

## Protocols for Movie Theaters: Appendix X

Effective Date: 12:01am on **Monday, April 05, 2021**

### Recent Updates (Changes highlighted in yellow):

**4/2/2021:**

- **Permits** Movie Theaters **to open at 50% indoor capacity.**
- Movie theaters that have a State license to sell alcohol at already existing concession **or beverage** counters may do so with the purchase of a meal, as defined in this protocol.
- Movie theaters may operate private screening rooms, but face masks must be worn at all times..
- Patrons may only eat or drink in designated dining areas or while seated in their reserved seat.
- **Requires** the staggering of movie start times to reduce entry and exit crowding.

COVID-19 case rates, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to fall, but **community spread** still **remains moderate**. COVID-19 continues to pose a high risk to communities and requires all people and businesses to take precautions and modify operations and activities to reduce the risk of spread.

Due to Los Angeles County entering the "**Orange Tier**" of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy framework, this protocol has been updated to lift some local activity-specific restrictions. Movie Theaters should proceed with caution and adhere to the requirements in this protocol to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 within their business operations.

The requirements below are specific to movie theater facilities. These establishments may reopen to the public for indoor operations at **50% maximum occupancy or 200 people, whichever is fewer**, based on applicable fire or building code occupancy. In addition, each movie theater screen located within a movie theater complex must be limited to **50% maximum occupancy or 200 people**, whichever is fewer based on applicable building or fire code occupancy.

Private screening rooms may also operate, but masks must be worn at all times by staff and guests. **Private screening rooms with a food facility permit may provide food or concessions, in adherence with the modifications required by this protocol.**

Concessions may be sold and consumed in compliance with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) Protocols for Restaurants. Patrons must be reminded that eating/drinking is only permitted in a designated dining area or while patrons are seated in their reserved seats in the theater, at a 6-foot distance from those who are not members of their household. Eating or drinking anywhere else while in the establishment or on the grounds of the establishment is prohibited.

- Movie theaters with restaurants, concessions stands, coffee shops, etc. must comply with [DPH protocols for restaurants](#).
- Movie theaters with retail outlets such as gift shops must comply with [DPH protocols for retail](#).
- Movie theaters that have a State license to sell alcohol at already existing concession **or beverage** counters may do so with the purchase of a meal. A meal, for purposes of this protocol, is a non-candy food item, such as, hamburgers, hot dogs, pizza, chicken nuggets or similar food item. A meal does not include pretzels, popcorn, pickles, candy, nuts, chips or side dishes.

In addition to the conditions imposed on movie theaters by the State Public Health Officer, these types of businesses must also be in compliance with the conditions laid out in this County Protocol for Movie Theaters.

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ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER**



This protocol is not intended for drive-in movie theaters, which have their own Los Angeles County DPH protocol/guidance. It is also not intended for performing arts theaters that have large gatherings of people coming together at the same time. Movie theaters with convention space, rentable meeting rooms, or other areas for private events, such as birthday parties, must keep those areas closed until such activities are allowed to resume modified or full operation through a specific order.

In the protocols that follow, the term “household” is defined as “persons living together as a single living unit” and shall not include institutional group living situations such as dormitories, fraternities, sororities, monasteries, convents, or residential care facilities, nor does it include such commercial living arrangements such as boarding houses, hotels, or motels.<sup>1</sup> The terms “staff” and “employee” are meant to include employees, volunteers, interns and trainees, scholars and all other individuals who carry out work at the site. The term “visitors” or “customers” should be understood to include members of the public and others who are not staff or employees who spend time at the business or site. The terms “establishment”, “site”, and “facility” both refer to the building, grounds, and any adjacent buildings or grounds at which permitted activities are conducted.

**Please note:** This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available so be sure to regularly check the LA County website <http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/> for any updates to this document.

This checklist covers:

- (1) Workplace policies and practices to protect employee health
- (2) Measures to ensure physical distancing
- (3) Measures to ensure infection control
- (4) Communication with employees and the public
- (5) Measures to ensure equitable access to critical services.

These five key areas must be addressed as your facility develops any reopening protocols.

**All businesses covered by this protocol must implement all applicable measures listed below and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is not applicable to the business.**

**Business name:**

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**Facility Address:**

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**Maximum Occupancy, per Fire Code:**

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**Approximate total square footage of space open to the public:**

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<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles County Code, Title 22. §22.14.060 - F. Family definition. (Ord. 2019-0004 § 1, 2019.)  
[https://library.municode.com/ca/los\\_angeles\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO\\_DIV2DE\\_CH22.14DE\\_22.14.060F](https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO_DIV2DE_CH22.14DE_22.14.060F)

**A. WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO PROTECT EMPLOYEE HEALTH (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO THE FACILITY)**

- Everyone who can carry out their work duties from home has been directed to do so.
- Vulnerable staff (those above age 65, those with chronic health conditions) are assigned work that can be done from home whenever possible.
- Work processes are reconfigured to the extent possible to increase opportunities for employees to work from home.
- Alternate, staggered or shift schedules have been instituted to maximize physical distancing.
- All employees have been told not to come to work if sick or if they are exposed to a person who has COVID-19. Employees understand to follow County DPH guidance for self-isolation and quarantine, if applicable. Workplace leave policies have been reviewed and modified to ensure that employees are not penalized when they stay home due to illness.
- Workers are provided information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on [government programs](#) supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19, including employee's sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 exposures occurring between March 19 and July 5 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#).
- Entry screenings** are conducted before employees, vendors, delivery personnel, and other visitors may enter the workspace, in compliance with LACDPH [Entry Screening Guidance](#). Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These checks can be done upon the employees' arrival or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through [signage](#) posted at the entry of the facility stating that employees with these symptoms must not enter the premises. A temperature check should also be done at the worksite if feasible.
  - Negative Screen (Cleared). If the person has no symptom(s) and no contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days, they can be cleared to enter and work for that day.
  - Positive Screen (Not Cleared):
    - If the person **who was not fully vaccinated<sup>2</sup> against COVID-19 and** had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days or is currently under quarantine orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to quarantine at home. Provide them with the quarantine instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine).
    - If the person is showing any of the symptoms noted above or is currently under isolation orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to isolate at home. Provide them with the isolation instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
- Upon being informed that one or more employees test positive for, or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (case), the employer has a plan or protocol in place to have the case(s) isolate themselves at home and require the immediate self-quarantine of all employees that had a workplace exposure to the case(s). The employer's plan should consider a protocol for all quarantined employees to have access to or be tested for COVID-19 in order to determine whether there have been additional workplace exposures, which may require additional COVID-19 control measures. See the public health guidance on [responding to COVID-19 in the workplace](#).

<sup>2</sup> People are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two (2) weeks or more after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (e.g., Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or two (2) weeks or more after they have received a single-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).

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- In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer should report this cluster to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821 or online at [www.redcap.link/covidreport](http://www.redcap.link/covidreport). If a cluster is identified at a worksite, the Department of Public Health will initiate a cluster response which includes providing infection control guidance and recommendations, technical support and site-specific control measures. A public health case manager will be assigned to the cluster investigation to help guide the facility response.
- Employees who have contact with the public or other employees during their shift (s) are offered, at no cost, an [appropriate face mask](#) that covers the nose and mouth. For more information, see LAC DPH COVID-19 Mask webpage at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/masks>. The mask is to be worn by the employee at all times during the workday when in contact or likely to come into contact with others. Employees who have been instructed by their medical provider that they should not wear a face mask must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used. All employees must wear face masks at all times except when working alone in private offices with closed doors or when eating or drinking.
- Employees are instructed to wash, if applicable, or replace their face masks daily.
- To ensure that masks are worn consistently and correctly, employees are prohibited from eating or drinking except during their breaks when they are able to safely remove their masks and physically distance from others. At all times when eating or drinking, employees must maintain at least a six-foot distance from others. When eating or drinking, it is preferred to do so outdoors and away from others, if possible. Eating or drinking at a cubicle or workstation is preferred to eating in a breakroom if eating in a cubicle or workstation provides greater distance from and barriers between workers. COVID-19 transmission is more likely to occur when employees are present together when not wearing face masks.
- Occupancy is reduced and space between employees is maximized in any room or area used employees for meals and/or breaks. This has been achieved by:
  - Posting a maximum occupancy that is consistent with enabling a distance of at least six feet between individuals in rooms or areas used for breaks;
  - Staggering break or mealtimes to reduce occupancy in rooms or areas used for meals and breaks; and
  - Placing tables at least eight feet apart and assuring six feet between seats, removing or taping seats to reduce occupancy, placing markings on floors to assure distancing, and arranging seating in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact. Use of partitions is encouraged to further prevent spread but should not be considered a substitute for reducing occupancy and maintaining physical distancing.
- Resources are provided to support employee hygiene, including, but not limited to tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, adequate time for handwashing, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes and disposable towels.
- All workstations, including those in projection rooms or offices, are separated by at least six feet.
- Break rooms, restrooms and other common areas are disinfected frequently, on the following schedule:
  - Break rooms \_\_\_\_\_
  - Restrooms \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Disinfectant and related supplies are available to employees at the following location(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Hand sanitizer effective against COVID-19 is available to all employees at the following location(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Employees are allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands.
- A copy of this protocol has been distributed to each employee.
- Each worker is assigned their own tools, equipment and defined workspace. Whenever possible, sharing held items (e.g., phones, tablets, laptops, desks, pens, etc.) is minimized or eliminated.
- All policies described in this checklist other than those related to terms of employment are applied to staff of delivery and any other companies who may be on the premises as third parties.
- Optional—Describe other measures:  
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## B. MEASURES TO ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- The total number of **people, including staff and customers**, in a movie theater facility is limited to **50%** of indoor maximum occupancy based on applicable building or fire code occupancy. Each individual movie theater screening area within a larger theater complex is limited to **50%** occupancy or a maximum of **200** attendees, whichever is fewer. Each movie theater screening area must have posted occupancy limits. Where feasible, parking lots are reconfigured to limit congregation points and ensure proper separation.
- Maximum number of **people** in the facility limited to: \_\_\_\_\_
- Theaters must utilize timed and/or advanced reservation ticketing systems and pre-assigned seating in order to stagger customer visits, limit occupancy, and help maintain physical distancing. Patrons must remain in their vehicle until their reservation time and must be instructed to arrive and leave in a single group to minimize contact with other visitors and staff.
- The movie theater operator must strictly and continuously meter entry and exit of customers at all entrances in order to track occupancy to ensure compliance with capacity limits. Operators must track occupancy for both the entire building and all individual screening rooms. Operators that are insufficiently or not metering or appear to be over-capacity, may, at the discretion of the public health inspector, be temporarily closed until these issues are rectified as determined by the onsite health inspector. Where possible, provide a single, clearly designated entrance and separate exits to help maintain distancing.
- Be prepared to queue customers outside while still maintaining physical distance, including the use of visual cues. If necessary, an employee (or employees if there is more than one entrance) wearing a face mask may be posted near the door but at least 6 feet from the nearest customers to track occupancy and to direct customers to line up six feet apart outside the entrance if the establishment has reached its occupancy limit or until their reservation time.
- Separate routes are designated throughout the facility for entry and exit, activity areas, seating areas, and employee work areas to help maintain physical distancing and lessen the instances of people closely passing each other. One-way directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic have been designated if feasible.
- Measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six (6) feet have been implemented to ensure physical distancing between and among workers and customers in all movie theater locations. This may include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings, colored tape, or signs to indicate where workers and customers should stand). Employees may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or as otherwise necessary.
- Tape or other markings assist customers in keeping a 6 feet distance between them and others in line. A marking identifies both a starting place for customers arriving in the line and 6-foot intervals for subsequent customers who are joining the line.

- Inside the facility, one or more staff is dedicated to manage movement of customers when activities could bring people within six feet distance of each other, such as ushering customers to seats, preventing groups from congregating in bottleneck areas, limiting groups from playing through courses, etc. In movie theaters, staff are used to assist customers in maintaining distances before and after screenings, including ushering customers to seats prior to the show and dismissing customers in an orderly fashion to reduce the crossflow of traffic or crowding in exit rows.
- In movie theaters, seating has been reconfigured to ensure physical distance of at least six feet between attendees. This may require seating every other row or blocking off or removing seats in a “checkerboard” style so that distances are maintained in all directions. Members of the same household may be seated together but must maintain at least six feet distance from other households.
- Movie showtimes are staggered so that exiting of multiple theater screening areas does not result in crowding and a lack of physical distancing due to customers from different areas leaving at the same time. Consider utilizing doors that exit the screening area to outdoors to minimize crowding.
- Customer groups are limited to the members of a household unit.
- Ball pits, foam pits, indoor playgrounds, climbing structures, enclosed bounce houses, arcades and game rooms, etc. are closed in accordance with state guidelines as these areas promote congregating and are difficult to properly disinfect.
- Concessions and beverage counters must be strictly monitored to ensure that customers are not crowding together. To limit crowding and lines, movie theaters that offer food and drink concessions should encourage customers to order online and/or over the phone and make concessions available for counter pick-up. Tape or other markings assist customers in keeping a 6 feet distance between them and others in line. A marking identifies both a starting place for customers arriving in the line and 6-foot intervals for subsequent customers who are joining the line.
- Private screening rooms may operate with the same capacity limits as movie theaters. Masks must be worn at all times by staff and guests while in private screening rooms. Private screening rooms with a food facility permit may provide food or concessions, in adherence with the modifications required by this protocol. Guest may bring in food to eat in their reserved seat or while seated in a designated dining area.
- To the extent feasible, physical, impermeable barriers have been installed in all areas where physical distancing is not possible, including:
  - At customer service counters;
  - At concession or beverage counters;
  - Between seating, and other types of activity areas to limit exposure between customers.
- Elevator capacity is limited to the number of people that can be accommodated while maintaining a 6-foot physical distance between riders provided that members of the same household may ride an elevator together; during peak building entry and exit times, this number can be adjusted to 4 individuals or fewer at a time for any elevator that does not allow for a 6-foot physical distance between riders. All riders are required to wear face masks. Monitor elevator use and consider using staff to assist with elevator queueing if the elevator is in high demand.
- Public seating areas (e.g., chairs, benches and other public spaces) are reconfigured to support physical distancing or taped or cordoned off if they cannot be reconfigured so that individuals are able to maintain a 6-foot physical distance from those who are not members of their household.
- Physical distancing requirements are implemented at loading bays and contactless signatures have been implemented for deliveries.

### C. MEASURES FOR INFECTION CONTROL

- The HVAC system is in good, working order; to the maximum extent possible, ventilation has been increased. Effective ventilation is one of the most important ways to control small aerosol transmission. Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in offices and other spaces. See California Department of Public Health [Interim Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](#) for detailed information. Please Note: Ventilation and other indoor air quality improvements are an addition to, and not a replacement for, mandatory protections including wearing face masks (except in certain high-risk environments that require using proper respiratory protection), maintaining at least six feet of distance between people, washing hands frequently, and limiting activities that bring together people from different households.
- Entry screening** is conducted before patrons may enter any of the establishment's indoor or outdoor areas. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills, and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. (See County [Entry Screening](#) guidance.) These checks can be done in person or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through [signage](#) posted at the entrance of a facility stating that visitors with these symptoms should not enter the premises.
  - Negative Screen (Cleared). If the person has no symptom(s) and no contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days, they can be cleared to enter for that day.
  - Positive Screen (Not Cleared):
    - If the person has had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days or is currently under quarantine orders, they may not enter and must be sent home immediately to quarantine at home. Provide them with the quarantine instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine).
    - If the person is showing any of the symptoms noted above or is currently under isolation orders, they may not enter and must be sent home immediately to isolate at home. Provide them with the isolation instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
- Customers arriving at the establishment are reminded to wear a face mask at all times while in the establishment or on the grounds of the establishment. Customers may momentarily remove their face masks while eating or drinking but are otherwise instructed to keep their face masks on. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Individuals who have been instructed by their medical provider that they should not wear a face mask must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used. To support the safety of your employees and other visitors, a face mask should be made available to visitors who arrive without them.
- Customers must be reminded that they may only eat/drink while in a designated dining area or while seated in their reserved seats in the theater. Eating/drinking anywhere else on-premises is prohibited.
- Customers arriving at the establishment with children must ensure that their children stay next to a parent, avoid touching any other person or any item that does not belong to them, and are masked if age permits.
- Contactless payment systems are in place or, if not feasible, payment systems are sanitized regularly. Describe:  

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- Common and high traffic area such as customer waiting areas and lobbies and areas of ingress and egress, and frequently touched objects and surfaces (e.g., counters, credit card machines, coin operated and cash redemption machines, vending machines, handrails, elevator controls, doorknobs or handles, elevator buttons, escalator handrails, ATM pin pads, etc.) are disinfected on an hourly basis during business hours using EPA approved disinfectants following the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Customers and employees have access to hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the center, including in the activity areas, lobbies, at entrances and exits and service areas. Customers are encouraged to wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer when using equipment.
- Terminals, desks, and help counters are equipped with proper sanitation products, including hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.
- Wherever feasible, disposable or single-use items are offered. This could include scorecards, pencils, 3D glasses, etc. If disposable items cannot be provided, properly disinfect items before and after customer use.
- Where feasible, doors are propped open during peak periods when attendees are entering and exiting facilities, in accordance with security and safety protocols.
- All workspaces and items that are frequently touched (e.g., working surfaces, time clocks, copy machines, keys, cleaning equipment, etc.) by employees is disinfected between shifts or between users, whichever is more frequent.
- Public restrooms are stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer. Public restrooms are cleaned and disinfected hourly using EPA approved disinfectants and following the manufacturer's instructions for use, on the following schedule:  

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- Public drinking water fountains are turned off and have signs informing customers that they are inoperable.
- Employee restrooms are not available for customer use.
- Customer entrances and exits, and other common-space areas are equipped with proper sanitation products, including hand sanitizer, tissues and trash cans.
- Optional - Describe other measures (e.g., providing senior-only hours, encouraging online ordering, incentivizing non-peak visits to the movie theater):  

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#### D. MEASURES THAT COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

- A copy of this protocol, or if applicable, the facility's printed Los Angeles County COVID-19 Safety Compliance Certificate is posted at all public entrances to the facility. For more information or to complete the COVID-19 safety compliance self-certification program, visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/covid19cert.htm>. Facilities must keep a copy of the Protocols onsite at the facility for review, upon request.
- Signage at the entry and/or where customers line up notifies customers of occupancy limit, reminds customers to maintain physical distancing of six feet, and the requirement to wear a face mask at all times. See the County DPH COVID-19 Guidance: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/guidances.htm#business> for additional resources and examples of signage that can be used by businesses.



- Signage throughout the movie theater indicates to customers where to find the nearest hand sanitizer dispenser and that food and beverages may only be consumed in the designated dining areas or while in their assigned seat.
- Signage throughout the movie theater complex reminds customers to use hand sanitizer frequently and to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Online outlets of the establishment (website, social media, etc.) provide clear information about center hours, required use of face masks, limited occupancy, any policies in regard to preordering, prepayment, advanced ticketing, and other relevant issues.

**E. MEASURES THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES**

- Services that are critical to the customers/clients have been prioritized. (e.g., senior only hours)
- Transactions or services that can be offered remotely have been moved on-line.
- Measures are instituted to assure access to goods and services for customers who have mobility limitations and/or are at high risk in public spaces.

**Any additional measures not included above should be listed on separate pages, which the business should attach to this document.**

**You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:**

**Business Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Last Revised:** \_\_\_\_\_