

Updated Reopening Guidance to Help Small Biz

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New guidance from Gov. Tom Wolf will allow some of the small businesses hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic to open on a very limited basis.

Businesses such as bars and restaurants, places of worship and personal care businesses such as hair salons and barber shops can open in the "yellow" phase of the state's reopening plan, though those businesses [must comply with a host of restrictions imposed by the state](#).

Starting June 5, restaurants in counties that have moved to the yellow phase can open for dine-in services, but only for outdoor seating. Indoor areas, including bars, must stay closed except for through-traffic. Customers can only be served if they are sitting at a table and there will be no service at outdoor bars.

In the green phase of reopening, restaurants and bars can begin indoor seating and service and resume seating patrons at a bar. However, there will not be allowed any standing in the bar area. Four customers with a common relationship may sit together at a bar, and must adhere to physical distancing guidelines between other customers.

The [state has published guidance specifically to help the restaurant industry](#) on how to comply with the state's mandates. The governor emphasized that businesses do not have to reopen in-person operations and should not do so if it cannot follow the state's guidance.

Once a county moves to the green phase, a personal care service business can operate by appointment only. Gyms and spas are strongly encouraged - but not required - to use appointments or reservations.

Also in the latest guidance, the state said the stay-at-home order is not applicable to religious institutions. However, the state has encouraged these places of worship to continue to adhere to the state's guidelines depending on what phase your county currently resides.

Employers must remain cognizant of their obligations as they reopen. The governor's orders require compliance with applicable Pennsylvania Department of Health guidance documents. For example, businesses that reopen are required to have a plan for employee COVID-19 exposure that includes building cleaning and notifying affected employees. Businesses must also appoint a Pandemic Safety Officer and post a notice of this in their workplace. Partial reopening could also impact employers' obligations to their employees and affect unemployment compensation obligations. Failure to comply with the governor's order and guidance could lead to enforcement action by the state.

If you have any questions about these new guidance items for businesses, please [contact me](#) or any member of the [Barley Snyder COVID-19 Response Service Team](#).

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