

Governor Cooper Announces Modified Stay At Home Order and Transition to Phase 1 of Easing Restrictions: *New order takes effect Friday, May 8 at 5 pm; Personal care businesses, entertainment venues, gyms to remain closed*

Raleigh
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Governor Roy Cooper today signed [Executive Order No. 138](#) to modify North Carolina's Stay At Home order and transition to Phase 1 of slowly easing certain COVID-19 restrictions effective Friday, May 8 at 5 pm. Certain businesses remain closed as the state continues battling COVID-19.

“COVID-19 is still a serious threat to our state, and Phase 1 is designed to be a limited easing of restrictions that can boost parts of our economy while keeping important safety rules in place,” said Governor Cooper. “This is a careful and deliberate first step, guided by the data, and North Carolinians still must use caution while this virus is circulating.”

“We must continue to protect our families and neighbors as we take this cautious step forward. When you leave your home, follow the three W's: Wear a face covering, wash your hands, and wait six feet apart,” said Dr. Mandy Cohen, Secretary of the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

Today's Order removes the distinction between essential and non-essential businesses. Retail businesses are allowed to open at 50% capacity and will be required to direct customers to stand 6 feet apart, perform frequent cleanings, provide hand sanitizer when available, screen workers for symptoms and more. The Order allows people to leave their homes for commercial activity at any business that is open.

Certain businesses remain closed, including bars, personal care businesses, entertainment venues, and gyms. Restaurants may only continue to serve customers for drive-through, take out and delivery.

All workers at retail and other businesses are recommended to wear cloth face coverings. Teleworking is still encouraged for businesses that can practice it.

Though small outdoor gatherings will be allowed in Phase 1, gatherings of more than 10 people generally are still prohibited. The Order encourages cloth face coverings to be worn when outside the home and in contact with others. Everyone who uses a face covering should adhere to this guidance without fear of profiling or bias.

During Phase 1, childcare facilities will be open to serve families of parents who are working or looking for work. These centers will be required to follow strict cleaning protocols. Summer day camps can operate in compliance with NC DHHS guidelines.

See more on [what's new in Phase 1](#).

In explaining today's Order, Governor Cooper and Secretary Cohen reported North Carolina remains stable on the following key metrics:

Trajectory in COVID-Like Illness (CLI) Surveillance Over 14 Days

- North Carolina's syndromic surveillance trend for COVID-like illness is decreasing.

Trajectory of Lab-Confirmed Cases Over 14 Days

- North Carolina's trajectory of lab-confirmed cases over the last 14 days cases is slightly increasing.

Trajectory in Percent of Tests Returning Positive Over 14 Days

- North Carolina's trajectory in percent of tests returning positive over the last 14 days is decreasing.

Trajectory in Hospitalizations Over 14 Days

- North Carolina's trajectory of hospitalizations over the last 14 days is level.

In addition to these metrics, the state continues building capacity to be able to adequately respond to an increase in virus spread. These areas include:

Laboratory Testing

- North Carolina has doubled the daily testing rate.

Tracing Capability

- The Carolina Community Tracing Collaborative has received over 4,000 applications and is in the process of hiring 250 new contact tracers.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Supply chains continue to improve with the exception of gowns.

The order is in effect until 5 pm on Friday, May 22. However, the end of this Order does not necessarily mean the state will move to Phase 2. Phase 2 will only start if data and indicators are in the right place.

Read [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about today's Order.

Read a [copy of today's graphs and slides](#).