

TO: Hamilton County Business Partners  
FROM: Greg Kesterman, Interim Health Commissioner  
DATE: March 26, 2020  
RE: Ohio Orders

We are receiving a considerable number of phone calls, both from the public and from businesses throughout Hamilton County, about the recent Ohio orders covering business closure and identifying essential businesses (attached for your reference). The order was intentionally written with broad guidelines so that we could all work together to identify essential services while working to “flatten the curve” of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The bottom line is this:

Businesses need to use common sense on how to interpret the order. If the local health department or local law enforcement showed up, would you have a rationale that you could point to in that order that yes, this is under this provision and this is how we are staying open? Could you prove that you are following all the guidelines set forth in the order? Following is an excerpt from the order covering essential and non-essential businesses:

**Non-essential business and operations must cease. All businesses and operations in the State, except Essential Businesses and Operations as defined below, are required to cease all activities within the State except Minimum Basic Operations, as defined below. For clarity, businesses, including home-based businesses, may also continue operations consisting exclusively of employees or contractors performing activities at their own residences (i.e., working from home).**



**All Essential Businesses and Operations are encouraged to remain open. Essential Businesses and Operations shall comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Order, including by maintaining six-foot social distancing for both employees and members of the public at all times, including, but not limited to, when any customers are standing in line.**

Again, I have attached the order for your reference. The order includes an extensive list of business examples developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It also clearly outlines the requirements that must be implemented for essential businesses choosing to remain open.

Please help us by observing the spirit of this order and consider whether your operation is doing everything in its power to maintain the health and safety of your employees, customers and the public at large.

We will get through this by cooperating, sacrificing in the short term, and working together.

