

Phase Two Guidance Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance for Restaurants

During Phase Two, the public and businesses will be required to adopt new behaviors and rigorous safeguards to reduce risk for all. This guidance is intended for food establishments during Phase Two. If providing services, **the following measures should be implemented to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission amongst employees, patrons, and the community. For additional information, visit coronavirus.dc.gov/phasetwo.**

Please note that any individual experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or was recently exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, should not work in or visit a restaurant due to the risk of exposing others. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

Phase Two General Information for Restaurants

- Service is limited to outdoor service and indoor service up to 50% capacity to seated patrons only (including hotel restaurants), with tables placed so that patrons are at least 6 feet apart, or to carry-out service
- Bar areas where a bartender is present must remain closed to patrons for seating and standing. Bar areas where a bartender will not be present may seat patrons with proper social distancing and table style service. Establishments with multiple bar areas must designate each bar area as either for staff use for bartending or for patron seating. **No standing is permitted at the bar area.**
- Tables are still limited to 6 persons, preferably from the same household.
- Reservations are encouraged and customers should provide names and contact information and record time of arrival. **Dining records must be saved for at least 30 days.**

Employees and Patrons Should Practice Everyday Prevention Measures

- **Stay at home if you are sick** or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Stay at least 6 feet from other people when possible
- Employees must wear proper face coverings while working and wash hands frequently, including before and after using the restroom, before serving food and beverages, and after removing used dishware, glassware, utensils and napkins from table.
- Employees must wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Patrons must wear face coverings while not eating or drinking (e.g. while ordering food and prior to being served, and after completion of meal), and maintain 6 feet of distance from those not in your party.
- Perform frequent hand hygiene (with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
 - Key times to perform hand hygiene include
 - Before eating food,
 - After using the toilet,
 - Before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings,
 - Before and after work shifts and work breaks,
 - Before and after services to each patron,
 - After handling another person's belongings, and
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

Employer Considerations to Encourage Employee and Patron Safety

Facility Considerations

- Post signage stating that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted to enter the facility and that individuals must wear a mask or face covering.
- Hand sanitizer must be made easily accessible at the entrance of every establishment.
- Provide supplies to allow for good hand hygiene. Supplies include soap and water, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol (placed on every table, if supplies allow), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.
- Inform and remind third-party delivery drivers and any suppliers about social distancing, face covering and hand hygiene requirements.
- Buffets, salad bars and other communal serving areas are permitted if an employee serves the food items.
- The use of disposable paper menus is strongly encouraged. Disposable menus should be discarded after each patron use. If reusable menus are used, they should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Items from self-service areas such as drink stations, condiment stations, and utensil and napkin stations should be removed, and employees should instead provide these items directly to patrons. The use of single use items is strongly encouraged.

Staff Considerations

- Provide staff with appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g., masks, gloves) and cloth face coverings.
- Stagger shifts, start times, and break times as much as possible.
- Implement leave policies that are flexible and non-punitive, and allow sick employees to stay home. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.
- Educate employees about COVID-19. Refer to coronavirus.dc.gov for more information.
- **For additional information specific to restaurants**, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC)website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/business-employers/bars-restaurants.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/business-employers/bars-restaurants.html)

Avoid Close Contact and Reduce Touchpoints

- If possible, have a separate entrance and exit for the establishment to allow one-way flow of patrons.
- Design and implement a process to ensure patron separation while they wait to be seated (e.g., floor markings, outdoor distancing, or waiting in cars.) Do not allow patrons to congregate in waiting areas or bar areas.
- Prohibit activities that require patrons to cluster.
- When possible, employees must be spatially staggered to prevent congregating and to maintain 6 ft social distancing guidelines
- Hand-shaking and other person-to-person contact between employees or with customers is discouraged in the workplace
- Employees should avoid using other employee's phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment (e.g., pens, pencils, check holders, etc.)

Screening and Monitoring for Symptoms

- Perform screening (e.g., symptom questionnaires) of employees daily, prior to entering the business, over the phone or in person.
- Employees who report symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19 should not enter the business.
- Separate employees who become sick at work from other employees and customers. Send sick employees home immediately
- Maintain a daily record of individuals in the restaurant for at least 30 days.

Clean and Disinfect/Sanitation

- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched or used by employees (e.g., door handles, work stations, computers) at least every four to six hours, and shared objects and surfaces (e.g., ordering and payment terminals, cash registers, tables, countertops/bars, receipt trays) between uses.
- All table items must either be single use and disposed of after use, or cleaned and sanitized between uses/table seatings. This includes digital ordering screens, utensils, dinnerware, drinkware, tablecloths, and napkin and condiment containers (i.e., any items that may have been touched by customers).
- Tables and chairs must be cleaned and disinfected after each seating, and check presenters are to be cleaned and disinfected after every use. Ensure that cleaning or disinfecting product residues are not left on table surfaces.
- Restrooms must be cleaned and disinfected frequently and appropriately marked and monitored to ensure social distancing guidelines are followed. Ensure an adequate supply of soap and paper towels is present at all times.
- All food contact surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized at least every 2 hours. Cleaning procedures throughout the restaurant must be developed in advance of opening and shared with employees so that they can be properly trained.
- Verify that dishwashing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures and ensure adequate supplies of appropriate detergents and sanitizers.
- For more information about disinfectants that are effective against the virus that causes COVID-19, see the CDC website [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html)

Building Considerations

- If the building was closed for an extended period of time, remember to check HVAC systems and ensure all water systems are safe to use. For more information, see CDC's Guidance for Reopening Buildings after Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html).

Establish a Plan for COVID-19 Exposure

- Establish a plan in the event that an employee or patron is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Identify a point of contact at the establishment that an employee can notify if they test positive for COVID-19 and choose to disclose this information.
- If an employee chooses to report to the establishment that they are positive for COVID-19, the establishment should have a notification process to share the following with staff:
 - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - Referral to the Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://www.coronavirus.dc.gov)
 - Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov/testing](https://www.coronavirus.dc.gov/testing)
- If an employee notifies the establishment they tested positive for COVID-19 **AND** the employee had extensive contact with patrons/visitors **OR** if a patron/visitor notifies the establishment they tested positive for COVID-19, then the establishment should
 - notify DC Health by emailing coronavirus@dc.gov and food.safety@dc.gov with the following information:
 - "COVID-19 Consult" in the email subject line
 - Name and direct phone number of the best point of contact at the establishment for DC Health to return the call
 - Estimated number of patrons/visitors potentially exposed.
 - Short summary of incident/situation.

- An investigator from DC Health will follow-up within 24 hours to all appropriately submitted email notifications.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the outbreak evolves. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.