



DIRECTIVE AND ORDER REGARDING SWIMMING POOLS

Pursuant to Executive Order 20-05-27-01

No. MDH 2020-05-27-01

I, Robert R. Neall, Secretary of Health, finding it necessary for the prevention and control of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (“SARS-CoV-2” or “2019-NCoV” or “COVID-19”), and for the protection of the health and safety of patients, staff, and other individuals in Maryland, hereby authorize and order the following actions regarding the operation of swimming pools for the prevention and control of this infectious and contagious disease under the Governor’s Declaration of Catastrophic Health Emergency.

1. Limitations on Pool Operations

- A. Subject to the following conditions and Executive Orders in effect, all outdoor swimming pools may open as of 5:00 p.m., May 29, 2020:
- I. All pool operators shall track pool capacity to ensure social distancing and post signs telling patrons who are sick not to enter;
 - II. The number of patrons may not exceed the limitations in Section 2.A. of this Order;
 - III. All pool operators shall post signs:
 - Telling patrons not to enter if sick
 - Post handwashing reminders
 - Cover your cough reminders
 - Post reminders to shower before entering the pool.
- Note: MDH prepared signs are available here:
<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/business-resources>
- B. The following facilities are not allowed to open: wading (kiddie) pools, spas (hot tubs), spray or splash pads, and lazy river pools.
- C. As specified in Executive Order 20-05-27-01, fitness center and aquatic center pools are still closed.
- D. Physical therapy pools may remain open as prescribed by a healthcare provider.

2. Pool Operations

A. Prepare the Facility/Grounds

A pool operator shall:

- Determine the maximum number of people in a pool at any given time by dividing the square footage surface area of the pool (determined by multiplying the length of the pool by the width) by 36. This ensures 6 feet of separation between pool patrons in the water. The maximum number allowed in the pool shall be posted at the pool.
- Ensure that all patrons on the pool deck or grounds are at least 6 feet apart, except for members of the same household. The deck layout should ensure that in standing or seating areas, individuals or household groups remain at least 6 feet apart.
- Implement physical distancing where patrons form a line waiting for the pool to open or for someone to leave so they can enter.
- Maintain an adequate supply of soap for handwashing and showers
- Ensure dispensers of hand sanitizer are available and filled.
- Ensure that all water systems (e.g., drinking fountains, decorative fountains, heated pools) are safe to use after prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.
- Ensure there is adequate equipment for patrons and swimmers (e.g., kickboards and pool noodles) to minimize sharing to the extent possible or limiting the use of equipment by one group of users at a time and cleaning and disinfecting between use.

B. Protecting Employees

- Staff who interact with patrons or other staff should wear face coverings whenever possible.
- Provide and use one-way valve masks for CPR, if available.
- Monitor staff absenteeism, require staff to stay home if sick, have a plan to ensure required staffing. If possible, vulnerable staff should be allowed to telework.
- For staff training, including lifeguard certification, maintain physical distancing and, except in the water, wear face coverings for in-person training. Provide online training for classroom portions of training.
- Train staff on new hygiene procedures.

C. Protecting Patrons

- Patrons should stay at least 6 feet apart (both in and out of the water) from other individuals not from their household.
- Patrons should wear face coverings when interacting with staff or other individuals not from their household.
- Patrons should not wear face coverings in the water.
- Patrons should be discouraged from sharing objects that are difficult to clean, sanitize, or disinfect or that are meant to come in contact with the face (for example, goggles, nose clips, and snorkels).
- Patrons should also be discouraged from sharing items such as food, equipment, toys, and supplies with those they don't live with.

D. Cleaning and Disinfection

All pool operators shall:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as pool railings, deck furniture, water fountains, doorknobs, and entry gates twice per day, and more often if needed due to the number of patrons.
- Clean and disinfect in accordance with [CDC](#) and [EPA](#) guidelines on COVID-19 and product instructions.
- Maintain daily cleaning of the facility (floors, toilets, etc.) with soap and water.
- Train staff on guidelines and product instructions for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Follow instructions for use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products on the product label.
- The pool may need to temporarily close if the lifeguard on duty must clean and disinfect the pool area.
- Facility will clean/brush pool tile/wall at the water line to reduce slime and biofilm once a week or more if needed.
- To protect against COVID-19, maintain chlorine and pH levels per current regulations, including shock or superchlorination as needed.
- Notify the local health department that the pool will open.

3. **Severability**

If any provision of this Directive and Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of this Directive and Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Directive and Order are severable.

THIS DIRECTIVE AND ORDER IS ISSUED UNDER MY HAND THIS 27TH DAY OF MAY 2020 AND IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.



Robert R. Neall

Secretary of Health