



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Alternative Occupancy Restriction for Essential Stores

Governor J.B. Pritzker issued Executive Order 2020-32 on April 30, 2020, effective May 1, 2020. This new “stay at home” EO added restrictions which affect essential stores. The EO provided that the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity set an alternative occupancy limit for essential stores.

Section 2 of the Order reads: Requirements for essential stores. Retail stores (including, but not limited to, stores that sell groceries and medicine, hardware stores, and greenhouses, garden centers, and nurseries) designated as Essential Businesses and Operations under this Order shall to the greatest extent possible:

- Cap occupancy at 50 percent of store capacity, or alternatively, at the occupancy limits based on store square footage set by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Essential Store Occupancy Limit Guidelines:

- Stores must limit customers in the store at one time to 5 customers per 1,000 square feet. This excludes employees. The customer occupancy limit is calculated by taking the total square footage of the permanent structure the business occupies and divide by 1,000. If the square footage of the facility is less than 1,000, the number of people is also less than 5 based on percentage.
- Below is limit chart based on the formula. NOTE: Retailers may impose a stricter standard should they choose.

Square footage of building	Illinois Customer Limit (5 per 1,000 sf)
1,000	5
2,500	12
5,000	25
10,000	50
20,000	100
30,000	150
40,000	200
50,000	250
100,000	500
150,000	750



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Section 2 of the EO provides additional requirements for essential stores. The Department provides clarification regarding those requirements below:

- Set up store aisles to be one-way where practicable to maximize spacing between customers and identify the one-way aisles with conspicuous signage and/or floor markings. One-way aisles will not apply to front, back, and middle aisles within the store; and
- Communicate with signage the requirement that an individual wear a face covering while in the store. If customers are not in compliance, we encourage stores to respectfully let the patron know of the Order and request that they put their face covering on.