



“Shelter-in-Place” Orders: What Do They Require?

Dear World Floor Covering Association Member,

To date 18 states, 31 local counties, 13 cities and the Navajo Nation have issued “shelter-in-place” orders. The result is a patchwork of local and state directives that use a variety of terms, like “shelter in place,” “safer at home,” “quarantines,” and “isolation” orders. These orders can be confusing and often unclear. Understanding which businesses can stay open is often difficult to understand.

To assist members, WFCA has provided below two links that allow access to all the orders in place, as well as guidance on how to interpret the orders and suggested precautions to take.

Links: Members can identify “shelter-in-place” orders that may impact their business using these links:

NY Times list all the states and localities that have quarantine orders with a link to the orders: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-stay-at-home-order.html>

The state governors association also has a site that can be used to access state and local orders: <https://www.nga.org/coronavirus/#states>.

These sites are updated daily, so any new orders will be posted.

What Businesses Are Covered:

All the orders include businesses and workers that are exempt from the order and may remain open or do their jobs. It is important to read what is exempted. For example, Wisconsin’s order exempts “housing construction, except that optional or aesthetic construction should be avoided” The order in Los Angeles County defines “Essential Businesses” that are exempt from its shelter order to include:

(g) Hardware stores, nurseries; building supplies;

(h) Plumber’s, electricians, ... handyman services, ... carpenters, ...and other service providers who provide services to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation to properties and other Essential Businesses:

Commonly, the orders exempt facilities and workers that are included in the guidance issue by the U.S Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). That guidance includes:

Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.

While it could be argued that these exemptions apply to flooring retailers and contractors and would allow them to remain open and to continue to arrange installation, it is anticipated that these exemptions will be narrowly interpreted to allow the completion of any flooring installation and repairs that may cause a safety or health hazard. The very purpose of the exemption is to deal with emergencies and safety and health risks, not permitting ongoing business.

Suggested Precautions:

To the extent that a flooring retailer or contractor determines that it must provide flooring to meet a safety or health risk, the following precautions should be considered:

1. Any one feeling ill or showing signs of the coronavirus should not work;
2. If a customer must be met, limit the number of employees present and practice social distancing (6 feet apart);
3. Where possible, have Installers work at least 6 feet apart;
4. Mask should be worn when available;
5. Gloves be provided that would be discarded whenever removed (lunch, breaks, restroom visits, etc.) if possible, but at least each day or upon completion of the job;
6. Hands should be washed with soap when gloves are removed;
7. At a minimum, hand sanitizer should be used if hands cannot be washed;
8. Workers should shower after leaving job site; and
9. Workers should launder work clothes daily.

While not failsafe, these precautions should limit workers exposure and risk of contacting the coronavirus.

WFCA will continue to keep members informed of developments. In the meantime, communicate your needs to us ASAP so that we can pass them along to legislators and agencies as these relief packages are negotiated. Please send any suggestions to shumphrey@wfca.org and fstaten@wfca.org.