will be following these policies.

### SOCIAL GATHERINGS / GATHERING LIMITS

34. **Is there a limit to the size of social gatherings?** Yes. Indoor social gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited. Outdoor social gatherings of more than 25 people are prohibited.

35. **What are considered “Social gatherings”?** Social Gatherings do not include gatherings at retail stores, offices, restaurants, casinos, youth sports, gatherings for religious or spiritual purposes on the premises of a religious or spiritual facility, wedding receptions (subject to the restrictions for Foodservice Establishments), Indoor Theaters and Outdoor Entertainment Venues, or organized outdoor events as outlined below. Social Gatherings include, but are
not limited to, parties, cookouts, parades, festivals, conventions, fundraisers, and other gatherings that are not associated with operating or patronizing a business that sells merchandise.

**Organized outdoor events** with a plan for social distancing and designated event organizers to ensure mask and social distancing are permitted, but the total number of persons permitted at such an event is limited to 100 people.

36. **Does this apply to the City of Annapolis?** While Governor Hogan's executive order gives each political jurisdiction - including the City of Annapolis - the authority to enact their own local COVID restrictions, Mayor Buckley has indicated the City will be following these policies.

37. **Does the limit apply to weddings and funerals?** This order is not meant to apply to organized wedding events or funerals that are conducted at a religious institution or other facility capable of responsibly hosting an event following social distancing protocols. The host facility is responsible for ensuring that proper social distancing protocols and maximum occupancy limits (for indoor venues) are followed under existing guidelines and regulations.

38. **Do the 25-person outdoor and 10-person indoor social gathering limits apply to private homes?** Yes, the effort is to reduce the unintentional spread of COVID-19 in large groups.

39. **Do the 25-person outdoor and 10-person indoor social gathering limits apply when serving general public customers at restaurants, bars, and similar establishments?** No, as defined above, a "social gathering" does not include gatherings associated with patronizing a business that sells merchandise. If the establishment serving food or beverages is in possession of a food service facility and/or a liquor license it is classified as a restaurant and not subject to the social gathering limits provided that it does not exceed 25% of the establishment’s maximum occupancy as defined in the Governor's Executive Order 20-06-10-01. This also applies to private parties/banquets/events being hosted at these establishments.

40. **Does the 10-person indoor social gathering limit apply to banquet hall rentals or rentals of space in community centers, etc.?** It depends on the end use that the space is being rented for and if that use is considered a social gathering as defined above. For example, if the space is being rented to host a party or a fundraiser then yes, the 10-person indoor limit applies. However, if the space is being rented for a religious gathering or a wedding reception then the
limit would not apply. Additionally, the organization renting the space must ensure that all applicable guidelines for the end use are followed.

41. **Are farmers markets considered social gatherings?** No, they are not.

42. **What if my office building has over 10 employees inside spread throughout different floors?** Each business/office should consider the essential need for employees in facilities while maintaining social distancing, face mask usage and proper hand hygiene practices. Gatherings at offices do not fall under this guidance. However, teleworking is encouraged whenever possible.

43. **Do these social gathering limits apply to going to the store or to houses of worship?** These limits do not apply to retail stores or religious/spiritual gatherings at a religious/spiritual institution.

**RECREATION / PARKS / SPORTS / ENTERTAINMENT**

44. **What indoor recreation businesses are permitted to open?** Effective Friday, June 19 at 5:00 p.m., indoor aquatic centers, indoor recreation centers; bingo halls, bowling alleys, roller and ice skating rinks, and the indoor areas of any other establishments that are subject to the admission and amusement tax under Title 4 of the Tax-General Article of the Maryland Code were permitted to be open at 50% limited capacity.

45. **What outdoor recreation businesses are permitted to open?** Effective Friday, June 12 at 5:00 p.m., amusement parks; miniature golf establishments; go-kart tracks; and the outdoor areas of any other establishments that are subject to the admission and amusement tax under Title 4 of the Tax-General Article of the Maryland Code reopened following state guidance found [HERE](#).

46. **Are playgrounds open?** Yes. Effective Friday, June 19 at 5:00 p.m., county and private playgrounds opened for general public use.

47. **Are organized sports permitted to resume?** Effective Monday, November 16th at 8 a.m. organized sports are suspended for all county fields and facilities.

48. **What type of Rec & Parks Fall programming is being offered?** The Fall and Winter 2020 Program Guide features several classes, programs and events that are being offered in our parks and virtually. Learn more [HERE](#).
49. **What county park amenities are open?** Dog parks, dog beaches, county park beaches, pavilions (reservations required), and playgrounds are open. Private youth camps are allowed to open under state guidance. These amenities also opened for use within private communities. **Visitor Centers remain closed at all regional parks; see notice HERE.**

50. **Have regional park fees been reinstated?** Yes, all regional park entry fees were reinstated on Tuesday, September 1. See the notice HERE.

51. **Are county park restrooms open?** Yes, effective Saturday, June 20 park outdoor restrooms opened and are cleaned regularly.

52. **Are the Arundel Olympic Swim Center and the North Arundel Aquatic Center open?** Both Arundel Olympic Swim Center (AOSC) and North Arundel Aquatic Center (NAAC) are OPEN. Admission to each swim center is by reservation only. The available times will be posted on our registration website. **Register and access account (ActiveNet).**

53. **Are the North County and South County Recreation Centers open?** Both of these recreation centers are now open for scheduled programs.