



COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Measures for Food Facilities

Background COVID-19 is a disease caused by a novel coronavirus that causes respiratory illness. The virus is primarily spread through the air via respiratory droplets from an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces. Symptoms include fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath. COVID-19 is in our community, and cases are increasing in Santa Clara County and surrounding areas.

Legal Order On March 16, 2020, the Santa Clara County Health Officer issued a mandatory legal order (“Order”) directing all individuals living in the County to shelter at their place of residence and to self-isolate to the maximum extent feasible. The Order is in effect from 12:01 am on March 17, 2020 through 11:59 pm on April 7, 2020.

To ensure access to food and consumer products, the Order permits the continued operation of:

- Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and similar food retail establishments serving grocery and non-grocery products.
- Restaurants and other establishment that prepare and serve food to the public but *only* on a delivery or carryout basis. Dining at the premises is prohibited.
- Charitable feeding operations but only on a delivery or take-away basis. Dining at the premises is prohibited.

To meet the public’s nutritional needs, food facilities are encouraged to continue operating subject to the specified restrictions. These facilities must also follow the Social Distancing Requirements set forth below to the maximum extent feasible.

These restrictions may be modified or extended and new ones imposed. Consult the Order and visit the Santa Clara County Public Health Department website for up to date information. <http://sccphd.org/coronavirus>

SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS

The Order requires that essential businesses, including food facilities, comply with the following Social Distancing Requirements to the maximum extent feasible:

- Maintain at least six-foot social distancing between individuals, including employees and customers and including while customers are waiting in line.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible and provide hand sanitizer to customers.
- Cover cough and sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands).
- Regularly clean high-touch surfaces.
- Do not shake hands.

RISK MITIGATION MEASURES FOR FOOD FACILITIES

The following additional protocols are recommended to mitigate spread of COVID-19 among employees and customers:

Ensure that there are adequate supplies for hand washing including soap, paper towels, and waste receptacles.

Require employees to **wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.**

Prevention – Handwashing

Employees' hands should be washed:

- When entering the kitchen
- Before starting food preparation
- After touching their face, hair, or other areas of the body
- After using the restroom
- After coughing, sneezing, using a tissue, smoking, eating, or drinking
- When handling raw food then ready-to-eat food
- Before putting on gloves
- After cleaning, bussing tables, or touching any items that patrons have used
- Between handling money/credit cards/phones/pens and handling food
- After engaging in other activities that may contaminate the hands

Tips!

- *Minimize bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food*
- *Assign an employee to keep soap and paper towels stocked at handwash stations at least every hour*
- *Protect food and drinks from contamination when preparing and packing for delivery and carryout by patrons*
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth*
- *Minimize touching your phone or other personal items*
- *Wash hands more frequently for all staff*
- *Provide extra garbage cans near restrooms exits*
- *Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer for customers to use*

Provide regular staff training to ensure proper protocols are followed!

**Prevention –
Sanitizing
Equipment
and the
Facility**

Chlorine-based (bleach) sanitizer at 100 ppm or quaternary ammonium-based sanitizers at 200 ppm are effective sanitizers. Use test strips to ensure that sanitizer is at these required concentrations. Sanitize equipment, utensils, and food preparation areas, as well as tables, seats, service counters and any other area exposed to customers or employees routinely throughout the day.

Tips!

➤ *COVID-19 can last for days on surfaces. Increase the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing all high-touch areas such as:*

- *Door knobs, touch screens, cash registers, faucet handles, and cabinet/drawer pulls*
- *Menus, and condiment dispensers and napkin dispensers*
- *Other items and surfaces frequently touched by employees or customers*

➤ *At this time, avoid accepting reusable utensils from customers (food containers, traveler cups, etc.)*

➤ *Provide condiments, utensils, and napkins to customers upon request rather than on a self-serve basis to minimize contact*

**Employee
Health**

An employee who is experiencing any fever and respiratory symptoms should stay home until 3 days **after** they are symptom-free to prevent the spread of any virus. Maximize flexibility in use of sick leave to facilitate such time off.

If an employee is confirmed positive for COVID-19 and the employee worked at any time after their symptoms began, cease operations until the facility can be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized. The facility may reopen after that has occurred. Coworkers should monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days and may continue to work during this 14-day period only if they do not have any symptoms.

**Social
Distancing**

To the extent feasible, you must ensure that all individuals at your facility are able to maintain at least six-foot social distance at all time, including while standing in line. Arrange your space to allow for adequate social distancing.

**Additional
information**

The information and requirements pertaining to COVID-19 may change as more is learned about this virus and its transmission. Up to date legal orders as well as additional information, status reports, and website links can be accessed on the Santa Clara County Public Health website: <http://sccphd.org/coronavirus>

Please send specific questions related to food service operations to dehweb@cep.sccgov.org. For additional updates, follow us on Facebook at @cepascc and @sccpublichealth.
