

UPDATED: Massachusetts Mandates Closure of All Non-Essential Businesses Effective Tuesday, March 24th at Noon

March 23, 2020 || By [Steven A. Baddour](#), [Daniel J. Connelly](#), [Caitlin R. Beresin](#), [Kaitlyn C. Sprague](#), [Taylor C. Shepherd](#)

On Monday, March 23rd, the Baker Administration issued a stay at home advisory, along with an order ([COVID-19 Order No. 13](#)) requiring businesses and organizations that do not provide “COVID-19 Essential Services” to close their doors starting March 24th at noon until April 7th at noon. The Administration has issued a list of business and other organizations deemed essential services and workforces that may continue to operate physical workplaces during this two-week order. The link to the Administration’s essential services list can be found [here](#). While the businesses and organizations outlined in the Administration’s list may remain open during this two-week order, Gov. Baker has urged them to follow the social distancing protocols and other guidance issued by the state’s Department of Public Health. The stay at home advisory differs from a shelter-in-place order in that it allows people to continue to go to the grocery store, pharmacy and conduct other important personal business, but encourages people to limit that time out in the community. The Governor has also expressed he does not believe he can or should issue an order relative to home confinement as it does not make sense from a public health standpoint.

The [Administration’s guidance](#) defines “essential services” as it relates to the following sectors:

1. Health Care & Public Health
2. Law Enforcement, Public Safety & First Responders
3. Food and Agriculture
4. Critical Manufacturing
5. Transportation
6. Energy
7. Water and Wastewater
8. Public Works
9. Communications and Information Technology
10. Financial Services
11. Defense Industry Base
12. Chemical Manufacturing and Hazardous Materials
13. Other Designated Community Based Essential Function and Government Operations
14. News Media

If you do not see the function of your business above, but believe it should be deemed “essential,” you may file an essential service designation request [here](#).

COVID-19 Order No. 13 also limits gatherings to no more than 10 people, which represents a reduction from last week’s order to limit group gathers of more than 25 people. This limit, however, does not apply to gatherings of more than 10 people in an unenclosed space such as a park, field or parking lot.

In Governor Baker’s COVID-19 update press conference this morning, the Governor echoed the ability for restaurants, bars and other food and drink establishments to provide take-out and delivery services. On-site consumption of food and beverages remains prohibited.

Your team at ML Strategies continues to monitor these updates and provide information as soon as it breaks. Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

For updates, emergency orders, and guidance associated with COVID-19, please see the list of orders [here](#). The ML Strategies team encourages all clients to read the Administration's orders that have been outlined with clarity and up-to-date guidance each step of the way.

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