

CALIFORNIA CORONAVIRUS WEEKLY RECAP

*A weekly digest to keep you up to speed on the California
Coronavirus outbreak.*

Before launching into the news from this week on how the coronavirus outbreak is impacting California, we want to fill you in on everything C.A.R. has been doing to assist members through this public health crisis.

Over the past week, we launched a number of new resources, including:

- Now that real estate is included in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) updated list of essential services during the pandemic, C.A.R. has released [Guidelines for Real Estate Best Practices During COVID-19](#).
- The new [REALTOR® Relief](#) page on C.A.R.'s coronavirus microsite details the financial relief programs available to REALTORS® during this crisis. For more information on provisions made available through the recent \$2 trillion stimulus package, see our [Relief FAQ for Agents](#) and [Relief FAQ for Brokers](#).
- C.A.R.'s new [COVID Relief Hotline](#) provides 1:1 assistance to guide you through accessing various financial programs. The hotline can be reached at **213-351-8450** between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by email at covidreliefhotline@car.org.

- C.A.R. has [updated its Coronavirus Addendum/Amendment and Notice of Unforeseen Coronavirus Circumstances forms](#).
- C.A.R.'s legal department released a new [FAQ for Landlords and Property Managers](#).
- The C.A.R. COVID website now has an archive of previous [Statements from C.A.R.](#)
- C.A.R. added [several new webinars](#) to help you navigate the numerous changes and new information being released.

Visit car.org/coronavirus for up-to-the-minute news on how the coronavirus is impacting California real estate and what you can do to protect yourself, your community and your business.

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The Market & Industry: Real estate now an essential service — with caveats

On Saturday, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) [expressly included real estate](#) in its updated list of essential services during the coronavirus crisis. Since Governor Newsom's March 4, 2020 order incorporates this list, the order now includes residential and commercial real estate, including settlement services, as [essential services in California](#).

Even so, this does not mean a return to business as usual for California REALTORS®. First, REALTORS® living in cities or counties with more restrictive standards for what qualifies as an essential service must follow those stricter local guidelines. Second, this change may not be permanent, as the governor could decide to amend his order to once again restrict real estate activity. Third, REALTORS® must take into account the health and safety of their clients and fellow licensees, and follow existing protocols for protecting against the spread of COVID-19.

To that end, **no open houses are to be held**, and **all showings are to take place virtually if at all possible**. Please see C.A.R.'s new [Guidelines for Real Estate Best Practices During COVID-19](#) for more information on how to safely show, enter and market properties; draft purchase agreements; and complete transactions.

The virus' impact on the California housing market is starting to become more pronounced. Last week, [96 percent of California REALTORS®](#) surveyed by C.A.R. reported they expect the coronavirus crisis will negatively impact their business, a marked increase from 56 percent just two weeks prior. Eighty-one percent of those surveyed had buyers holding back on deals, and [new listings have declined](#) significantly across the state in the last few weeks. Many REALTORS® have reported [transactions falling apart](#).

Additionally last week, over [3 million Americans filed for unemployment](#), the highest number ever recorded; California alone saw [1 million unemployment claims](#) over the course of just 12 days. Recognizing that many of those filing for unemployment are homeowners with mortgages to pay, Governor Newsom announced last Wednesday a [90-day grace period for mortgage payments](#) in California. Four of the nation's largest banks — [Wells Fargo, U.S. Bank, Citibank and JPMorgan Chase](#) — negotiated the package with the governor's office, along with over 200 smaller banks and credit unions.

Last Friday, the governor followed up the mortgage payment grace period with an expanded [moratorium on evictions](#): a two-month delay on residential evictions for those tenants who cannot pay rent due to COVID-19-related issues. For more details, see C.A.R.'s [FAQ for Landlords](#).

Sources: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Mercury News, C.A.R. Research & Economics, CNBC, Los Angeles Times

The Economy & Your Finances: CARES Act provides REALTORS® with relief

Last Friday, the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#) was signed into law. This [historic \\$2 trillion stimulus package](#), the largest emergency aid package in U.S. history, includes a number of financial resources to benefit independent contractors — including REALTORS® — whose businesses and income have been hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CARES Act makes the following relief programs available to REALTORS®, among others:

- **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)**, which is an expansion of the Small Business Administration's 7(a) loan program for providing financial assistance to small businesses. Borrowers can receive forgivable loans of up to \$10 million, which must go to payroll costs (including paid sick leave and loss of income for independent contractors), rent or mortgage expenses, insurance premiums and other debt obligations during the covered period between February 15 and June 30, 2020.
- **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)**, which expands unemployment benefits eligibility to business owners, self-employed workers and independent contractors, including most REALTORS®. This means if you're unable to work as a direct result of the pandemic and you aren't eligible for ordinary unemployment insurance benefits, you may be entitled to PUA benefits. Please note that C.A.R. is currently advising REALTORS® to wait for additional guidance before applying for

these benefits as the California EDD is working on implementation procedures, and applying now may result in significant delays in receiving benefits.

For detailed information on these and other relief programs available to REALTORS®, see our [Relief FAQ for Agents](#) and [Relief FAQ for Brokers](#). You can also call the newly launched [COVID Relief Hotline](#) at 213-351-8450 for 1:1 guidance on how to access these and other financial relief programs.

The CARES Act also provides direct tax rebate payments to American taxpayers of \$1,200 per adult (or \$2,400 per married couple) for all individuals with adjusted gross incomes below \$75,000 (or \$150,000 married), plus \$500 per child. For more information on the stimulus checks, see this FAQ from [The New York Times](#) and visit the [IRS coronavirus webpage](#).

Source: U.S. Congress, CNN, C.A.R. Legal, The New York Times, Internal Revenue Service

Around the State: Stay-at-home order likely to continue through April

Last Thursday, the United States surpassed China and Italy to become the [nation with the most confirmed cases of COVID-19](#). As of yesterday at 5:08 p.m., the United States has [163,429 confirmed cases](#); Italy and Spain follow with 101,739 and 87,956 cases, respectively.

[Confirmed cases](#) in California are now [doubling every three to four days](#), a pace on par with that of New York City, which has become the [epicenter](#) of the crisis in the United States. As of yesterday evening at 9:51 p.m., there were 7,426 confirmed cases of and 149 deaths due to COVID-19 in the State of California. Cases have been reported in 47 of the state's 58 counties — up from 42 counties last week — with Los Angeles (2,505) and Santa Clara (848) counties having the most cases. California remains the third-largest outbreak in the country, behind New York (66,663 cases and 1,218 deaths) and

New Jersey (16,636 cases and 198 deaths).

Governor Newsom announced last Wednesday that his [stay-at-home order](#), which went into effect on March 19, will likely continue [through the end of April](#). On Sunday, President Trump [extended his administration's guidelines](#) for social distancing through the end of April as well. Schools in [Los Angeles](#) and [Sacramento](#) are officially closed through at least May 1, as are schools in the [Bay Area](#), where the shelter-in-place order was confirmed yesterday to be in effect until May.

Also, the [California Department of Motor Vehicles \(DMV\)](#) has canceled all appointments and closed all branches. For those who have not yet obtained a REAL ID, the [deadline has been extended](#) from October of this year to late 2021 to account for office closures.

Sources: The New York Times, John Hopkins University Coronavirus Research Center, Los Angeles Times, Vox, Office of the Governor of California, CAL Matters, NBC News, San Francisco Chronicle, Los Angeles Magazine, SF Gate

Health Check-Up: Enroll in health coverage without a qualifying event

C.A.R. members are now eligible for Anthem's Special Open Enrollment Period (SEP), which allows anyone who was eligible for coverage as of January 1 to now enroll in the C.A.R. Anthem healthcare plan. [Learn more here](#), or call 1-800-939-8088 for more information. Additionally, Covered California is allowing individuals to [enroll in health coverage without experiencing a qualifying life event](#) or other special circumstance through June 30, 2020.

Experts agree the coronavirus seems to present [milder symptoms in children and babies](#) than it does in adults. Still, children are not immune: Saturday marked the first [infant death](#) associated with COVID-19. For information on how to care for children during this pandemic, [see this guide](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Coronavirus testing is ramping up in California, with testing now available at [22 state and county health labs](#), as well as commercial, provider and academic labs. As of 2 p.m. last Friday, approximately [89,600](#) tests had been conducted across the state. The CDC advises that [not everyone needs to be tested](#) for COVID-19, especially while supplies are still limited, given that most cases are mild and patients can recover from home. If you want to get tested, the CDC suggests you contact your state or local health department. The California Public Health Department can be reached at (916) 558-1784, and you can find a [directory of local public health departments here](#).

Sources: RealCare, Sacramento Bee, Johns Hopkins Medicine, CNN, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health

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