# Tesla workers in California are exempt from state's new COVID-19 orders

Employees at Tesla's Fremont plant are "essential workers" and therefore exempt from new statewide COVID-19 health orders, *CNBC* reported. The California Department of Public Health says manufacturing is considered an "essential workforce" – and that applies to Tesla's manufacturing, too.

California Governor Gavin Newsom announced new measures such as a "limited stay-at-home order" to slow new coronavirus cases in the state. The rules, which take effect Saturday, prohibit non-essential work and personal gatherings between 10PM and 5AM.

The carmaker fought previous, stricter shelter-in-place orders in the spring. In March, Alameda County officials initially told the company it was not exempt from an order requiring nonessential businesses in six Bay Area counties to shut down. The Tesla plant continued operating, with company executives arguing it was "national critical infrastructure," even though it did not appear to fit the description of an "essential business" in the the order.

Tesla eventually said on March 19th that it would comply with the Bay Area order and shut down operations at the Fremont plant, where its Model 3, Model S, Model X, and Model Y were assembled, on March 23rd. The company agreed to reduce its workforce there to "basic operations."

In May, CEO Elon Musk announced he was reopening Tesla's Fremont plant even though it violated the local shelter-in-

place order. He filed a lawsuit against the county and threatened to move its operations out of California. He was later accused of creating a “public health risk” by reopening his factory before being authorized to do so.

Last week, Musk announced he likely had a “moderate case of covid.” At least six Tesla employees tested positive for COVID-19 following the reopening of the Fremont plant.

Alameda County officials could still impose stricter stay-at-home orders which would supersede the state order, but have not done so yet.

https://www.theverge.com/2020/11/20/21587781/tesla-workers-california-fremont-exempt-new-covid-19-order-newsom