

SFAA Guidelines on San Francisco's Shelter-In-Place In the Context of Rental Housing

What is considered to be an essential business? Can I continue to show my vacant apartments? What should I do about maintenance requests and pre-move out inspections during the Shelter-In-Place?

The City's [Public Health Order](#) lists essential businesses which are allowed to continue to operate during the Shelter-In-Place.

CAA and SFAA recommend that rental housing providers affected by Shelter-In-Place orders implement the following measures:

- Limit having employees on-site to the level necessary to maintain Minimum Basic Operations (e.g., processing rents and payroll, handling service requests for urgent habitability issues).
- To the extent possible, limit the necessity for in-person rent payments and other resident requests by providing contactless methods for making rent payments and service requests (e.g., rent drop boxes, online portals for payment and requests). Note: under state law, landlords cannot mandate that tenants pay rent online, one option other than electronic or cash payments must be provided.
- Cease non-essential maintenance and repair work (e.g., continue to fix overflowing toilets and broken heaters, but don't move forward with plans to repaint walls for cosmetic purposes and upgrade appliances).
- Inform residents of limited staffing and contact information for urgent matters. CAA recommends using multiple methods of communication to ensure residents are informed of the changes (e.g., sending both an email and placing a sign in the office window/door).
- Contact your vendors (e.g., plumbers, exterminators) regarding their availability to respond to emergencies to determine if you need to make alternative arrangements.
- Continue to perform walk-through inspections for planned move-out if requested by the resident, as these are legally mandated, but follow social distancing

protocols by keeping a six-foot distance from individuals and provide appropriate protective equipment to employees performing inspections, such as gloves and disinfectant wipes. If a resident requested an inspection prior to the outbreak, follow up with the resident to confirm whether they would still like the inspection done. If a resident withdraws their request, get that withdrawal in writing.

- It is a business decision whether to continue showing vacant units. If showings will continue, to the extent possible, provide virtual and low-contact options (e.g., allowing prospective residents to enter units on their own). Disinfect high-touch surfaces of vacant units between each showing. Do not schedule open houses or appointments with more than one prospective resident at a time.
- Remain communicative about any extra cleaning precautions you might be taking to keep residents safe.
- Begin to put together protocol for how you will provide services to a resident who may have Coronavirus symptoms or who may be self-quarantining.