

## Sephora, Nordstrom to close North American stores as COVID-19 fears amplify

March 17, 2020



*Fendi looks exclusively for Nordstrom's newly opened New York department store. Image credit: Nordstrom*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Unlike other countries where quarantine decisions and lockdowns are uniformly mandated, the United States is piecemeal. That leaves it to individual retailers such as cosmetics-focused Sephora and department store chain Nordstrom to announce two-week closures.

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The announcements reflect fears from customers and employees that the coronavirus is only gaining speed in its spread in the United States and Canada. Both retailers have committed to take care of their employees while the stores are closed.

"There is no question this is a time of great uncertainty," said a statement from Nordstrom CEO Erik Nordstrom and chief brand officer Peter Nordstrom. "While we don't know exactly what the future may hold, we feel confident that by sticking together and supporting each other, we'll emerge from this stronger than before."

Closed offline, open online

The news comes a day after Saks Fifth Avenue said it would shut its flagship store in New York for two weeks as the city recommended store closures to protect against the spread of the coronavirus.

**Nordstrom** is headquartered in Seattle, the biggest city in Washington State where the coronavirus first took root in the United States.

LVMH-owned **Sephora** is headquartered in San Francisco, which is now under mandatory lockdown as local governments attempt to stem the spread of the virus.

"Following guidance from public health authorities, we understand that practicing social distancing and reducing dense public gatherings as much as possible is critically important at this time," said Jean-Andr Rougeot, president/CEO of Sephora Americas, in a statement. "This is truly a global effort that requires all of our participation."

Both companies have urged consumers to shop them online or via mobile apps, thus relying on an ecommerce channel that is set to become the biggest beneficiary of a bricks-and-mortar lockdown worldwide.

Here are the letters sent by the leaders of Nordstrom and Sephora to their customers, prospects, employees, stakeholders and those on their mailing lists:

## NORDSTROM

On behalf of everyone at Nordstrom, our hearts go out to all those impacted by COVID-19 this includes not only those diagnosed with the virus, but also their friends and family, those whose jobs and schools have been impacted and so many more. Our focus is, as always, on the health and safety of our employees, customers and communities.

The situation is changing rapidly, and to do our part in slowing the spread of the virus, we have decided to temporarily close all our stores. The two-week closure will go into effect on Tuesday, March 17. This decision includes all our U.S. and Canada stores. We remain open and ready to serve you through our apps and online at Nordstrom.com, Nordstromrack.com, HauteLook.com and TrunkClub.com including digital styling, online order pickup and curbside services at our full-line stores, as we are allowed by local regulations.

We realize the impact a closure can have on our store employees, and this is not a decision we made lightly. We want to take care of them as best we can and will be providing them with pay and benefits during this two-week period as well as providing additional resources to help them through this challenging time.

There is no question this is a time of great uncertainty. While we don't know exactly what the future may hold, we feel confident that by sticking together and supporting each other, we'll emerge from this stronger than before.

Thank you for your loyalty,

Erik & Pete Nordstrom

## SEPHORA

Letter from our CEO

To our Beauty Community,

Today we have made the difficult decision to close all of our retail stores in the US and Canada and implement remote working for employees in our corporate offices from 5pm local time on Tuesday, March 17th through Friday, April 3rd. When Sephora first opened its doors, we did so with the mission to create a unique community for all beauty enthusiasts. Since then, we have always taken our responsibility to protect the well-being of our people and community seriously. It was with that responsibility in mind that we made this decision.

We also recognize that we are in a position to support the collective fight against COVID-19. Following guidance from public health authorities, we understand that practicing social distancing and reducing dense public gatherings as much as possible is critically important at this time. This is truly a global effort that requires all of our participation.

During this time, we remain committed to serving our clients:

Our sephora.com and sephora.ca sites and mobile apps remain operational, with a comprehensive product assortment across all categories available. We are waiving standard shipping fees through Friday, April 3rd on sephora.com, sephora.ca, and the Sephora app. To redeem, please use code FREESHIP.\*

For product purchases made in-store in the last 30 days as of today (March 16th), we will accept the in-store returns, with receipt, within 30 days of store re-opening. To ease returns for online orders, we have adjusted our current 30-day return policy and increased it to 60 days to be returned to the original method of payment.

We are committed to supporting your beauty needs, and hopefully still having a bit of beauty fun, via social media. Our Sephora social channels have how-to videos and a wealth of content supporting a range of beauty questions for our diverse clientele. Connect with us on Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok.

Our Beauty Insider Community is a place to connect with other beauty enthusiasts and is a network of clients who enjoy chatting about anything beauty.

And as always, you can reach our Customer Service team via email, phone, or chat.

We will continue to care for our employees and their families. Any changes to our corporate or store operations will not affect our commitment to them. To that end, all store employees will continue to receive their base pay for scheduled shifts for the duration of this closure. In addition, health and wellness benefits for employees who are currently enrolled will continue. And all distribution center employees will receive the same considerations should

we experience any unplanned disruptions in one of our centers. We will continue to share updates with our community in the days ahead as we take any further action.

While this remains a challenging time for us all, we are inspired by the support of this community. We'd like to thank our store teams who have served our clients over the past few weeks with enthusiasm and dedication. As we continue, we greatly appreciate our e-commerce, distribution center, client services, and supply chain personnel for their strength and resilience.

Thank you for being a loyal Sephora client.

Sincerely,

Jean-Andr Rougeot  
President & CEO, Sephora Americas

\*\*Exclusions/terms apply. See Sephora.com or Sephora.ca for details.

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