

COVID-19 Guidance for Food Facilities with On-Site Dining

Background

COVID-19, also known as the novel coronavirus, is a respiratory illness that is spread through the air via respiratory droplets from an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces. The State of California issued a stay at home order on March 19, 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Counties in California are now being permitted to phase-in certain business operations and activities as specific indicators are met.

Restaurants in Sacramento County are now allowed to open their indoor and outdoor dining areas with restrictions. Guidelines for the safe operation of dine-in activities at restaurants have been published by the State of California and must be followed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The attached checklist is derived from the [CA State Guidance for Dine-in Restaurants](#).

Requirements may change. Please check the [EMD website](#) for the most current information.

Which facilities may operate once dine-in restaurants are approved to open

Retail Food Service Facilities and Food Trucks - Restaurants and other types of retail food facilities may operate. Dine-in restaurants must follow specific guidelines outlined below. All customer "self-service" buffets and salad bars are not allowed to operate.

Grocery Stores and Markets - May operate while incorporating social distancing guidelines.

Bars, Wineries, Breweries, and Pubs - May only operate if they are offering sit-down, dine-in meals. Alcohol can only be sold in the same transaction as a meal.

➤ *Bars, wineries, and breweries that are already permitted to sell beer and wine for **off-site** consumption may continue these sales while following social distancing guidelines.*

Food Safety, Sanitation and Facility Inspections

Although reducing the spread of COVID-19 has been the main focus in recent months, food safety continues to require care and attention. Before opening a food facility to additional services, ensure food safety requirements are also being met:

- Keep all handwash stations stocked and accessible at all times
- Keep all cold foods at 41°F or below
- Maintain all hot foods at 135°F or above
- Store food to prevent cross contamination
- Wash and sanitize food prep surfaces regularly to prevent cross contamination

Environmental Specialists will be reviewing requirements by phone as well as conducting on-site surveys. If you have questions, please contact your inspector by phone or email, or call the Environmental Management Department at (916) 875-8484.

▶ **See next page for COVID-19 specific checklist**

COVID-19 General Checklist for Dine-in Restaurants

This checklist is intended to assist dine-in restaurants with implementing a plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Make a written plan.* It should contain the following elements:

- Identify the person in charge of implementing the plan.
- Identify the high risk areas and activities within the facility and the measures that will be taken to limit the risks.
- Describe how training and communication with employees will be conducted.
- Describe how the facility will self-check for compliance with safety measures and the process for correcting any safety measures that are not being implemented properly.
- Develop a plan for employees that report positive COVID-19 results.
- Create a plan for addressing peak periods when potential customers may exceed facility capacity. Review this plan with the employees that will be implementing this plan.
- [Social distancing plan – Appendix A](#)

**“Dine-In Restaurant COVID-19 Prevention Plan” Template available on the [EMD COVID-19 webpage](#)*

Provide employee training. Topics should include:

- Information on COVID-19, preventing spread, and who is especially vulnerable.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using CDC guidelines.
- The importance of not coming to work if experiencing a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- The importance of hand washing and requirements for handwashing.
- The proper use of face coverings.
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time.
- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits including government programs supporting sick leave and worker’s compensation for COVID-19.

Implement control measures and on-site employee screening

- Complete a health survey with each employee prior to the beginning of each shift and offer temperature scans for employees. (not required, but encouraged)
- Encourage employees who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home. Also note, Cal Code section 113949 states that employees with symptoms of gastrointestinal illness (such as vomiting and/or diarrhea) may not engage in any food handling activities.
- Require frequent handwashing and use of hand sanitizer. Assign staff to regularly check that soap and paper towel dispensers are stocked and functional. Keep extra batteries available for motion sensing dispensers.
- Strongly recommend employees use face covers. Face coverings are required for any employee who must be within six feet of customers. Provide face coverings if possible.
- Encourage customers to use face covers.
- Post signs encouraging face covers and 6 ft. social distancing.
- Keep disposable gloves available at all times. Remind employees that gloves should be used in addition to hand washing and hands must be washed each time gloves are changed.

- Ensure that staff handling dirty dishes use gloves and impermeable aprons. Employees washing dishes should also be provided with eye and face protection. Gloves, aprons and eye protection should be changed and/or sanitized frequently.

Social Distancing Guidelines

- If customers need to wait for takeout food or a table, ask them to wait in their cars and offer to alert them using their mobile phone.
- Use a reservation process to help prevent people from gathering.
- Implement a system for addressing peak periods and queueing procedures, including a host to remind customers to practice physical distancing. Provide tape or markings on the floor to indicate 6 ft. separation in any area where a line might form.
- Post signs at each public entrance to the facility informing the dining public to:
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 ft.
 - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry into a restaurant
 - Stay home if they are ill or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19
- Keep doors and windows open when possible to increase air circulation. If flies, cockroaches, rodents or any other type of vermin are observed, take immediate action to eliminate vermin and keep doors and windows closed until vermin issue is resolved.
- Reconfigure, restrict, or close common areas, like employee break rooms. Discourage employees from congregating in high traffic areas.
- Reduce menu options so that kitchen staff can generally occupy one area per person. Consider staggering employee shifts. Complete as much prep work as possible during less busy hours.
- Use contactless payment, pick-up and delivery protocols whenever possible

Seating Arrangements

- Keep seating at each table at least 6 ft. from seating at other tables or install plexiglass or other physical barriers to separate customers.
- Implement measures to provide 6 ft. of separation between workers and customers through reconfiguring space, installing physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings, colored tape, or signs to indicate to where workers should stand).
- Do not seat customers within 6 ft. of an employee work station or food and drink preparation area.
- If extra tables and chairs are present, but cannot be used, provide signs or other visual cues to indicate that they are unavailable.
- Seating at bars may only be allowed if food is being served and 6 ft. social distancing can be maintained between different parties of customers, between customers and employees.
- Research if outdoor dining area could be expanded to increase social distancing.

Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Contamination Control Measures

- Provide hand sanitizer at guest and employee entrances and check-out counters.
- Schedule time for workers to complete cleaning activities and assign a team member at each shift to oversee any additional sanitization procedures that may be needed.
- Clean and sanitize table, chairs and surrounding area after each customer use.

- ❑ Sanitize high contact touchpoints, such as counters, phones, door handles, credit card terminals, etc. following a regular schedule.
- ❑ Clean and sanitize customer restrooms frequently.
- ❑ Clean high traffic areas thoroughly every day.
- ❑ Keep sanitizer, towels, and/or sanitizer wipes in wait stations, bar areas, host stands, and kitchens. Ensure that supplies are kept fresh and readily available
- ❑ Ensure that utensils and food-ware are properly washed, rinsed and sanitized for an adequate contact time or single-service (disposable) utensils and food-ware are used.

Sanitizer for utensils: Chlorine at a concentration of at least 100ppm soaked for 30 seconds

Quaternary ammonium at a concentration of at least 200ppm soaked for 1 min.

- ❑ Sanitize self-service machines, such as soda and frozen yogurt machines frequently.
- ❑ Install hands-free paper towel and soap dispensers if possible.
- ❑ Provide disposable menus, sanitize menus between each customer, or refer customer to online menu.
- ❑ Do not pre-set tables. Provide napkins, cutlery, glassware, etc. to customers as needed.
- ❑ Pre-roll utensils in napkins prior to use by customers and store in a clean container.
- ❑ Supply condiments as needed in clean service ware (small bowls) or in disposable packages. Salt and pepper shakers should be sanitized between customers if they are left at a table.
- ❑ Provide takeout containers as needed and ask customers to package their own leftovers.
- ❑ If using table linens, provide fresh linens for each new customer.
- ❑ Do not provide self-service mints, candies, snacks, and toothpicks.
- ❑ Eliminate self-service buffets and salad bars.
- ❑ Eliminate self-service areas with utensils, napkins, straws, water pitchers, and condiments.
- ❑ Discontinue use of shared entertainment items such as board games, pool tables, darts, bowling, and arcade games.
- ❑ Discontinue any tableside food preparation, food selection carts, and conveyor belts.

Questions

Thank you for your efforts in keeping Sacramento residents and visitors safe!

- For details, refer to the [State of CA COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Dine-In Restaurants](#).
- If you have questions, please call EMD at (916) 875-8440.
- To ensure you receive the latest information, call EMD at (916) 875-8440 to update your email and contact information.