

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

FOOD ESTABLISHMENT AND BAR OPERATING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are updated effective January 4, 2021 in St. Louis County. In accordance with the St. Louis County Department of Public Health's ("DPH") Amended Safer At Home Order (the "Order") effective January 4, 2021. These guidelines may be replaced or modified by DPH based on new scientific information and local information including the trajectory of influenza-like illnesses, cases of COVID-19, and any other information deemed relevant to protect public health in St. Louis County.

Except as specifically set forth herein, the following guidelines do not supersede existing Food Code requirements or public health orders.

The goal of these guidelines in the document is to reduce the risk of spreading the virus among staff and customers in these facilities. The core set of principles to prevent the spread of infections by respiratory transmission (including COVID-19) include:

- **Practice social distancing** – maintain at least 6 feet between and among employees and customers at all times.
- **Monitor employee health** – check the status of employee's health and screen employees for COVID-19.
- **Use protective equipment** – a fabric face cover must always be worn by employees and customers, except when eating and drinking.
- **Clean/sanitize/disinfect** – wash and sanitize hands, and wipe down frequently touched surfaces with EPA-approved disinfectant.

Curfew

All food establishments and drinking establishments must cease indoor and outdoor service to customers at 10 p.m. Customers should be notified that they must physically leave the indoor or outdoor facility by 10 p.m. Carry-out and delivery are NOT subject to the 10 p.m. curfew.

Food Establishments Operating at Limited Capacity

- Food establishments must limit the number of people allowed in the facility to 25% (twenty five-percent) of the number that would otherwise be allowed based on the facility's authorized fire and building code occupancy OR limit the number of tables in the facility to the number of tables that can be distanced 6 feet or more from other tables, WHICHEVER IS LESS. Measurements between tables is to be taken from the back of one chair to the back of the chair at an adjoining table – measured when the table is unseated.
- If a food establishment has a bar within the food establishment, the same capacity limitations must be maintained. In addition, the customers must be seated at a table and must remain seated while consuming beverages.

- If a food establishment has accommodations at the bar itself, customers at the bar must be seated 6 feet from other parties, parties at the bar must be limited to 2 individuals and there must be a physical barrier between the server/bartender at the bar and the customers. Barware must not be kept on the bar. Service items like napkins, garnishes, straws, etc. should be kept behind the bar and away from customers except for the individual items given to a customer for that customer's use.
- Physical barriers between the server and customer at the bar can be plexiglass or some other similarly effective barrier that is non-porous.
- All customers must wear Face Coverings while entering and exiting the food establishment and if visiting the restaurant restrooms.
- All customers must wear Face Coverings at all times they are interacting with or being served by a restaurant employee. Any customer refusing to do so must be told to leave the facility.
- All food establishments must post the following requirements:
 - The requirements for Face Coverings – including while interacting with service providers.
 - Both interior and exterior signs reminding customers not to enter the restaurant if they have symptoms and that they must follow social distancing requirements.
 - Provide information for reporting violations of these COVID-19 requirements.
 - Require that customers provide one (1) contact information per party for contact tracing purposes only. Contact information is considered as first and last name and telephone number or valid email address.
- People who are waiting to be seated may not congregate on the premises. Consider establishing a reservation-only or call-ahead seating policy to prevent crowding. Do not use shared buzzers to notify people that a table is available for them.
- No more than 10 people may be seated at a table. If a party is larger than 10 persons and is seated at separate tables, they must remain seated at the table to which they were initially seated and not physically interact with the other table.
- All private parties at a food establishment must be limited to 10 people or fewer.
- All food establishments must establish record-keeping systems to assist public health officials with contact tracing if necessary. The POS system may provide this function, or the establishment owner may wish to use another method to record reservations and phone numbers for contact tracing purposes. Customers who are unwilling to comply with this requirement will be asked to leave the establishment. Contact information will only be provided to the DPH if requested by the DPH. Food establishment management should keep this information and must provide it to the DPH upon request.
- Encourage high-risk individuals to order take-out or delivery or offer special time periods, such as senior citizen hours, when there may be fewer people in the establishment.
- If lines are likely to form at pay stations, use tape to mark off six-foot spaces. Establishment may wish to consider using portable or iPad payment systems that allow servers to process transactions tableside. Any item touched by more than one person shall be cleaned between uses.
- Customers may not use pool tables, dart boards, arcade games, or any other shared recreational equipment that may be available.

Bar Service and Drinking Establishments Operating at Limited Capacity

- All bars and drinking establishments must limit the number of people allowed in the facility to 25% (twenty five-percent) of the number that would otherwise be allowed based on the facility's authorized fire and building code occupancy OR limit the number of tables in the facility to the number of tables that can be distanced 6 feet or more from other tables, **WHICHEVER IS LESS**. Measurements between tables is to be taken from the back of one chair to the back of the chair at an adjoining table – measured when the table is unseated.
- All customers must be seated at tables or the bar at all times while consuming beverages. Customers are not allowed to visit other tables.
- Bars that are separate areas in restaurants and hotels or other facilities (such as roof top bars, lounge bars, and other defined areas where primarily alcoholic beverages are served) must require customers to be seated at tables or at the bar while consuming beverages.
- If a drinking establishment has accommodations at the bar itself, customers must be seated 6 feet from other parties, parties must be limited to 2 individuals and there must be a physical barrier between the server and the customers. No barware must be kept on the bar. Service items like napkins, garnishes, straws, etc. should be kept behind the bar and away from customers except for the individual items given to a customer for that customer's use.
- Physical barriers between the server and customer at the bar can be plexiglass or some other similarly effective barrier that is non-porous.
- All customers must wear Face Coverings while entering and exiting the bar or drinking establishment, if visiting the bar or drinking establishment restrooms and while not actively engaged in consuming a beverage.
- All customers must wear Face Coverings at all times they are interacting with or being served by an employee of the bar or drinking establishment. Any customer refusing to do so must be asked to leave the facility.
- All bar and drinking establishments must post the requirements for:
 - The requirements for Face Coverings – including while interacting with service providers.
 - Both interior and exterior signs reminding customers not to enter the bar or drinking establishment if they have symptoms and that they must obey social distancing requirements.
 - Provide information for reporting violations of these COVID-19 requirements.
 - Require that customers provide one (1) contact information per party for contact tracing purposes only. Contact information is considered as first and last name and telephone number or valid email address.
- Individuals who are waiting to be seated may not congregate on the premises. Consider establishing a reservation-only or call-ahead seating policy to prevent crowding. Do not use shared buzzers to notify people that a table or spot at the bar is available for them.
- No more than 10 people may be seated at a table. If a party is larger than 10 persons and is seated at separate tables, they must remain seated at the table to which they were initially seated and not physically interact with the other table.
- All private parties at a bar or drinking establishment must be limited to 10 people or fewer.

- All bar and drinking establishments must establish record-keeping systems to assist public health officials with contact tracing if necessary. The POS system may provide this function, or the establishment owner may wish to use another method to record reservations and phone numbers for contact tracing purposes. Customers who are unwilling to comply with this requirement will be asked to leave the establishment. Contact information will only be provided to the DPH if requested by the DPH. Food establishment management should keep this information and must provide it to the DPH upon request.
- Encourage high-risk individuals to order take-out or delivery or offer special time periods, such as senior citizen hours, when there may be fewer people in the establishment.
- If lines are likely to form at pay stations, use tape to mark off six-foot spaces. Establishments may wish to consider using portable or iPad payment systems that allow servers to process transactions tableside. Any item touched by more than one person shall be cleaned between uses.
- Customers may not use pool tables, dart boards, arcade games, or any other shared recreational equipment that may be available.

Outdoor dining, Carry-out and Delivery

Food and drinking establishments may also provide outdoor service, carry-out, and delivery. Carry-out and delivery service is not subject to the 10 p.m. curfew.

- Establishments must operate outdoor dining with the table restrictions as outlined above for indoor dining and drinking establishments.
- All other requirements for indoor dining, bars and drinking establishments outlined above are also required for outdoor service.
- All outdoor tents must comply with any requirements by the St. Louis County Department of Public Works, their local municipal requirements or fire district requirements.

Preparing the facility

- If the building that houses the establishment has been closed for an extended period of time, ensure that water and HVAC systems are operating safely. Dangerous mold can develop in unoccupied buildings and stagnant water pipes pose a risk for Legionnaire's disease. Refer to CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>.
- Outdoor dining or outdoor bar areas allow for greater ventilation and may reduce transmission.
- The Food Safety Program can be reached at (314) 615-8900. .
- Food preparation stations in the kitchen must be set up at least 6 feet apart. Kitchen staff should practice 'no-contact' transfers: place items down on a counter for the next person to pick up rather than handing them off directly.
- If the building has been closed for an extended period of time, check date-marked foods and discard all that have gone beyond their expiration.
- Food and drink preparation must be completed inside the permitted food facility and cannot be moved outdoors.

Instructions to Establishments on Cleaning and Disinfection

- Use EPA-approved disinfectants for all routine cleaning. Diluted bleach solutions (1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water) may be used for appropriate surfaces. For a list of products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against the novel coronavirus, visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>
- Make disinfectant wipes available to front-of-house staff and instruct them to wipe down countertops, tables, chairs, pens and other shared surfaces.
- Kitchen surfaces, especially hand sinks, handles, prep stations, and doorknobs need to be wiped down with disinfectant or EPA approved sanitizer at least every hour. A log should be created to document all practices with a two-person verification checklist.
- Place hand sanitizer near entrances, exits and payment stations.
- Ensure that all shared surfaces and objects are wiped down with disinfectant between each customer, including tables, chairs, receipt trays, menus, condiment bottles, and anything that could have been touched by prior customers.
- China, glass and silverware may be used for in-restaurant dining as long as FDA-approved washing, rinsing and sanitizing standards are met. Diligent care should be taken to ensure sanitizer. Otherwise, disposable items must be used, and each item disposed after use.
- Concentration and water temperature requirements are strictly followed and dish washing machine mechanisms are working properly. (Disposable products preferred)
- Give additional training to all cleaning staff. Staff should know how to put on and remove disposable gloves safely, use disinfectants according to manufacturer directions, and disinfect all high-touch surfaces.

Instructions to Establishments on Personal Protective Equipment

Provide all staff members with proper protective equipment, including fabric or disposable face coverings. Instruct staff on the proper use of PPE to avoid cross-contamination.

- All kitchen staff must wear the following protective equipment while on site:
 - Disposable food-grade gloves
 - Hairnet, hat, or other hair restraints
 - Face covering (fabric or disposable masks)
- Service staff must wear a fabric or disposable face covering at all times; customers must wear fabric or disposable face covering unless seated at their tables and consuming food or drink. Servers are not required to wear gloves but must wash their hands frequently.
- Staff should change their face coverings if they become soiled, torn or wet. Change gloves when switching tasks, handling different foods, or after touching objects that should be considered contaminated (cell phone, computer, clothes, door handles, etc.), or if a glove is torn or punctured. Wash/sanitize hands after changing masks and before putting on a new pair of gloves.
- Designate trash cans with closed lids specifically for disposal of worn PPE. Empty these trash cans frequently, always wearing gloves that are then disposed of after removal.

Instructions to Establishments on Monitoring Employee Health

- Upon arrival at work, employees must be masked, and employers must conduct health checks. Conduct health checks safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws. Screening should include 1) a temperature check using a touchless thermometer, 2) questions about the presence of cough, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, fever, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell and 3) questions about close contact with any person diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Employees with a temperature of 100.4°F or above, or who answer yes to any of the screening questions, must not be allowed to enter the workplace.
- If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, work with local health agencies to ensure all employees and customers who can be identified as having had contact while the employee was infectious are contacted. Compile a list of employees, customers, or others known to be in close contact with the person.
- Keep all personal items, including cell phones and outerwear, in designated areas to prevent contamination of workspaces. Reusable bottles/cups must stay in this personal items area.
- Train all staff to recognize the recognized signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Instructions to Establishments on Self-service Options

Self-service drink and food service is limited and must meet the following conditions:

- Customer flow must be managed by providing clear exit and entry points with line markers 6 feet apart indicative of proper social distancing.
- Allow adequate space around self-service display fixtures and modify traffic flow if necessary.
- Provide hand sanitizer at entry and exit points and encourage customers to use it.
- Provide signage to remind customers to maintain proper social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Provide pre-packaged foods whenever possible.
- Limit self-serve beverages and food items to only those items that are shielded within a case by a door or other self-closing device that remains closed when customers are not making a selection.
- Require customers to wear a face covering while obtaining self-service foods and beverages.
- Provide customers with disposable utensils or tissues for use in retrieving food items and provide a container for those disposable utensils and tissues to be discarded after use.
- Limit the food selection to a limited variety of items on display to encourage customers to quickly select items and discourage customers from gathering around the display.
- No personal cups or refillable cups are allowed. All drink cups must be disposable and provided by the business. Drink cups may not be refilled or reused in the establishment.
- Disposable drink cups and food containers must be stored in a secured area and dispensed one at a time to avoid customers touching containers that others may use.
- During expected high-traffic times, staff must be placed near self-service areas to reinforce face coverings, social distancing and proper protection of self-service containers and utensils.

- High touch surfaces, such as dispensers with buttons, must be disinfected after each high-traffic period and every 30 minutes otherwise.
- NO buffet style food service is allowed.

Instructions to Establishments on Limiting Contact Points

- Make sure that there are clear pathways, establishing one-way pathways when possible, throughout the establishment, including to and from entrances, restrooms, and payment stations.
- To the extent it complies with any fire codes, prop open frequently used interior doors to limit contact with doorknobs and surfaces. Increase ventilation by opening exterior doors and windows if this can be done while maintaining other health and safety practices.
- Cups, lids, napkins, and straws should be brought directly to customers by staff and not placed out for self-service. Do not place utensils on table until customers are seated.
- Keep condiments, including salt and pepper shakers, off of tables and have servers bring them when requested, or consider using single-serve condiment packages. Clean shakers after each party's use and discard any remaining single serve packages.
- Encourage customers to pay and tip with credit or debit cards and to use their own pens to sign receipts. Employees must wash their hands after handling cash.
- Practice contactless transfers by placing items down on a counter for the customer to pick up. In the case of curbside delivery, ask the guest to open their trunk and have employees place the order in the trunk.