



Guidelines for Safe Food Handling During COVID-19 Outbreak

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 and comply with Governor Sisolak's Executive Order, food establishments should operate based on Phased Reopening guidance. In addition to the Southern Nevada Health District's *Regulations Governing the Sanitation of Food Establishments*, the following public health practices are recommended:

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 – The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person speaks, coughs, or sneezes. Protect yourself and others with the following guidelines:

- Practice social distancing by avoiding large gatherings and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others when possible.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Ask that guests maintain adequate social distancing of 6 feet of personal space.
 - Minimize line formation and the amount of people gathered inside.
 - Stagger pick-up times for orders.
 - Use a text message or email to let your customer know when to come inside.
- All staff in food establishments are encouraged to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on "[Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)" and wear non-hospital grade, cloth face coverings.
 - As staff may be unaware if they have coronavirus, the use of a cloth face covering may prevent the spread of the virus to customers and other staff.
 - Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for social distancing or proper handwashing.
 - See the Health District's "[Guidance on Cloth Face Coverings in Food Establishments](#)" for information on how to wear, remove and care for cloth face coverings.
- Go electronic, if possible. Limit payments and receipts to online transactions.

Handwashing

- Wash hands before starting food preparation tasks.
- Wear single-use gloves or use other barriers while working with ready-to-eat (RTE) foods.
 - Wash hands prior to putting on gloves.
- Wash hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol after in-person transactions.
 - Hand sanitizer is **not** to be used to replace hand washing.



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Food Preparation – There is no current evidence to support the transmission of COVID-19 associated with food or food packaging. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or possibly eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. The coronavirus is mostly spread from one person to another through respiratory droplets; however, it's always critical to follow food safety practices to prevent foodborne illness.

- Maintain time/temperature control for safety (TCS) food at the correct temperatures while awaiting pick-up. As always, keep hot food at 135°F or above and cold food at 41°F or below.
- Protect food and food contact surfaces from contamination:
 - Discontinue use of customer self-service buffets, salad bars, and condiment stations.
 - Remove single-use utensils from self-service areas. Use commercially sealed utensils and include them in the order.
 - Take-out containers are single-use and should not be washed, rinsed, and sanitized.
 - Discourage the use of customer's personal items such as reusable bags, cups, and containers.
 - Prevent packaged condiments from coming into direct contact with open foods.
- Follow the Health District's "[Take-out and Curbside Pick-Up Guidelines.](#)"

Cleaning and Sanitizing – For food contact surfaces, use cleaning and sanitizing chemicals approved for food establishments, and follow the directions on the label.

Disinfection – Disinfection is recommended for rooms or areas that people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 have visited and for high touch surfaces. CDC guidelines at "[Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)" provide instructions on how to disinfect with a product that is on the [EPA's List N](#).

- High touch surfaces include, but are not limited to, workstations, doorknobs, door handles and door push plates, pens, soda fountain touchpoints, electronic payments and point of sale terminals, and countertops or racks used to stage orders.
- It is important to follow the manufacturer's directions on how to apply the disinfectant and train employees on how to use the product (e.g., concentration, application method, personal protective equipment, and contact time, etc.).
 - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using soap and water prior to disinfection.
- After disinfection-level chemicals are used on food contact surfaces, they must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized with chemicals and concentrations approved for food contact surfaces.

Food Handlers – Continue your employee health policy of excluding or restricting food handlers with vomiting, diarrhea, fever with sore throat, infected wounds on the hands and arms, and jaundice. In addition:



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- Consider using an [Employee Screening Questionnaire](#) for COVID-19 symptoms at the beginning of each person's shift.
- **Employees with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 shall be excluded.** If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality.
- **Employees who have symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of smell or taste should notify their supervisor and stay home.**
 - Sick employees should follow CDC recommendations for "[What To Do if You Are Sick.](#)"
 - Employees should not return to work until:
 - No fever for at least 3 days (72 hours) without the use medicine that reduces fever and other symptoms (such as, cough, shortness of breath) have improved; AND,
 - At least 10 days have passed since the first symptoms appeared.
- **Employees who appear to have symptoms upon arrival** at work or who become sick during the shift should immediately be sent home and follow CDC recommendations for "[What To Do if You Are Sick.](#)"
- **Employees who are well but who have a household member sick with COVID-19** should self-quarantine for 14 days and monitor their health. They should call their healthcare provider and the Health District if they develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 during their self-isolation.

****This shall remain in effect through Phased Reopening****