



# Is Reopening Just Prep for the Next Shutdown?

CLICK ON THE HEADLINE TO SHARE :: SAVE :: PRINT :: VIEW



The Nail Extension Jaime Schrabek

Two days into reopening and I'm already preparing for the next shutdown. While that seems pessimistic, it's not the worst thing that could happen. Given the current surge in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations, it may be the likeliest thing to happen besides becoming infected. Unable to control the spread of coronavirus during the initial shutdown, we should prepare ourselves for the strong possibility of closing our salons again, no matter where we live.

While many states like Florida and Texas moved quickly to reopen salons, others took their time. My nails-only salon could have opened Friday, June 19, but I waited until Tuesday, June 30 to better prepare. In an email sent to clients on April 29, nearly 2 months earlier, I predicted as much:

*"For as much sacrifice and progress we've all made through this crisis, Governor Newsom's plan places beauty salons in Stage 3, meaning that Precision Nails won't be allowed to reopen for some time. Being realistic, Sherrie and I don't expect to see all of you amazing clients until late June at the earliest."*

The timing of our reopening aligns with this prediction, but what deserves more attention is the process that salon owners and beauty pros follow to return to work. What our government lacks

in consistency, we may compensate for in actions meant to prepare and protect ourselves.

In the absence of federal guidelines, Barbicide's Back to Work Plan (dated April 22) exerted a tremendous influence. The introduction captures the intent, and also reminds of the state's authority to control our businesses:

*"Given the renewed focus on the health and public safety of beauty professionals and their clients, the following Back-to-Work Plan should be used to make everyone more comfortable when services resume. This plan incorporates best practices according to infection control subject matter experts and the advice may supersede the rules of your state ... **The date you may return to work is determined by your state or local authorities and must be followed.**"*

Because everyone from health officials to consumers had access, this plan's impact reached far beyond the professionals who flocked to the website to complete a short refresher on disinfection and receive a certificate. Note that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) did not address our industry specifically until early June, and focused only on nail services, not hair or skin care: [COVID-19 Employer Information for Nail Salons](#).

When states issue industry-specific guidelines, much seems familiar and expected, but we cannot know the requirements until then.

As if to remind us that COVID-19 is a health crisis

and not a beauty crisis, the guidance more often, if not always, has been generated and issued by state public health departments, not state boards of cosmetology.

One of the more interesting developments in the reopening process has been the staggered opening of different parts of our industry. For example, California released [guidance for “hair salons and barbershops”](#) on June 5 with a “recommended effective date no sooner than” June 12. A week later, the state released [guidance for “expanded personal care services”](#) with an effective date (permission to reopen) of June 19. Because county health officials have the authority to impose further restrictions or delay implementation, a significant number of beauty businesses in our state remain closed, like those in San Francisco and Santa Clara counties.

Understanding the requirements for my own salon business, I used additional time to finalize a detailed, worksite-specific COVID-19 prevention plan and share our most relevant reopening procedures with clients, including:

- Client must reserve appointment(s) in advance; multiple services will occur consecutively (no simultaneous services).
- Client must wear a face covering at all times while inside the salon; PN will provide disposable masks upon request.
- Client must enter PN alone; no guests, children

or non-service pets will be allowed. If client requires assistance, prior arrangement must be made and assisting individual must comply with all PN procedures.

- Salon waiting area and amenities (besides restrooms) will be eliminated during this time.
- Outside food and drink will be prohibited. Water will be provided upon request.
- Client must be symptom-free, and attest to such, upon arrival.
- Client must wash hands upon arrival and avoid touching belongings or face during any service.
- PN will position hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the salon and provide contactless payment options.
- Appointment reservations may be cancelled on short notice by either PN or client due to illness or exposure.
- Client must notify PN if client develops symptoms and/or tests positive for COVID-19 after visiting PN.

Despite compliance with requirements and best practices, we may be forced to close again. Would knowing in advance make another shutdown any easier to manage? Sadly, we may soon find out.

---

Licensed since 1992, Jaime Schrabec, Ph.D. works as manicurist and owner of Precision Nails, an exclusive employee-based salon in Carmel, California. Beyond the salon, she advocates for the beauty industry, co-hosts [Outgrowth: A Slice of Pro Beauty](#) podcast, consults with salon owners, mentors educators, teaches classes, organizes events, writes savvy articles and advises California’s Board of Barbering and Cosmetology and attorneys as an expert witness. For more information, email [jaime@precisionnails.com](mailto:jaime@precisionnails.com).