



City of Wharton
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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“Back in Business”
Update 6/4/2020

The City of Wharton has established a “Back in Business” framework to help ease our businesses in re-opening their doors. The “Back in Business” campaign has been developed as the State and Federal government announced more business to resume. At this time, further allowances for expanded business has been permitted by the Governor.

According to the Governor’s Executive Order GA-26 issued on June 3rd, 2020 and available at https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/EO-GA-26_expanded_opening_COVID-19.pdf:

Effective June 3, 2020:

- All businesses currently operating at 25% capacity can expand their occupancy to 50% with certain exceptions.
- Bars and similar establishments may increase their capacity to 50% as long as patrons are seated.
- Amusement parks and carnivals in counties with less than 1,000 confirmed positive cases may open at 50% capacity.
- Restaurants may expand their maximum table size from 6 to 10 persons.

Effective June 12, 2020:

- Restaurants may expand their occupancy levels to 75%.

Effective June 19, 2020:

- Amusement parks and carnivals in counties with more than 1,000 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 may open at 50% capacity.

Additional Openings:

Special provisions have been made for outdoor gatherings, such as Fourth of July celebrations, but it is imperative that local officials and public health officials collaborate on safe standards. These provisions are included in the Governor's Executive Order and are also available on the Open Texas webpage.

Further Protocols:

All businesses should continue to follow the minimum standard health protocols from DSHS. For details and a full list of guidelines, openings, and relevant dates, visit <http://open.texas.gov>.

Reminders for those going out:

- Individuals are encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings.
- People should not be in groups greater than ten when possible.
- People over the age of 65 are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible.
- People are still asked to avoid nursing homes, state supported living centers, assisted living facilities, or long-term care facilities.

What does this mean for businesses?

Q: What does this new order mean for me?

A: Depending on the type of business you operate, this order may allow increased customer presence in your building and/or adjusted protocols for serving customers. All businesses should still be practicing social distancing and the minimum standard health protocols located at www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus.

It is recommended that retail businesses provide training to their staff on cleaning, sanitizing, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette, and take precautions to protect employees from exposure. See this helpful guide from the Texas Dept. of State Health Services: 'DSHS guidance on how to re-open safely for both employees and customers' at <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/docs/ReOpenedRetailGuidance.pdf>

Q: What happens next?

A: The City of Wharton will continue to monitor the circumstances and take guidance from the Governor regarding the re-opening of businesses. The City will also keep businesses updated if any possible or subsequent spike in cases causes the Governor to increase restrictions

We know there are many more questions out there and that there will continue to be as we move forward in this process. The City of Wharton is dedicated to supporting its business community through this time and is eager to see Wharton 'back in business'. Please contact the Community Development Department at 979-532-2491 for more information.

Sincerely,

Community Development Department
City of Wharton