



Pool Re-Opening During COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Public swimming pools were closed as of the March 16, 2020 Health Officer Order and the March 19, 2020 Governor's Order. Outdoor swimming pools and spas were allowed to open as of June 5, 2020. Indoor pools were allowed to open as of March 24, 2021, when Marin County entered into the orange tier. Below is more specific information regarding the opening and operation of outdoor swimming pools.

"Public swimming pool" as defined in the California Health and Safety Code: means any public swimming pool, bathhouse, public swimming and bathing place and all related appurtenances... operated for the use of the general public with or without charge, or for the use of the members and guests of a private club, including any swimming pool located on the grounds of a hotel, motel, inn, an apartment complex, or any residential setting other than a single-family home. Public swimming pools also includes spas, spray grounds, water parks and are also located at health and fitness clubs, schools, municipalities, and campgrounds.

Public swimming pools in Marin County are regulated by Environmental Health Services and operate under a County of Marin Permit to Operate.

The best practices and restrictions related to preventing COVID-19 transmission are detailed in the following CDPH Covid-19 Industry Guidance:

- *Campgrounds, RV Parks, Ski Operators, & Other Outdoor Recreation*
<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-campgrounds-outdoor-recreation--en.pdf>
- *Fitness Facilities*
<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness--en.pdf>

Below are answers to Frequently Asked Questions:

Are we allowed to open our public pool and spa in this Tier?

- We are currently in the **Orange Tier 3**. See below for what is allowed in each Tier:

Purple – Widespread – Tier 1:

Outdoor pools can open with modifications. Outdoor spas/hot tubs can open only for use by household groups or in cases where six feet of distancing can be maintained. Indoor pools, hot tubs, saunas, and steam rooms must remain closed. Drowning prevention classes, including swim lessons with a certified instructor, are allowed indoors and outdoors. Outdoor pools must close slides, rides, and other attractions.

Red – Substantial – Tier 2:

Outdoor pools and hot tubs can open as described in Tier. Indoor pools, hot tubs, saunas, and steam rooms must remain closed.

All County publications are available in alternative formats (Braille, Large Print, or CD), upon request. Requests for accommodations may be made by calling (415) 473-4381 (Voice) (415) 473-3232 (TDD/TTY) or by e-mail at disabilityaccess@marincounty.org. Copies of documents are available in alternative formats, upon request.

Orange – Moderate – Tier 3:

Outdoor pools and hot tubs can open as described in Tier 1. Indoor pools can open when physical distancing can be maintained for non-household groups. Indoor pools do not include any indoor water parks or water rides. Indoor hot tubs, saunas, and steam rooms must remain closed.

Yellow – Minimal – Tier 4:

Outdoor pools and hot tubs can open as described in Tier 1. Indoor pools, hot tubs, saunas, and steam rooms can open, but physical distancing must be maintained for non-household groups. Indoor pools do not include any indoor water parks or water rides.

To see which Tier the County currently is in, visit the CDPH Blueprint for a Safer Economy:
<https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>

Can my pool maintenance company continue to operate at my *indoor* spa, or water park?

- Yes. The re-circulation and filtration systems should be operated to keep the pool water clean and clear. Routine maintenance including cleaning, chemical balancing and adjustments should continue.
- Not maintaining the chemical balance and filtration may pose other health risks to the users and to the community.

Are public pools & spas required to post Site-Specific Protection Plans (SPP)?

- Yes. All businesses are required to post SPP's as stated in Appendix A of the Marin County Health Officer Order. The SPP describes how facilities will comply with each section and best practices as listed in the CDPH Covid-19 Industry Guidance documents. This includes but is not limited to social distancing requirements and cleaning requirements for high-touch surfaces.

What are the social distancing & mask requirements at a pool site?

- Ensure all workers, guests, and swimmers that are not in the same household maintain at least 6 feet of distance
- Sites with a spa/hot tub must ensure that at least 6 feet of distance is maintained at all times between users that are not in the same household or should just limit use to one household at a time.
- Face coverings must be worn at all times when out of the water or shower areas.
- Face coverings are not to be worn when in the water, as it can be difficult to breathe when they get wet.

There are no on-site staff members at our pool. Are we required to have a monitor to ensure the protocols are being followed?

- One person must be responsible for implementation of the SPP.
- It is recommended that a monitor(s) be designated who can periodically check to see that protocol is being followed. It could be a maintenance person or a HOA Board or committee member.
- The facility should implement a maximum number of occupants and could consider a reservation system or time limits.

Can lockers rooms and restrooms be open to the public?

- Yes. At least one restroom must be available for use unless there are living quarters within 300 feet of the pool.
- Only allow shower room use if partitions are in place or signs have been posted to specify physical distancing requirements. If partitions or proper distancing are not possible, these facilities should remain closed.

Are there other considerations to re-opening a swimming pool after being closed for a long period of time?

- Refer to the following CDC's guidance to minimize *Legionella* risk:
 - [8 steps to Minimize Legionella Risk Before Your Business or Building Reopens:](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html)
 - [Operating Public Hot Tubs:](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/pdf/swimming/resources/operating-public-hot-tubs-factsheet.pdf)

Are you currently accepting plan submittals for new pools, pool remodels, or alterations?

- Yes. We are accepting plan submittals for new projects. Please contact Loni Ward (LNward@marincounty.org) directly if you would like to submit plans.

Are you conducting pool inspections this pool season?

- Yes, routine pool inspections will be conducted throughout the pool season.
- If your pool remains closed, your inspector may contact you to schedule an appointment for an inspection to check for safety hazards and to see that the pool or spa is maintained safely.

Does my pool need to be inspected in order to re-open?

- No, it is not necessary to have your pool inspected prior to re-opening. Just ensure that the pool chemistry is within the legal ranges. You can use your previous inspection report as a checklist when looking for any safety issues that may have developed since the last inspection.
- If you have concerns and would like to schedule an inspection, please contact your district inspector or call our main office number at 415-475-6907 to connect with an inspector.
- You only need an inspection to re-open after an inspector posts a closure sign.

Where can I find additional information related to COVID-19?

- <https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/stay-home-order-effect-marin-county>
- <https://marinrecovers.com/parks-outdoor-recreation/>
- https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/final-covid-19-site-specific-protection-plan-for-re-opening-businesses_05152020_v2_0.pdf