

Recommendations for Easing COVID-19 Restrictions for the Retail Food Industry



The following is meant to provide guidance to jurisdictions proceeding with gradual re-opening of the retail food industry. This is not all-encompassing but provides some ideas on how to gradually remove restrictions. Please note, each jurisdiction may need to modify based on its individual needs.

Phase 1: New COVID-19 cases have declined 50% from peak

Food Service

- Gradually allow dining reopening while still maintaining social distancing such as 33% of the seats.
 - Require reservations for dine-in.
 - If reservations are not requiring, maintain social distance for those waiting for dine-in.
 - All staff are screened each shift before entering the facility for symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is immediately excluded.
 - Staff with direct customer contact wear cloth or other mask.
 - Customers are screened upon reservation and arrival as to whether anyone in the party is positive, has any symptoms, is under quarantine, or has been closely exposed. Deny entry if unwilling to answer questions.
 - Customers preorder meals if possible to reduce time in the facility.
 - Limit of 5 in a group and maintain a minimum of 6 feet between groups and no waiting lines.
 - No self-service salad bar or buffet.
 - Mandatory reporting of any positive staff and two or more employees with symptoms within a 48-hour period.
 - Monitoring of frequent handwashing and no bare-hand contact of ready-to-eat foods.
 - Thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces after each meal service.
 - Electronic payment only.
 - No bars or entertainment operations.
 - Public notified to report violations.

Food Stores

- All staff are screened each shift before entering facility for symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is immediately excluded.
- Staff with direct customer contact wear cloth or other mask.
- Limit the number of people in facility to 33% of Fire Code occupancy and maintain a minimum of 6 feet between individuals.
- Prevent waiting lines by opening additional registers as needed.
- Continue single direction aisles as needed for social distancing.
- No self-service salad bar or buffet.
 - Allow employee served delis in grocery stores.
- Mandatory reporting of any positive staff and two or more employees with symptoms within a 48-hour period.

- Monitoring of frequent handwashing and no bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods.
- Thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces every hour.
- Specified hours for elderly and vulnerable populations.
- Encourage contactless payment.
- Public encouraged to wear masks and report store violations.

Phase 2: New COVID-19 cases have declined 75% from peak

Food Service

- Allow additional amounts of dining to reopen (up to 66% of seats with a minimum of 6 feet between groups and single dining groups of no more than 10 people.)
 - All staff are screened each shift before entering the facility for symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is immediately excluded.
 - Staff with direct customer contact wear cloth or other mask.
 - Customers are screened upon reservation and arrival as to whether anyone in the party is positive, has any symptoms, is under quarantine, or has been closely exposed.
 - No waiting lines (reservations strongly encouraged or required.)
 - No self-service salad bar or buffet.
 - Mandatory reporting of any positive staff and two or more employees with symptoms within a 48-hour period.
 - Monitoring of frequent handwashing and no bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods.
 - Thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces after each meal service.
 - Electronic payment only.
 - No bars or entertainment operations.
 - Public notified to report violations.

Food Stores

- All staff are screened each shift before entering the facility for symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is immediately excluded.
- Staff with direct customer contact wear cloth or other mask.
- Limit the number of people in facility to 50% of Fire Code occupancy and maintain a minimum of 6 feet between individuals.
- Prevent waiting lines by opening additional registers as needed.
- No self-service salad bar or buffet.
 - Allow employee served delis in grocery stores.
- Mandatory reporting of any positive staff and two or more employees with symptoms within a 48-hour period.
- Monitoring of frequent handwashing and no bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods.
- Thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces every hour.
- Specified hours for elderly and vulnerable populations.
- Encourage contactless payment.
- Public encouraged to wear masks and report store violations.

Phase 3: New COVID-19 cases have declined 90% from peak

- Allow full dining to reopen.
- Allow the return of buffets in all venues.
 - All staff are screened each shift before entering the facility for symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is immediately excluded.
 - Mandatory reporting of any positive staff and two or more employees with symptoms within a 48-hour period.
 - Monitoring of frequent handwashing and no bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods.
 - Thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces after each meal service.