

Protocol for Reopening of Swimming Pools in Shared Residential Facilities

Recent Updates:

5/21/2021: Updated to allow indoor pools, hot tubs, saunas, steam rooms, restrooms, showers, and locker rooms to reopen at 50% capacity. Updated cleaning requirements to align with updated CDC cleaning guidance. Any informal social gatherings held in residential pool areas must follow County Guidance for Informal Social Gatherings.

COVID-19 case rates, hospitalizations, and deaths remain low and steady, but COVID-19 continues to pose a high risk to our community and requires all people to follow precautions and to modify operations and activities to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Due to Los Angeles County entering the “Yellow Tier” of the State’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy framework, this protocol has been updated to lift some local activity-specific restrictions. Residential facility operators should proceed with caution and adhere to the requirements in this protocol to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 within their business operations. This protocol applies to the use of swimming pools located at apartments, condominiums, and homeowner’s associations.

Outdoor residential pools are allowed to be open for routine use limited to enable all pool users to maintain six (6) feet physical distance from those who are not members of their household. Indoor residential pools can be open for routine use at 50% occupancy, based on applicable building or fire codes.

Indoor and outdoor hot tubs, indoor saunas, and steam rooms may be open. Indoor and outdoor hot tubs can open only for use by household groups or in cases where six feet of distancing can be maintained non-household members, unless all are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, or all are fully vaccinated except for members of one household and none of the individuals living at that household is [at high risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19](#). Saunas and steam rooms must be limited to 50% capacity. Restrooms and locker rooms may be open for use at 50% capacity.

Any informal gatherings held at the residential pool must follow to the County Guidance on Informal Social Gatherings: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/docs/people/InformalSocialGatherings.pdf>.

In Yellow Tier, informal social gatherings are limited to 100 people outdoors or, for indoor gatherings, 50% capacity of an indoor space or 50 people, whichever is fewer. Masking and distancing must be maintained unless everyone at the gathering is known to be fully vaccinated or all are fully vaccinated except for members of one household and none of the individuals living at that household is at high risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19.

All pool operators 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.

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.¹ 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.

¹ 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.

The term “swimmers,” “participants,” “visitors,” “spectators,” 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.

In the protocols that follow, people are considered “fully vaccinated against COVID-19” at:

- two (2) weeks or more after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose COVID-19 vaccine series (e.g., Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), OR
- two (2) weeks or more after they have received a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine (e.g., Johnson and Johnson (J&J/Janssen)).

Please note: This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available so be sure to check the LA County website <http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/> regularly 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 that ensure equitable access to critical services

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

All residential pool operators 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: _____

Facility Address: _____

Date Posted: _____

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

- Check here if there are no onsite employees for the facility/property. *Skip to Section B.*
- 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 and should discuss any concerns with their healthcare provider or occupational health services to make appropriate decisions on returning to the workplace
- All employees (including facility staff, and operations staff, collectively referred to as “employees”) have been told not to come to work if sick, or if they are exposed to a person who has COVID-19.
- Employees 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 [2021 COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave Law](#).

- Screenings** are conducted before employees, and other visitors may enter the workspace, in compliance with the LA County DPH [Entry Screening Guidance](#). Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever or chills, or a new loss of taste or smell, 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 10 days, they can be cleared to enter and work for that day.
 - **Positive Screen (Not Cleared):**
 - If the person was not fully vaccinated against COVID-19² and has had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 10 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.
 - 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.
- 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.
- In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer must report this cluster to the Los Angeles Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821 or online at 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. The Department of Public Health will need the facility's immediate cooperation to determine whether the cluster of cases constitutes an outbreak of COVID-19.
- Employees who have contact with others 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/ncoronavirus2019/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 should not be used.
- Employees who are in regular close contact with customers or who are in a closed, indoor space with customers who are not wearing face masks (e.g., conducting entry screenings or serving meals) must be provided a face shield to wear in addition to a face mask. It is strongly recommended that workers that are in close contact indoors with customers who are not wearing face masks be provided with masks that are more effective at protecting against small aerosol transmission, including but not limited to fit-tested N95 (preferred), KN95 or double-masks, given the higher risks of COVID-19 spread indoors. For more information see the LA County DPH COVID-19 mask webpage at <https://ph.lacounty.gov/masks>.

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

- Face shields are optional for employees that show acceptable proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 to their employer; wearing a face mask is still required. For fully vaccinated employees who have shown proof of their full vaccination against COVID-19 and choose not to wear a face shield, the employer should create and keep a written record that documents that each of these employees has shown them acceptable proof of vaccination. The employer does not need to keep a copy of the proof of full vaccination shown.
 - People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 at ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).
 - The following are acceptable for the employee to show their employer as proof of full vaccination for COVID-19: Vaccination card (which includes name of person vaccinated, type of vaccine provided and date last dose administered) OR a photo of a vaccination card as a separate document OR a photo of the attendee's vaccine card stored on a phone or electronic device OR documentation of full vaccination from a healthcare provider (which includes name of person vaccinated and confirms that the person is fully vaccinated for COVID-19).
- Employees are instructed to wash (if applicable) or replace their face masks daily.
- To ensure that masks are worn consistently and correctly, employees are discouraged 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.
 - Occupancy is reduced and space between employees is maximized in any room or area used by 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; and
 - 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.
- Employees need not wear a face mask when the employee is entering the water.
- Shifts are staggered or rotated to limit the number of employees present at the aquatic venue at the same time.
- 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.
- 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:

B. MEASURES TO ENSURE SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Outdoor pools may be open for routine use. Use of the pool facility must be limited to enable all pool users to maintain 6 feet physical distance from those who are not members of their household.
 - Maximum permitted pool user capacity: _____
- Indoor operations. Pool operations that are offered indoors, including indoor pools, restrooms, showers, saunas, steam rooms and locker rooms are limited to 50% of the facility's maximum indoor occupancy based on applicable Building or Fire Code. Operation of these indoor facilities must additionally follow the [County Protocol for Gyms and Fitness Establishments](#).
 - Maximum number of patrons in the facility limited to: _____
- Outdoor hot tubs/spas/jacuzzi may be open for use by household groups or to individuals from different households in cases where six feet of distancing can be maintained, unless all are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or all are fully vaccinated except for members of one household and none of the individuals living at that household is at high risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19.
- Inform all resident households about pool user capacity limit.
- Consider implementing reservations for pool use. For example, this could include reserving full lanes for individual lap swimming and half -lanes for individual household use.
- Lap swimmers should keep a 6 feet physical distance from those they do not live with, unless all are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. It may be necessary to limit the number of swimmers that may use a lane for lap swimming at any given time.
- If a lifeguard is on-duty, the lifeguard is not also expected to monitor handwashing, use of face **masks**, or social distancing of others.
- It is recommended that a designated person or group of residents be responsible for monitoring and ensuring that the maximum number of pool users as set forth above is not exceeded. The designated person should also monitor adherence to all interim guidelines.
- Measures to ensure social distancing (individuals can remain at least 6 feet apart from those they do not live with) have been implemented, unless all are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or all are fully vaccinated except for members of one household and none of the individuals living at that household is [at high risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19](#).
 - Change deck layouts and other areas surrounding the pool to ensure that the standing and seating areas can support physical distancing requirements, while maintaining clear deck space of 4 feet around the pool, as required by State law. This can include removing chairs or taping off areas to discourage use.
 - Providing physical cues or guides (for example, lane lines in the water or chairs and tables on the deck) and signs and visual cues (for example, tape on the decks, floors, or sidewalks) to ensure that residents and swimmers stay at least 6 feet apart, both in and out of the water.
- Consider prohibiting** guests that are not residents of the apartment, condominium or homeowner's association from using the pool facilities.
- Parties or gatherings **at** the pool **must follow County [Guidance for Informal Social Gatherings](#)**.

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.
- Increase introduction and circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. 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 all working areas.
- However, do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk to staff, residents, or swimmers.
- ☐ Visitors arriving at the establishment are reminded to wear a face **mask** at all times (except while in the water) while in the establishment or on the grounds of the establishment. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Persons 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.
- ☐ **Entry screenings** are conducted before visitors may enter the facility **in compliance with County Screening Guidance**. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever or chills, **or a new loss of taste or smell**, and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. 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 to the 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 10 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 10 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.
 - 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.
- ☐ Conduct a pool safety check to ensure pool chemistry is adequate for disinfection and that pool has been evaluated for safety equipment.
 - Proper operation and maintenance should inactivate virus in the water
- ☐ For facilities that have not been operating, flush each of the hot and cold-water fixtures for five minutes prior to reopening to replace stale water in the facility's plumbing with a fresh and safe water supply. This includes but is not limited to drinking fountains, decorative fountains, hot tubs, etc.
- ☐ Implement a cleaning and disinfection plan for frequently touched surfaces and, if used, for shared objects each time they are used. Use EPA approved disinfectant. The following will be cleaned and disinfected **at the frequency listed below but no less than one time per day**, on the following schedule:
 - Handrails and slides _____
 - Lounge chairs, tabletops _____
 - Door handles and surfaces of restrooms, handwashing stations, diaper changing stations and showers _____
 - Common-use facilities _____

- Restrooms _____
- Other _____
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene. Supplies include soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, tissues and trash cans that are available to the residents.
- If not removed, ensure that furniture (e.g. lounge chairs) or other common-use items are cleaned and disinfected **at least once daily**. Residents may bring supplies to disinfect furniture and common-use items after they use them. It is recommended that residents bring their own furniture or common-use items.
- Individuals should bring their own towels to the pool and should not share towels with those outside of their household.
- No food or beverages can be distributed on pool decks with others, and household members should not share any food or beverages with non-household members to reduce the risk for infection transmission.
- Water fountains or water coolers are shut off and may not be used.

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 pool 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 each public entrance of the pool facility is posted to inform pool users to stay home if they are ill or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- Signage is posted that reminds pool users to maintain social distancing of six feet from non-household members to the extent possible.
- Signage encouraging all residents and swimmers to wash their hands often or use sanitizer upon entry into the pool facility. Provide or ask residents to bring a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Signage reminding residents to wear a face **mask** when traveling through common areas to and from the pool and shared restrooms. **Remind swimmers to remove face mask when entering water.**

E. MEASURES THAT COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

- Measures are instituted to assure access to the pool for residents who have mobility limitations and/or are at high risk in public spaces.

You can also find guidance from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention for social distancing and facility/surface disinfection procedures at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>.