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# COVID-19 REOPENING GUIDANCE FOR GYMS, FITNESS CENTERS, DANCE STUDIOS, AND OTHER EXERCISE FACILITIES

UPDATED ON OCTOBER, 7, 2020

**Note:** On Friday, August 28, 2020, the State announced a shift from its Monitoring List to a color-coded four-tier Blueprint for a Safe Reopening. In doing so, the State altered the reopening plans for some businesses and activities, opening some that had been prohibited and imposing new standards on others. The State also reiterated that local Health Officers have the power to impose greater restrictions than the State.

Gyms, fitness centers, dance studios, and other exercise facilities are strongly encouraged to continue to provide outdoor exercise activities.

For outdoor shared public swimming pools and wading pools guidance, please visit [here](#).

## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

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This document provides guidance for gyms, fitness centers, dance studios, and other exercise facilities. This guidance is intended to support a safe, clean environment for personnel and patrons. Contact [COVIDRecovery@acgov.org](mailto:COVIDRecovery@acgov.org) if you have questions or require technical assistance. For business resources, visit <https://covid-19.acgov.org/recovery.page>.

NOTE: The [Alameda County Reopening Plan](#) is in alignment with the [State's Blueprint for Safer Economy](#), but there will be areas where Alameda County is more restrictive than the State. The more restrictive guidance prevails.

## BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

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1. Prepare and implement a [COVID-19 Site-Specific Protection Plan](#) based on local and State industry guidance.
2. Train employees on COVID-19 prevention, symptom screening, face coverings, and importance of physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
3. Implement symptom screening for all employees and do not allow employees who exhibit symptoms to come to work. Screening tools available under Tools and Resources for Businesses at: <https://covid-19.acgov.org/recovery.page?>
4. Develop and implement cleaning and disinfecting protocols in the Site-Specific Protection Plan.
5. Establish physical distancing guidelines and document in the Site-Specific Protection Plan.
6. Ensure compliance with the [Alameda County Face Covering Order](#) by all persons in your place of business (patrons, employees, suppliers, etc.). Both personnel and patrons will be required to wear a face covering—including during the exercise—unless they are specifically exempted from

the face covering requirements in Health Officer Order No. 20-13, updated on June 5, 2020 or comply with specific requirements set forth below.

7. Comply with guidance issued by the [California Blueprint for Safer Economy](#), all [Local Health Officer Orders](#), and applicable federal, California, and local provisions for paid sick leave for individuals who cannot safely work for reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

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In addition to preparing, posting, and implementing the [COVID-19 Site-Specific Protection Plan](#) required by the Order, each owner, operator, manager, or supervisor of a gym, fitness center, dance studio, and other exercise facility must address each item below in the COVID-19 Site-Specific Protection Plan.

1. *Section 1 – Requirements for All Gyms, Fitness Centers, Dance Studios, and Other Exercise Facilities:*
  - 1.1. Face coverings are mandatory at all times for patrons and personnel.
    - 1.1.1. Personnel who are providing one-on-one/personal training or private instruction must wear a face covering and face shield.
    - 1.1.2. Patrons must avoid exerting themselves to the point where they may want to remove their face covering. They must be able to wear the face covering continuously while exercising and should be advised to check with their health care professional if they are unsure what activities they can safely participate in while continuously wearing a face covering.
    - 1.1.3. Patrons should allow their breathing to slow to a regular intensity before temporarily removing their face covering to hydrate and should then immediately replace their face covering, and wash or sanitize their hands if they touch their face.
  - 1.2. The number of people inside a gym must never exceed 10% of the capacity of that gym, fitness center, dance studio, and other exercise facilities, including personnel.
    - 1.2.1. Facilities are strongly encouraged to adopt a reservation system for patrons to help limit capacity and allow for time to regularly sanitize equipment.
    - 1.2.2. Facilities should consider maintaining contact information of patrons who have visited for at least 21 days after each visit. The purpose of this recommendation is to assist ACPHD with effective contact tracing in case of an outbreak that may have affected people also at the facility.
  - 1.3. Equip the front desk area with Plexiglas or other impermeable barriers, if feasible, to minimize the interaction between reception workers and patrons.
    - 1.3.1. Implement virtual, touchless check-in tools, if possible, so that patrons do not have to utilize the reception space.
  - 1.4. Inform patrons ahead of time that they will be expected to bring their own towels from home and to bring their own water bottles as drinking fountains will be closed. No-touch bottle filling stations are permitted.
    - 1.4.1. Where towel service is available, all towels borrowed by a patron should be placed in a container with a tightly fitted lid and not used again until it is properly laundered either by a commercial laundering service or a laundering process that includes immersion in water of at least 160 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 25 minutes. Store all clean towels in a clean, covered place. Staff who handle dirty linens or laundry must wear gloves and a face

covering.

- 1.5. Patrons must always maintain physical distancing of at least six feet from people outside their household and 12 feet around patrons engaged in exercise that increases breathing rate or intensity (i.e. “cardio” exercise). Use signage, floor tape and/or directional guidance to help to ensure physical distancing as personnel and patrons move around the space.
  - 1.5.1. Those engaged in activities that do not increase the rate or intensity of breathing must maintain at least six feet of distance from others.
  - 1.5.2. One-On-One Personal Training is allowed when at least six feet of physical distancing can be maintained, or 12 feet if any activity that increases breathing rate or intensity is performed.
  - 1.5.3. Patrons may not engage in exercise that requires the participation of other patrons, such as spotting while lifting weights.
- 1.6. Use signage and on-going monitoring to ensure that individual rooms and spaces within a facility do not exceed their capacity.
- 1.7. Facilities providing indoor group fitness activities must ensure that the shared space has doors and windows that can open to provide additional airflow. Classes must be staggered to allow for sanitization of the space and equipment between groups.
  - 1.7.1. If the facility is providing outdoor group fitness classes, it is subject to all of the conditions for outdoor non-contact fitness class imposed by [Section 8 in Appendix C](#).
- 1.8. Disinfectant sprays and wipes must be conveniently located near equipment for use by patrons. Facilities must post signage instructing patrons to spray and/or wipe down equipment stations before and after use.
  - 1.8.1. Personnel should monitor compliance with disinfecting self-directed fitness equipment and the availability of disinfecting supplies.
  - 1.8.2. Patrons and personnel should be provided information, by signage or other means, about how to inform the facility’s designated COVID-19 monitor of safety concerns in real time.
- 1.9. Indoor retail spaces may open, subject to all of the conditions for indoor retail imposed by [Section 1\(b\) in Appendix C](#).
- 1.10. Ventilation is important to prevent transmission. Rooms or spaces which are known to have poor ventilation are prohibited.
- 1.11. Indoor or outdoor basketball courts, volleyball courts, squash courts, and other sports facilities are permitted for those who are playing with members of their same household or living unit or social bubble and it must:
  - 1.11.1. Have good ventilation
  - 1.11.2. Face coverings are worn the entire time
- 1.12. Indoor or outdoor tennis and pickleball courts may be used by members of different households or living units so long as no more than two people are present (i.e., singles tennis or pickleball).
- 1.13. Indoor dining is not permitted at this time, but patrons may pick up food from indoor food service areas within the facility, to be consumed outside the facility.
- 1.14. Locker room and shower facilities may only open to the extent necessary to provide restroom access. Benches, showers, and other shared spaces must be closed.
- 1.15. Indoor pools, hot tubs, saunas, steam rooms, and climbing walls must remain closed.
- 1.16. Childcare spaces, playgrounds, and/or sensory walls/stations/tables must remain closed.