

Opening Up To the New Normal

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With COVID-19 cases falling and vaccination rates increasing, the County of Los Angeles is updating guidance for reopening the economy. Effective Monday, April 5, 2021, Los Angeles County non-essential office-based businesses can now reopen indoors, at 50% capacity, per the new [County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health Order of the Health Officer](#). This revised order was updated as a result of Los Angeles County's move into the "Orange Tier," which reflects [a moderate risk of COVID-19 transmission](#). In addition to allowing offices to reopen at a limited capacity, the order increases capacity limits for restaurants, breweries, wineries, cardrooms, places of worship, family entertainment centers, shopping malls, retail, fitness center, personal care establishments, movie theaters, museums, and institutes of higher education. Social distancing and masking requirements still apply. As of April 12, 2021, however, ["location and capacity limits on places of worship are not mandatory but are strongly recommended."](#) This is in response to [recent](#) United States Supreme Court [rulings](#), which lifted California's ban on indoor religious services during the pandemic.

The order classifies the following as "Lower-Risk Businesses:" (1) retailers ("Lower-Risk Retail Businesses"); (2) manufacturing and logistics sector businesses that supply Lower-Risk Retail Businesses; (3) non-essential office-based businesses (although telework is strongly encouraged); and (4) indoor malls and shopping centers. Unless the staff of an office-based business is fully vaccinated, telework is encouraged and indoor occupancy is limited to 50% of capacity. Essential office-based businesses (not including healthcare operations, essential infrastructure, and essential government functions) that cannot perform essential operations remotely must limit indoor capacity to 75%.

Office-based businesses reopening at 50% occupancy should review the sector-specific protocol found in [Appendix D](#). This reopening protocol includes guidelines regarding entry screenings, physical distancing, infection control measures, and signage.

Additional recent industry-specific updates include the [Outdoor Seated Live Events and Performances protocol](#), which was revised on April 6, 2021, and the [Music, Television and Film Production protocol](#), which was revised on April 4, 2021. Outdoor venues may increase attendance capacity to 67%, if all guests show a negative test result within the 72 hours prior to attendance or show the operator proof of full vaccination. The revised Music, Television and Film Production protocol focuses on employee screenings, takes into account whether or not the employee is fully vaccinated, and mandates that dining occur only in designated dining areas and be outdoors if feasible. The guidelines for various sectors of the economy likely will continue to be revised as more of the population is fully vaccinated.

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