

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Reopening Retail Food during COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Please see ADHS' [Guidance for Restaurants/Food Establishments providing Dine-in Services](#) in addition to these FAQs.

Where do we direct complaints related to establishments operating in violation of the Governor's Orders or guidance documents (e.g. not adhering to physical distancing, tables not 6 feet apart, wait staff not wearing masks, etc.)?

If you believe a business is not adhering to an Executive Order, you can report the violation to your local police department's non-emergency line.

As a result of COVID-19, are kitchen staff (back of the house) required to wear masks and gloves during food preparation?

Food establishments should develop standards for the use of non-medical grade masks or cloth face coverings by employees when near other employees and customers. Gloves are not mandatory in all aspects of food preparation, but recommended. Gloves are not a substitute for proper handwashing or hand hygiene.

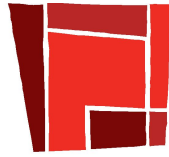
Per the [FDA Food Code](#), with limited exceptions, employees may not contact exposed, ready-to-eat foods with their bare hands and shall use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single-use gloves, or dispensing equipment (FDA 2017 Model Food Code Section 3-301.11).

Are masks or gloves recommended or required for inspection staff?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves, is recommended for inspection staff per [OSHA guidance](#) and [CDC guidance](#). Most inspectors are contacting facilities prior to their in-person visit. You may discuss PPE with them at that point or upon their arrival, before entering the facility. Inspectors shall adhere to the PPE requirements at your facility, or may choose to exceed them.

The Governor's guidance states "avoid instances where customers serve their own food." How does that apply to buffets? Are there specific measures that need to be in place?

The FDA recommends discontinuing self-service buffets, salad bars and beverage service stations. As an option, have food-service employees serve the food or drink to the customer. Consider individually portioning/wrapping food items in these areas. Customer self-service areas should be avoided, per the Governor's Guidance. Customers should be encouraged to maintain a six foot separation from each other while in line for service or check out.



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Who will be handling dining area complaints (e.g., not sanitizing my table, tablecloth, chairs, booths) even though this is only a recommendation on the Governor's list?

Food establishments may want to remove tablecloths to provide a hard table surface for proper disinfection. Restaurants should disinfect customer areas after each sitting with an [EPA-registered](#) disinfectant. Frequently disinfect surfaces that are repeatedly touched by employees or customers, such as door knobs, condiment containers, equipment handles, check-out counters. Please see EPA's [6 Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use](#).

Onsite Certified Manager classes and tests have been cancelled. Where can a person get a certified manager certificate?

All American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Certified Food Protection (CFP) Manager courses are listed [here](#). Some of these courses have found ways to allow participants to still obtain their certification without onsite classes and tests. An example method is taking courses online and taking the exam in your own home.

Are the restaurants limited to how many people can dine inside and how is this calculated?

The number of patrons within a facility shall be dependent on the size of the restaurant's seating area. Please calculate how many customers can be accommodated while adhering to the 6 feet or more of physical distancing between parties and limit according to that number.

How about nursing homes, assisted living, and other long-term care facilities? Who's overseeing those complaints if a dining room is filled with residents? Should they practice the same physical distancing with tables 6 feet apart?

ADHS developed recommendations for congregate meal sites, which are listed [here](#). These facilities should, to the extent possible, practice physical distancing in their dining setting. For more information, visit CDC's interim guidance for [Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Retirement Communities and Independent Living Facilities](#).

Are pastry cabinets with doors allowed in areas where the public can serve themselves with utensils or wax paper (e.g., donut case at a grocery store)?

Customer self-service areas should be avoided, per the Governor's Guidance. As an option, have food-service employees serve the food or drink to the customer. Consider individually portioning or wrapping food items in these areas.

Additional Resources:

- [Best Practices for Re-Opening Retail Food Establishments During the COVID-19 Pandemic – Food Safety Checklist](#) - FDA
- [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) - CDC
- [Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) - FDA