



Shawnee County Health Department

Shawnee County Health Department
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Safer at Home Order issued for Shawnee County

TOPEKA, KS – A Safer at Home Order has been issued for Topeka and Shawnee County. Beginning Thursday, March 26 at 12:01 a.m., residents will be directed to stay at home to help limit the spread of COVID-19. This order is in effect until April 26, 2020.

Under the order, everyone is directed to stay home except for essential needs, such as getting food, caring for a relative or friend, getting necessary health care, or going to an essential job. Vulnerable populations must stay home.

This step, adopted also by several surrounding communities, is critical to prevent and slow down the spread of the coronavirus in our community.

“I know these are trying times, but now more than ever we need to cooperate for the safety of our families and the future of Topeka,” said Mayor Michelle De La Isla. “By staying at home you are safer and so are our health care professionals and first responders who desperately need your cooperation. We will get through this together.”

“In these trying times we are all going to have to make sacrifices and at this point we are surrounded by other towns and counties who have community spread of COVID-19 so it is in the best interest of the citizens of Shawnee County that we stay at home to reduce the chances of spreading COVID-19,” said Commissioner Bill Riphahn. “It is vital that you take care of yourself your family and your neighbors. With your help and cooperation, we will get through this. Shawnee County is a resilient county if we get knocked down seven times we will get up eight.”

Non-essential businesses may continue operations if employees are able to work from home. Individuals who are essential employees can continue to work on-site, unless they are considered high risk for contracting an illness, have underlying conditions or are showing symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath).

Essential activities are activities or tasks essential to an individual's health or safety or the health and safety of their family or household members.

These activities include:

- Obtaining medicine or seeing a doctor or other health care provider
- Getting necessary services or supplies for themselves, their family or household members, such as food, pet food or supplies necessary for staying at home
- Obtaining supplies necessary for maintaining a household
- Obtaining supplies necessary for working from home



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- Engaging in outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking or running
- Performing work providing essential services at an essential business
- Caring for a family member in another household
- Caring for the elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities or other vulnerable persons.

Essential businesses are organizations that provide the goods or services needed for an essential activity. These include:

- Hospitals
- Childcare facilities
- Government operations
- Pharmacies, health care supply stores and health care facilities
- Grocery stores and convenience stores
- Agricultural stores or stores that provide essential food and goods for animals
- Gas stations
- Auto repair facilities
- Garbage collection
- Hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, exterminators and other service providers necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation and essential operation of residences and other essential businesses
- Educational institutions, for the purposes of facilitating distance learning
- Laundromats, dry cleaners and laundry service providers
- Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food and goods directly to residences

Those with questions about whether or not their business is essential are asked to take this business survey:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/7e1deddaf0fa4847bf5f6f9bfb7c19c5?>

After taking the survey, you will be contacted by Shawnee County Emergency Management.

If you are experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath), please call your doctor before going to the hospital. More information can be found at the Shawnee County Health Department's website. <https://www.snco.us/hd/>

The SCHED is continuing to provide the most up to date guidance about COVID-19 to the community and its partners. Additionally, the SCHED encourages all Shawnee County residents to stay informed and look for information from credible resources such as the [SCHED](#), the [Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#) (KDHE) and/or the [CDC](#).

Shawnee County Health Department is committed to working in partnership with our community to promote and protect the optimal health of all people by bridging gaps to eliminate health inequities, respecting the diversity of our community, through adaptive and innovative processes.