



## What Does it Mean to be an Essential Provider?

During a declared state of emergency, as we are seeing in states across the country, businesses and professionals of all backgrounds are typically being categorized into two areas of operation; **Essential and Non-Essential**.

Essential providers and businesses typically include some of the following:

- **Healthcare**
- **Pharmacies**
- **Grocery Stores**
- **Telecommunication**
- **Infrastructure**

Being categorized as an **Essential Provider** allows Doctors of Optometry the ability to continue to best serve their patients (*per recommended guidelines*) in times of crisis and need. This may allow for, depending upon clinical guidelines, provider clinical judgment and state mandates:

- **Amended OPEN office hours.** (Versus mandatory closure if non-essential)
- **Ability to have patients travel to an office or satellite location for appropriate care.** (Necessary during stay at home and shelter in place notices)

Once categorized as an **Essential Provider**, it is imperative all Doctors of Optometry continue to employ their best clinical judgement, recommended guidelines and observe all government declarations when it comes to their patients and employees, so as not further exacerbate the spread of COVID-19.