



Austin's New COVID-19 Emergency Rules Now in Effect for Construction Sites and Individuals

Last week, the City of Austin approved [two new ordinances](#) giving the City the authority to take legal action and assess civil penalties against businesses and individuals who fail to follow COVID-19 public health requirements. Yesterday, the City signed **new emergency rules that go into effect today** and remain in effect through November 12, 2020. Work sites that fail to follow these rules could be subject to civil suit, while individuals can be fined up to \$2,000 per day.

These rules include specific requirements for construction sites and broader requirements for all work sites and individuals. The rules provide for the following specific requirements for construction sites:

1. Comply with all general requirements;
 - These rules mirror those in previous orders. However, please note that sites are now required to post **at least one Austin Public Health "Help Prevent Disease" signs** at each entrance and on each restroom door (available for download and print [here](#)), in addition to other required signs.
2. Institute staggered shifts for certain sites and post required notices;
3. Ensure handwashing station and restroom(s) are spaced at least six feet apart;
4. No use of community water coolers (provide individual water bottles or have workers bring their own);
5. Designate an on-site COVID-19 safety monitor; and
6. Ensure that each worker who enters a jobsite has signed-in, and keep a list of, and contact information for, each on-site worker.

For a full copy of the new emergency rules, click [here](#).

Per the Development Services Department and Austin Code Department: "Austin Code Department, along with Austin Fire and Austin Police, will continue to respond to and document all complaints regarding violations at construction sites. Sites with multiple complaints or repeat violations will be referred to the Health Authority for possible legal action." The Health Authority will review complaints and determine whether to send such complaints to the City Attorney for prosecution.

We highly recommend that all project participants working in Austin take immediate action to implement these emergency rules, and ensure that their employees follow the rules onsite in order to mitigate the risk of a civil action, which could lead to extra costs and project delays.

Below is a list of updates since last week:

1. In addition to face covering signs and signs explaining the six-feet apart requirement, a person in control of a site shall post at least **one Austin Public Health “Help Prevent Disease” signs** at each entrance and on each restroom door (available for download and print [here](#)).
2. Child care facilities are no longer excluded from the definition of a “site,” meaning they could be subject to legal action and civil penalties. However, certain rules do not apply to child care facilities.
3. These emergency rules are in effect today through November 12, 2020, not December 31, 2020.

For more information, please contact [Brittany B. Long](#).