

# FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY COVID-19 REOPENING GUIDELINES

MAY 11, 2020



## SIGNAGE

- Post a sign on the door to your restaurant that no one with a fever or persistent cough is to be permitted in the restaurant.
- Provide signage at each public entrance to inform all employees and customers that they should:
  - Not enter if they feel generally unwell
  - Maintain a minimum of six foot distance
  - Sneeze or cough into a cloth or tissue
  - Not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact
- Post a sign on receiving door that no suppliers or vendors should enter if they have a fever or persistent cough.
- Post in a publicly prominent place in your facility and on your website your commitment to:
  - Food safety
  - Staff safety training
  - Steps that you are taking to go above and beyond in providing safe food and a safe, enjoyable dining experience
  - Customer safety
  - Customer responsibility
- Create, execute and post publicly a full scale 'ready for dine-in' cleaning and sanitizing protocol in preparation for welcoming customers.



## TRAINING

- Continue and enhance employee safety training, highly emphasizing proper hand washing and hygiene etiquette.
- Encourage restaurants to bring in staff at least one week prior to opening for the purpose of training, cleaning, building inventory, etc.
- All restaurants are required to meet the minimum education and training standards outlined in DHEC Regulation 61-25. At least one employee with the authority to direct and control food preparation and service shall be a food protection manager who has been certified by an accredited program. Only Conference for Food Protection ANSI-certified Food Protection Manager courses meet the requirements of 2-102.20
- All restaurants are encouraged to have their employees complete the DHEC-approved Food Handler training and all managers earn their Conference for Food Protection ANScertified Food Protection Manager certification.
- For those operations with carry out and delivery service, have employees take the Free ServSafe COVID-19 training for carryout and delivery service.



## FOOD SAFETY FOCUS

- Place settings, utensils, menus, and condiments will either be single-use or will be cleaned and disinfected after every use.
- Continue to clean and sanitize food preparation surfaces in the kitchen and other food storage areas at the frequency required by R. 61-25.
- Buffets and self-service stations: Have staff dispense food from buffets (cafeteria-style) or discontinue these services to prevent customer reuse of service utensils and potential physical contamination.
- Have sanitizer or another disinfectant readily available to all guests and employees.
- Thoroughly disinfect every table, chair/booth, utensil, glass, and surface the guest has contacted.
- Staff should wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after cleaning and disinfecting is completed. Ensure that staff properly wash their hands immediately after gloves are removed.



## RESTAURANT DINING ROOM

- Create a plan and checklist of all back of house and front of house surfaces the staff and customers will come in contact with.
- Select one person per shift to be in charge of safety and sanitation during the shift, observing and ensuring that hand washing is done appropriately, and sanitation of dining room areas, restrooms, lobbies and door areas is done regularly and consistently (minimum of hourly).
- Restaurants already have sanitization regulations that need to continue to be adhered to based on regulation 61-25, Retail Food Establishments.
- Provide hand sanitizers at all entry doors, touchless is preferred if availability permits. At your main entrance, provide a cleaning station with alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues, and a trash can for visitors.
- Table condiments, such as salt, pepper, ketchup, etc. should be removed from the table and provided upon request. Consider using portion control products when appropriate.
- Use sanitizing solutions to clean tables, chairs, and check presenters after each seating.
- Clean and sanitize salt and pepper fixtures or use single-use condiments. Use paper menus if possible or sanitize menus after each use.
- Sanitize all doorknobs and other frequently touched surfaces as much as possible between newly arriving parties with approved sanitizing solution.
- Cleaning supplies should be single-use (paper towels, disposable mop heads) or laundered between uses (dish towels, mop heads).
- Space tables, both indoor and outdoor, at least six to eight feet apart depending on chair placement to keep diners at least six feet apart from other tables. If not possible, seat tables in rotation, or block seats. Reduce seating in dining rooms to the appropriate level based on square footage and layout of the dining room. Occupancy may not exceed 50% during Phase Two.
- No more than eight customers at a table during Phase Two of the reopening of our restaurants.
- Manual or digital reservation system would be helpful to be more efficient with tableseating. Have diners wait for tables in cars or outdoors using social distancing regulations rather than congregating in your dining room. Text them when their table is available.
- If there is any waiting outside the restaurant or at the counter, tape or markings should be used to monitor six feet physical distance.
- If not already standard operating procedures, have sanitization check lists for restrooms and other public areas.
- Set up guidelines for server stations so they are not congregating together. Depending on the size of the restaurant, consider having a station for each server.
- During routine business hours, frequently and thoroughly clean and disinfect all frequently touched objects within the dining and customer areas (doorknobs, cabinet handles, handrails, light switches, kitchen counters, dining room tables).
- Deep clean and disinfect the entire facility during non-operational hours at least five times per week.
- Only use kiosks or touch screens if they can be sanitized between uses, encourage touchless payment operations like credit cards with no signature required.
- Do not place utensils on table until patron is seated and, if possible, use disposable single-use utensils.
- In self-service seating restaurants, signage should be placed on tables/booths which are not to be occupied so that proper social distancing can be maintained.
- We recommend to remove bar stools or maintain a six feet distance between each party to allow people to order drinks at the bar and sit using appropriate social distancing.
- Do not allow groups of people to order drinks and stand around to consume. Customers should be seated to ensure proper distancing and the safety of all guests.



**EMPLOYEE SAFETY**

- Each employee will pass a health check or health survey prior to each shift.
- Heightened hygienic practices including peer observation and supervisor oversight to ensure staff are washing hands frequently and correctly, gloves may be used and must be changed properly, and that staff avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth.
- It is recommended to have physical barriers such as Plexiglas between employees and customers when possible for counter service ordering, food pick up areas and host stands.
- Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction, mobile and menu tablets, text on arrival for seating and contactless payment options.
- Each staff member will have his/her temperature taken before their shift and there will be ongoing interaction with staff on their health status and the health of anyone with whom they may be in close contact (family members, roommates, etc.).
- Immediately exclude any staff members indicating symptoms or that have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone diagnosed COVID-19.

- Ensure staff do NOT share cups and eating utensils with others.
- All employees handling food should wear gloves. This is not just for the safety of our guests, but also for their psychological sense of safety.
- Employees should be allowed to wear gloves and masks if they so desire, even in front-of-the-house positions and in the restaurant environments when a six-foot social distancing area in the kitchen and front counter area would be difficult to maintain.



**CUSTOMER SAFETY**

- Discontinue services that allow customers to fill or refill their own beverage cups such as coffee cups or growlers.
- Plan ahead of time for a circumstance in which you'll need to expedite a guest's exit from your restaurant.
- Be prepared to put guests in touch with medical resources.



**RESOURCES**

**Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)**

Local businesses can access MUSC services for more hands-on and detailed assessments beyond what is provided in these documents by contacting [businesshealth@muscedu](mailto:businesshealth@muscedu) (843) 792-2840

**South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association**

[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.scrla.org/resource/resmgr/coronavirus/SC\\_restaurant\\_reopening\\_guid.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.scrla.org/resource/resmgr/coronavirus/SC_restaurant_reopening_guid.pdf)

**accelerateSC Task Force**

<https://accelerate.sc.gov/restaurant-guidance>

**South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**

<https://www.scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/retail-food-service-establishments-covid-19>

**Center for Disease Control**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

**National Restaurant Association**

<https://restaurant.org/Covid19>

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These guidelines are adapted from the South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association's recommendations to accelerateSC (Governor Henry McMaster's task force dedicated to safely reopening South Carolina businesses post-COVID-19.).