

Reopening Protocol for Gyms and Fitness Establishments: Appendix L

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

Recent updates: (Changes highlighted in yellow)

4/2/21: Effective 4/5/2021, gyms and fitness establishments, including yoga and dance studios, 1:1 fitness training and climbing walls be reopen for indoor operations up to 25% occupancy.

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. Gyms and Fitness Establishments 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 Gym and Fitness Establishments, yoga and dance studios, 1:1 fitness training, and climbing walls (collectively referred to as “Gyms and Fitness Establishments”). In addition to the conditions imposed on these specific businesses by the Governor, these types of businesses must also be in compliance with the conditions laid out in this Reopening Protocol for Gyms and Fitness Establishments.

Gyms and Fitness Establishments may reopen for indoor operations at limited occupancy. Indoor operations at gyms and fitness establishments are limited to **25%** occupancy based on applicable Building or Fire Code and continue to be open to the public for outdoor operations. Since outdoor fitness operations present a lower risk of transmission compared to indoor operations, gyms and fitness establishments are encouraged to continue prioritizing outdoor services. For both indoor and outdoor operations, all employees and patrons must wear an [appropriate face mask](#) at all times except when swimming. For more information on face masks see Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) COVID-19 Mask webpage at <http://ph.lacounty.gov/masks>.

Outdoor hot tubs can open only for use by household groups or in cases where six feet of distancing can be maintained. **Indoor hot** tubs, saunas, and steam rooms must remain closed. **Indoor and outdoor pools may be open for regular use.** All pools must comply with LACDPH [Protocols for Public Swimming Pools](#).

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 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 guidance 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:

Maximum Occupancy, per Fire Code:

Approximate total square footage of space open to the public:

**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 and should discuss any concerns with their healthcare provider or occupational health services to make appropriate decisions on returning to the workplace.
- 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 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.
- Entry screenings are conducted before employees, vendors, delivery personnel, and anyone providing services onsite may enter the workspace, in accordance with the LACDPH [Entry Screening guidance](#). Screenings 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 remotely or in person upon the employees' arrival. 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 was not fully vaccinated¹ 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.

¹ 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).

- 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.
- ❑ 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 COVID19, 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](#).
- ❑ 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](#).
- ❑ 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 County 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://ph.lacounty.gov/masks>. The mask must 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. Masks that restrict airflow under heavy exertion (such as N-95 masks) are not advised for exercise.
- ❑ All employees must wear face masks at all times except when working alone in private offices with closed doors or when eating or drinking. The exception made previously for employees working in cubicles with solid partitions exceeding the height of the employee while standing is overridden.
- ❑ 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 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.
- Workers who consistently must be within six feet of patrons or co-workers must wear a secondary barrier (e.g., face shield or safety goggles) in addition to a face mask. All employees should minimize the amount of time spent within six feet of guests.
- Employees are instructed to wash or replace their face masks daily.
- All workstations 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 _____
- Ensure temporary or contract workers at the facility are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary supplies and PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary and/or contract workers.
- Face masks are required when employees are in the vicinity of others. Workers must have face masks available and wear them in the fitness facility, offices, or in company-owned vehicles when traveling with others. Face mask are particularly important if physical distancing cannot be maintained on the job (for example, personal trainers and staff assisting members with exercises). Face masks must not be shared. Employers are required to provide face masks to all employees.
- 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. Sharing held items 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:

B. MEASURES TO ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Indoor operations. Gym and fitness establishment operations that are offered indoors are limited to 25% of the facility's maximum indoor occupancy based on applicable Building or Fire Code.
 - Maximum number of patrons in the facility limited to: _____
- Outdoor operations. Occupancy in outdoor spaces is limited to such a level that enables all employees and patrons to maintain at least a 6-foot physical distance from others at all times.
- Outdoor structures and space. Outdoor operations may be conducted under a canopy, or other sun shelter,

provided that the sides of the canopy or sun shelter are not closed and there is sufficient outdoor air movement within the space. Any outdoor space or temporary structure used for outdoor operations must comply with the State's criteria for an outdoor setting, as specified in the California Department of Public Health's mandatory guidance on [Use of Temporary Structures for Outdoor Business Operations](#).

- Outdoor structures that do not meet the State's criteria for an outdoor setting are classified as indoor settings, and any customers within them will be counted and included as part of the establishment's 25% total indoor occupancy limit.
- Staff must strictly and continuously meter entry and exit of patrons at all entrances to the indoor and outdoor areas of the gym/fitness establishment in order to track occupancy and ensure compliance with capacity limits and physical distancing requirements. Gyms/fitness establishments may choose to limit the number of entrances that are open to the public during normal business hours to facilitate easier tracking. Gyms/fitness establishments 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.
- If possible, implement a reservation system for patrons to reserve time in the outdoor fitness space so the facility can manage occupancy. Utilize the reservation system to contact patrons with reservations 24 hours before their scheduled arrival to confirm their reservation and ask if they or someone in their household is exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms. If the patron answers in the affirmative the patron should be reminded that they should only utilize the fitness facility if they are not ill. Such communication can be done via app, email, or text, if possible.
- Avoid patrons queuing outside the facility and consider having a staff person at the entrance of the gym/fitness establishment to help maintain occupancy levels.
- Only those patrons that are actually exercising should be at the gym/fitness facility. Patrons waiting for their reservation time should wait in their cars.
- Group training classes such as aerobics, yoga, and dance should take place outdoors as much as possible and should be modified to limit the size of the class to ensure a minimum of six feet of physical distance between patrons.
 - Group exercise classes may only be offered if distancing requirements can be maintained and there is no person-to-person physical contact.
 - For high aerobic classes such as aerobics, spin or conditioning or machines such as elliptical, tread or stair machines, consider placing individuals and equipment at least 8 feet apart rather than 6 ft.
- Indoor High and Moderate contact sports, such as, racquetball and basketball are not yet permitted.
- Outdoor sports courts can be used for individual practice or for activities where 6 feet of physical distance can be maintained throughout the activity. When people are waiting to use a court, a maximum time limit for court use by each participant should be implemented. Participants waiting must practice physical distancing.
- Yoga classes held in temperatures over 100 degrees should be discouraged.
- Personal trainers are permitted if they maintain a six-foot distance from the client and wear a facemask. Patrons must wear a face mask while receiving instruction and should be cautioned to only do exercises to the extent they can breathe comfortably while wearing a face mask over both their nose and mouth at all times.
- Equipment is placed at least 6 feet apart, with greater distancing for treadmills and other high-exertion aerobic fitness equipment. Equipment can be arranged in an "X" pattern to provide greater distancing. Equipment that cannot be moved marked off to ensure that clients can maintain at least a six (6) feet distance from others. Tape or other markings assist customers in keeping a 6 feet distance between them and others in any 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.

- Use one-way foot traffic patterns throughout the outdoor fitness space with visual cues and signs.
- Employees have been instructed to maintain at least a six (6) feet distance from customers and from each other in all areas of the gym/fitness establishment space. Employees may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or as otherwise necessary.
- Massage services are allowed and are required to comply with the relevant portions of the posted [Personal Care Services](#) protocol.
- Restrooms that are inside of the facility may be opened for customer use at a limited capacity.
- Showers and locker rooms must remain closed.
- Signs and floor markings should be used to ensure proper physical distancing is maintained while customers are in the restroom.
- Shared restroom facilities should be cleaned hourly throughout the day using EPA-registered disinfectants. High-touch surfaces such as faucets, toilets, doorknobs, and light switches must be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
- Create and post a cleaning schedule for the restroom facilities. Post the cleaning schedule on the front of the door so patrons know when they can/cannot use the restroom. Make sure to close the restroom during the cleaning and disinfecting process.
- Consider using a checklist or audit system to track how often cleaning is conducted.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and are continuously stocked at all times. Provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed. Install hands-free devices, if possible, including motion sensor sinks faucets, soap dispensers, sanitizer dispensers, and paper towel dispensers.
- Consider modifying doors to multi-stall restrooms to be able to be opened and closed without touching the handles, using opening-devices, or powered door operators with the hand, whenever possible. If the door cannot be opened without touching the handle or door-operator with the hand, place a trash-receptacle by the door to ensure a paper towel can be readily disposed of when operating the door. The location and positioning of waste receptacles should not interfere with egress, evacuation, emergency equipment, or any reasonable accommodations provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Make sure trash cans are emptied regularly.
- Provide information on how to wash hands properly, including hanging signs in restrooms.
- Consider suspending non-core activities, including retail operations, childcare, and food service. If fitness facilities operate such amenities, they should review and following the applicable posted county public health protocols for these activities.
- Swimming facilities within the gym **must also** comply with County [Protocols for Public Swimming Pools](#). **Indoor hot tubs, saunas and steam rooms remain closed.**

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 coverings (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.

- All patrons are required to wear face masks while they are at the gym/fitness establishment. The only exception is when patrons may be swimming in a pool. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Individuals who have been instructed not to wear a face mask by their medical provider must wear a face shield with a drape at the bottom edge to be in compliance with State directives if their condition allows it. A drape that is form fitting to the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used. Masks are required, even during heavy exertion **as tolerated**.
- Patrons should be reminded to limit their exertion to a level that is comfortable while wearing a face mask and to **stop or** take frequent breaks from exercise if they begin to experience any difficulty breathing. Masks should be changed if they become wet, sticks to a person's face, or obstructs breathing. To support the safety of your employees and other visitors, a face mask should be made available to visitors who arrive without them.
- Symptom checks are conducted before patrons may enter the facility. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever or chills 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 14 days, they can be cleared to enter and participate 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.
 - 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.
- Contactless payment and check-in systems are in place or, if not feasible, systems are sanitized regularly. Describe:

- Perform thorough cleaning throughout the day in high traffic areas in the gym or fitness establishment building that may be used by employees, such as break rooms and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, escalators, handrails, and elevator controls.
- Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces, including personal exercise machines and equipment, doorknobs, and hand washing facilities.
- Require patrons to disinfect individual exercise equipment, mats, and machines before and after use with provided disinfecting wipes. Ensure that lined, non-touch trash receptacles are available throughout the fitness facility to dispose of used wipes.
 - If members are unable or unwilling to wipe/disinfect equipment after exercise, provide "ready to clean" tags for members to place on equipment after use, to ensure equipment is disinfected by staff before the next use.
- Make sure all workers have been trained to use and have an adequate supply of all-purpose cleaners and disinfectants, when needed. Follow Cal/OSHA requirements and manufacturer instructions for safe use and required personal protective equipment for cleaning products.
- Workers should have enough ventilation (air flow) in areas where they are disinfecting.

- Sanitary facilities are available for employee use only. Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and are continuously stocked at all times. Provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed. Install hands-free devices, if possible, including motion sensor sinks faucets, soap dispensers, sanitizer dispensers, and paper towel dispensers.
 - Make sure trash cans are emptied regularly.
 - Patrons should be reminded to maintain six feet of distance from janitorial or custodial staff. Implement a process to regularly check in with workers to ensure visitors are following this protocol. Ensure workers are able to share such information without fear of reprisal or retaliation.
 - Procure options for third-party cleaning companies to assist with the increased cleaning demand, as needed.
 - Consider implementing a check-out system for patrons to utilize any small equipment and accessories (i.e., exercise bands, ropes, mats, foam rollers, etc.). Develop a process to clean and disinfect these items upon return.
 - Customers are encouraged to bring their own water bottles. Encourage patrons to bring their own towels and mats and consider disbanding the provision of any facility-provided towels or personal hygiene products.
 - For any towels, cloth wipes, or other laundered items, provide a closed container where patrons can place used towels or other items. Ensure those items cannot be used again until properly laundered either by a commercial laundering service or an in-house laundering process. Store all clean linens in a clean, covered place. Ensure workers who handle dirty linens or laundry wear gloves.
 - Have a staff member provide the linens or other materials upon request instead of setting up a self-serve area.
 - Amenities, including magazines, books, self-serve water stations (unless touchless), and other items for patrons, must be removed from all areas.
 - When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 60% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide employees training on manufacturer's directions and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves and other protective equipment as required by the product. Follow the asthma-safer cleaning methods recommended by the California Department of Public Health.
 - Hand sanitizer, tissues and trash cans are available to the public in the outdoor gym/fitness establishment space. Consider setting up at least one handwashing station that is available to employees and patrons in the outdoor space.
 - Optional - Describe other measures (e.g., providing senior-only hours):
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D. MEASURES THAT COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

- A copy of this protocol or 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, where customers line up and highly-visible locations that notifies employees and patrons of occupancy limits, requirements to maintain social distancing and that face masks are required at all times, except in pools. Signage should also caution patrons about not overexerting themselves while wearing a face mask and exercising. See the [County DPH COVID-19 Guidance webpage](#) for additional resources and examples of signage that can be used by businesses.

- Online outlets of the establishment (website, social media, etc.) provide clear information about store hours, required use of face masks, outdoor operations, limited occupancy, policies in regard to pre-booking, prepayment, and other relevant issues.

E. MEASURES THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES

- Services that are critical to the customers/clients have been prioritized.
- Transactions or services that can be offered remotely have been moved on-line.
- Measures are instituted to assure access to services for customers who have mobility limitations and/or are at high risk in public spaces.
 - Consider implementing special hours designated for high risk or medically vulnerable populations, including seniors with admittance by reservation only.

**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:
