

MEMO

FROM: Lindsay Kurrle, Secretary, Agency of Commerce and Community Development
TO: Large In-Person Consumer Retail Operators
DATE: March 31, 2020
RE: Direction to Large “Big Box” Retailers to Cease In-Person Sales of Non-Essential Items

Large “big box” retailers, such as Walmart, Target and Costco, with in-store sales of food, beverage and pharmacy, as well as electronics, toys, clothing, and the like, are hereby directed to cease in-person sales of non-essential items in order to reduce the number of people coming into the stores.

Large “big box” retailers generate significant shopping traffic by virtue of their size and the variety of goods offered in a single location. This volume of shopping traffic significantly increases the risk of further spread of this dangerous virus to Vermonters and the viability of Vermont’s health care system. We are directing these stores to put public health first and help us reduce the number of shoppers by requiring on-line ordering, delivery and curbside pickup whenever possible, and by stopping the sale of non-essential items.

The Governor’s Executive Order allows in-person business operations to continue at retail businesses for the following:

- f. retail serving basic human needs such as grocery stores, pharmacies, other retail that sells food, beverage, animal feed and essential supplies, provided, these retail operations shall be conducted through on-line and telephone orders for delivery and curb-side pickup to the extent possible;*
- g. fuel products and supply;*
- h. hardware stores, provided, these retail operations shall be conducted through online and telephone orders for delivery and curb-side pickup to the extent possible;*
- i. transportation sector and agricultural sector equipment parts, repair and maintenance, provided these retail operations shall be conducted through on-line and telephone orders for delivery and curb-side pickup to the extent possible;*

Large retailers must cease in-person sales of non-essential items not listed in the Executive Order, including, but not limited to: arts and crafts, beauty, carpet and flooring, clothing, consumer electronics, entertainment (books, music, movies), furniture, home and garden, jewelry, paint, photo services, sports equipment, toys and the like.



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Large “big box” retailers must:

- Restrict access to non-essential goods. Stores must close aisles, close portions of the store, or remove items from the floor.
- Only offer non-essential items via online portals, telephone, delivery, or curbside pickup, to the extent possible.
- Except in the event of emergencies threatening the health and welfare of a customer, showrooms and garden sections of large home improvement centers should be closed.

The Agency has also issued a list of recommended best practices for retailers allowed to continue in-person operations.

