



COVID Zone Information for Human Services Providers

What are the COVID Zones?

In October, 2020 Governor Cuomo announced a new, **hyper-local shutdown effort** to help curb the spread of COVID-19 in areas where positivity rates reached dangerously high levels in the State.

The state's shutdown plan includes three zones: **red**, **orange**, and **yellow**.

Each zone has different restrictions on varying businesses and public spaces.

Heavy fines apply for violating the rules – Mayor Bill de Blasio said they could be up to **\$15,000 a day for mass gathering infractions** and **up to \$1,000 a day** each for social distancing and face-covering violations.

Everyone living in *all* zones should ensure they continue to follow basic COVID-safety guidance (wash your hands regularly, stay home if you are sick, maintain at least six feet of distance from others, wear a mask, and get tested).

How Do I Know Which Zone My Organization Is In?

The State has created an easy-to-use **[“Zone Finder” interactive map](#)**. You are able to insert your organization's or personal address into the map to learn which zone you fall into.

We encourage you to check the map frequently, as zones are subject to change as COVID positivity rates rise or fall over time.

[Click here to find your zone](#)

What Do the Different Zones Mean for My Nonprofit?

Each zone has different restrictions on maximum numbers of individuals allowed in a building, whether different kinds of businesses are allowed to remain open, and much more.



RED ZONE RESTRICTIONS:

- In Red Zones, any **nonessential gatherings of any kind are prohibited**.
- All nonessential businesses are **required to close** and must **reduce in-person workforce** by 100%.
- Only **essential businesses** as designated by New York State Empire State Development Corporation can remain open.
 - Most human services organizations are considered **essential**.
- All **NYC public, nonpublic and charter schools** [must close](#) and return to remote learning. Schools can reopen if they meet New York State testing requirements.
- **Houses of worship** may remain open at 25% capacity up to a maximum of 10 people, whichever is fewer.

ORANGE ZONE – Warning Zone

- **Nonessential indoor and outdoor gatherings** must be limited to no more than 10 people. Any individual who encourages, promotes, or organizes mass gatherings may be fined up to \$15,000 per day.
- All **NYC public, nonpublic, and charter schools** [must close](#) and return to remote learning. Schools can reopen if they meet NYS testing requirements.
- **Non-essential businesses** including gyms, fitness centers, and personal care services (such as barbers, hair salons, spas, tattoo or piercing parlors, nail technicians and nail salons, cosmetologists, estheticians, laser hair removal, and electrolysis services) must close.
- **Houses of worship** may remain open at 33% capacity up to a maximum of 25 people, whichever is fewer.

YELLOW ZONE – Precautionary Zone

- **Nonessential indoor and outdoor gatherings** must be limited to no more than 25 people. Any individual who encourages, promotes, or organizes mass gatherings may be fined up to \$15,000 per day.
- **NYC nonpublic and charter schools** may remain open if NYS testing requirements are met.
- **All businesses** may remain open but must follow COVID-19 requirements for their [sector](#).
- **Houses of worship** may remain open at 50% maximum capacity.



Is My Organization Essential?

Do I Need to Reduce the Size of My In-Person Workforce?

In October 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [updated guidance](#) to help determine whether a business is subject to a workforce reduction under Executive Order 202.68.

Most human services organizations are considered **essential**, and therefore do NOT need to reduce in-person staff.

The language determining essential human services includes:

- Homeless shelters and congregate care facilities
- Food banks
- Human services providers whose function includes the **direct care of patients** in state-licensed or funded voluntary programs; the **care, protection, custody and oversight** of individuals both in the community and in state-licensed residential facilities; those operating **community shelters** and **other critical human services agencies providing direct care or support**

Please review the list of [essential businesses in the guidance](#) to determine whether your organization is affected or not by mandatory restrictions/staff reductions based on zone.

HR Considerations

While your organization may not be located in or affected by a zone determination, please remember that your staff may be living in a red, orange, or yellow zone.

Please share the [Zone Finder interactive map](#) frequently with staff to ensure both your leadership and staff understand their own zones and restrictions.

If staff are located in a red or orange zone, consider extra safety precautions – or allowing them to work remotely – to ensure they, their colleagues, and your clients can stay healthy and safe.

Thank you for your work during COVID-19!
Please email info@humanservicescouncil.org with any questions.

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