

# California's Color-Coded County Tier System



Every county in California is assigned to a COVID-19 risk-level tier based on:

- ▶ **New cases:** the average number of new cases per day, over 7 days, per 100,000 residents
- ▶ **Positive tests:** the percentage of coronavirus tests given per day that are positive for COVID-19
- ▶ **Health Equity:** positive test rates in a county's most disadvantaged neighborhoods do not significantly lag behind the county's overall test positivity rate

Tier Level	New Cases per 100,000*	Positive Tests
<b>Widespread</b> PURPLE	 More than 7	More than 8% testing positivity rate
<b>Substantial</b> RED	 4 to 7	5 - 8%
<b>Moderate</b> ORANGE	 1 to 3.9	2 - 4.9%
<b>Minimal</b> YELLOW	Less than 1	Less than 2%

\* Case numbers are adjusted up or down based on testing volume above or below the state median.

## Tier Assignments Determine What Can Be Open

### Your County

- ▶ Can make *tighter* restrictions through the local health department, but it cannot loosen them.
- ▶ Can move towards wider reopening as new COVID-19 cases decrease and fewer people test positive.
- ▶ Must remain in its current tier for a minimum of 3 weeks before being able to advance to a less restrictive tier.
- ▶ Can move to a less restrictive tier, if it has met that tier's criteria for 2 weeks in a row including the [California Health Equity Metric](#).

### Moving from Tier to Tier

- ▶ Every week, all counties' case numbers (existing and new) and positive testing numbers are evaluated.
- ▶ Changes in tier levels are announced on Tuesdays.

Find your county's current tier at [covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy](https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy).



## What's Open in Each Tier?

### Widespread PURPLE

**Most indoor businesses are closed. Many can open outdoors with modifications**, for example, restaurants, places of worship, and family entertainment (mini golf). Personal care services, for example, hair and nail salons, tattoo parlors, and piercing shops, can open indoors with modifications.

### Substantial RED

**Some indoor businesses are closed**, including places that serve alcohol but don't serve food. **Many can open indoors at 25% capacity** (or 100 people, whichever is fewer) for example, restaurants, places of worship, and movie theaters. Gyms can open indoors at 10% capacity. Personal care services can open indoors with modifications. Schools may re-open for full in-person instruction once a county has been in the red tier for at least 2 weeks. However, schools that have already reopened may remain open if the county moves back to the purple tier.

### Moderate ORANGE

**Some indoor businesses can open with modifications**. Many can open indoors at 50% capacity (or 200 people, whichever is fewer), for example, restaurants, places of worship, and movie theaters. **Some can open indoors at 25% capacity** for example, gyms, bowling alleys, and cardrooms. Personal care services can open indoors with modifications.

### Minimal YELLOW

**Most indoor businesses can open with modifications**. Some can open indoors at 50% capacity for example, restaurants, places of worship, movie theaters, gyms, cardrooms, and bars. Personal care services can open indoors with modifications.

Find [which activities and businesses are open in the four tiers \(PDF\)](#)

## Why Some Activities and Businesses Can Open While Others Stay Closed

- ▶ Activities and businesses that have a lower risk of spreading COVID-19 are allowed to open sooner.
- ▶ Higher-risk activities or businesses will be allowed to open when the risk is determined to be less.
- ▶ In each tier, an activity or business's operations depend on whether it has the:

### Ability to Accommodate

- ☑ Mask wearing at all times while not eating and drinking
- ☑ Physical distance between individuals from different households
- ☑ Increased airflow (such as operating outdoors or opening windows and doors)

### Ability to Limit

- ✗ Number of people per square foot
- ✗ Time that an individual spends at the business or activity
- ✗ Time that an individual spends in close contact with others
- ✗ People from one household mixing with other households
- ✗ Amount of physical interactions of visitors/patrons
- ✗ Activities known to increase the spread of COVID-19 (singing, shouting, and heavy breathing)

Schools in **purple-tiered** counties cannot reopen for in-person instruction. However, schools that have already reopened may remain open if the county moves back to the purple tier. Local health departments can grant waivers for TK-6 grades, and schools can provide supervision, or instruction, and other services for small groups (16 individuals total per group). Schools may re-open for full in-person instruction once a county has been in the **red tier** for at least 2 weeks.

[School Re-opening Framework \(PDF\)](#)