

Moving Safely During COVID-19: Recommendations and Tips

While it's recommended to stay where you are, there are some things to do if you're planning a move right now

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The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, is transforming the way our society operates. Social distancing and best practices [provided by the CDC](#) are both helping our nation in its fight against this pandemic. That being said, moving is still not considered “essential travel” in some places, so sheltering in place is recommended if at all possible. For those who have no choice, or live in a place where moving *is* considered “essential”, there are things you can do to safely relocate. We’ll provide steps to take to get to your new home safely and as quickly as possible.

Check Your City, County, and State Laws

As we mentioned, moving isn't in line with social distancing measures being taken in all cities and states. Stay where you are, if you can.

If you can't remain where you are, check your city, county, and state regulations to see if you're free to move within your area and/or outside of it. Places like San Francisco do not consider moving companies "essential businesses"; NYC does. Luckily, many other places do, meaning you can still get help lugging all your belongings to your new home or apartment. It's best to research your immediate area's orders and regulations to know if you're in the clear.

Touring an Apartment

Not more than a few weeks ago, touring an apartment in-person was part of the traditional renting process. With shelter-in-place orders taking place across the nation, physically taking a walking tour of an apartment is no longer an option in many cities. Landlords and property managers have adapted by [offering virtual tours, 3D images, and live online tours](#). When calling to inquire about a listing, ask if there is a live or virtual home tour option so that you can get a real feel for the home or apartment without physically seeing it.

Additionally, lockboxes are another great alternative to the traditional in-person tour. They allow you to tour the apartment on your own without anyone else present. The lockbox can be controlled remotely by the landlord or through a code that they will give you when your tour time rolls around. Be sure to inquire about any of these options when expressing interest in a home or apartment.

Be Proactive

In the past, scammers have taken advantage of people who can't meet in person to do a tour or sign a lease. While it's true that scammers are still out there, there are measures you can take to [avoid the most common scams](#). Be smart and don't pay anything upfront without seeing and reading through your lease and at least virtually meeting your new landlord.

Ask Questions

This goes for just about every part of the moving process, but it's especially important to ask questions of any moving company you're using. Pricing, distance, and procedure are all things you should [ask before signing a contract with a moving company](#). In addition, COVID-19 presents additional challenges, like sanitation and disinfection of the truck, your belongings, and the movers themselves. Ask how moving day will go in terms of who will be entering your home, how the suggested 6 feet of separation will be monitored, and what kind of sanitation the company provides to its movers. Maybe they offer a pair of gloves for each mover, or maybe they require movers to use hand sanitizer every time they re-enter your home. Many companies already have a plan in place, so asking about it will help put your mind at ease that they're taking this as seriously as you are.

Disinfect Everything

You'll need to be just as vigilant as the moving company about cleanliness. Purchase new boxes as opposed to searching for free ones so you're not unknowingly bringing the virus into your home and onto your belongings. Use disinfectant wipes on the most commonly touched surfaces so you know you're always working on a clean space when [packing and organizing](#). If using a moving company, wear a mask and ask that they do, too.

Solidify Travel Plans

If you're moving anywhere other than within your own city, you'll want to spend extra time sorting out your travel plans. An [out-of-state move](#) requires deciding between flying or road tripping. If you're already quarantined with another person, a road trip is a great option. You'll have a travel buddy and won't have to be in an enclosed airport and plane. On the flip side, a long road trip might require you to stay at motels in different towns along the way. Consider which option is best for your situation and make sure you have everything in order when moving day comes.

While COVID-19 has challenged the traditional process of renting, moving to a new home or apartment is still possible in most places.