



County of San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FOOD AND HOUSING DIVISION



Health Officer Orders Impacting Body Art, Massage, and Public Swimming Pools/Spas: Frequently Asked Questions

To ensure compliance with the County of San Diego, Order of the Health Officer, and Emergency Regulations, the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is providing the following Questions and Answers for clarification:

Q: What changed on August 28, 2020?

A: With the State's new tiered approach called [California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) announced by Governor Newsom on August 28, 2020, the [San Diego County Public Health Order](#) was amended to allow indoor services with modifications as outlined in the [State Guidelines](#). Effective September 1, 2020, the San Diego County Health Order requires all Personal Care Services, including Body Art (Tattoo) and Massage, to have customers sign in with their name and telephone number. This is consistent with normal intake process as State and local regulations already require Body Art and Massage facilities to track and maintain customer information for services administered.

Public Swimming Pools/Spas

To ensure compliance with the County of San Diego, Order of the Health Officer, Emergency Regulations, and the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) [Public Swimming Pool Operation During COVID-19 Guidance](#), DEH is providing the following Questions and Answers for clarification:

Q: What changed on August 28, 2020?

A: San Diego County is currently in [Tier 2 – Risk Level Substantial](#). Effective September 1, 2020, many of the sectors [listed](#) can resume indoor activities with a limited capacity and COVID-19 safety precaution modifications in place. These precautions are outlined in the [State Guidelines](#) and the [Safe Reopening Plans](#) specific to your industry. Indoor swimming pools at Gyms and Fitness Centers, not conducting infant drowning prevention classes or day camps, will not be able to reopen until San Diego County is in Tier 3. Indoor and Outdoor Spas, Saunas and Hot Tubs will not be able to reopen until San Diego County is in Tier 4.

Q: Are swimming pools required to close?

A: Effective 12:00 a.m. July 15, 2020, the use of **indoor swimming pools at Gyms and Fitness Centers is prohibited**. Swimming pools used to conduct essential infant drowning prevention classes or day camps, can continue to operate. All other indoor or outdoor swimming pools can continue to operate and should follow the COVID-19 preventative measures described in the County of San Diego [Public Swimming Pool Operations During COVID-19 Guidance](#) and complete and post a copy of the County Safe Re-Opening Plan at the pool facility. Section E of the [Safe Re-Opening Plan](#) must be filled in with a description of the precautions your facility has implemented to meet the measures in the County of San Diego Public Swimming Operations During COVID-19 Guidance.

Q: My property has a swimming pool and a spa, are we able to re-open both?

A: Only public swimming pools are approved to re-open. Spas (sometimes referred to as hot tubs) are not included in the State Guidance as being allowed to re-open at this time. Caution tape, cones, and/or signage can be used to notify bathers that the spa is not open if it is in the same enclosure area as the pool. If the spa is in a separate enclosure from the pool, post signage at the gate indicating spa is closed. Turning off the heater in the spa is another good way to deter users.

Q: Our swimming pool facility is only used by residents of the HOA, is our HOA pool/spa still considered to be public?

A: HOA swimming pools are considered public swimming pools, the California Health and Safety Code states that a public pool is a pool that services more than 3 residential units.

Q: Are face coverings required in the pool area?

A: Per the County of San Diego Health Officer Order, face coverings are required anytime 6-foot social distancing cannot be achieved.

Q: Do people need to be socially distanced in the pool water when swimming?

A: Persons using the pool or in the pool area should adhere to 6-foot social distancing.

Q: Can we close the pool restrooms?

A: Public swimming pool restrooms cannot be closed; State law requires that restrooms at swimming pools remain open and available for use by swimmers. They should be frequently disinfected and stocked with adequate soap and paper towels at the hand sink.

Q: Do I need to change the capacity of my pool to accommodate 6-foot social distance?

A: You do not need to purchase/obtain new pool signage to reflect changes in occupancy. Temporary signage on social distancing should be posted. Remove, store, or label pool chairs/lounges/tables that cannot accommodate 6 feet of social distancing to prevent use.

Q: As an HOA, we don't have anyone present at the pool area at all times to monitor its use. How do we ensure the protocol is being met?

A: Designate a member of the community, HOA Board, or the association manager to evaluate and monitor the protocol. Ensure there is adequate signage and that all residents are aware of the requirements in the protocol. If feasible, implement a reservation system to help control the number of residents coming to the pool at one time. The permittee can decide not to re-open the pool if there is no way to adequately evaluate, implement, and monitor the protocol.

For more information or if you have further questions, please contact the Food and Housing, Specialist on Duty at (858) 505-6900 or by email fh dutyeh@sdcounty.ca.gov.