Interim Guidance for Restaurants and Bars

This guidance provides considerations for businesses in the food service industry (e.g., restaurants and bars) on ways to maintain healthy business operations and a safe and healthy work environment for employees, while reducing the risk of COVID-19 spread for both employees and customers. Employers should follow applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and CDC guidance for businesses to plan and respond to COVID-19. All decisions about implementing these recommendations should be made in collaboration with local health officials and other State and local authorities who can help assess the current level of mitigation needed based on levels of COVID-19 community transmission and the capacities of the local public health and healthcare systems.

(Re)Opening

- **In all Phases:**
  - Establish and continue communication with State and local authorities to determine current mitigation levels in your community.
  - Consider assigning vulnerable workers duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees (e.g., managing inventory rather than working as a cashier, managing administrative needs through telework).
  - Provide employees from higher transmission areas (earlier Phase areas) telework and other options as feasible to eliminate travel to workplaces in lower transmission (later Phase) areas and vice versa.
- **Phase 1:** Bars remain closed and restaurant service should remain limited to drive-through, curbside take out, or delivery with **strict** social distancing.
- **Phase 2:** Bars may open with limited capacity; restaurants may open dining rooms with limited seating capacity that allows for social distancing.
- **Phase 3:** Bars may open with increased standing room occupancy that allows for social distancing; restaurants may operate while maintaining social distancing.

Safety Actions

Promote healthy hygiene practices (Phases 1-3)

- Enforce hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and use of a cloth face covering by employees when near other employees and customers.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene practices for both employees and customers including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (perhaps on every table, if supplies allow), and tissues. Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering.

Intensify cleaning, disinfection and ventilation (Phases 1-3)

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (for example, door handles, work stations, cash registers) at least daily and shared objects (for example, payment terminals, tables, countertops/bars, receipt trays, condiment holders) between use. Use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2 and that are appropriate for the surface. Prior to wiping the surface, allow the disinfectant to sit for the necessary contact time recommended by the manufacturer. Train staff on proper cleaning procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.
- Make available individual disinfectant wipes in bathrooms, and post reminders not to flush these wipes but to dispose of them in the trash.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize food contact surfaces, food preparation surfaces, and beverage equipment after use.
- Avoid using or sharing items such as menus, condiments, and any other food. Instead, use disposable or digital menus, single serving condiments, and no-touch trash cans and doors.
- Use touchless payment options as much as possible, when available. Ask customers and employees to exchange cash or card payments by placing on a receipt tray or on the counter rather than by hand. Wipe any pens, counters, or hard surfaces between use or customer.
- Use disposable food service items (utensils, dishes). If disposable items are not feasible, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Employees should wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash and wash hands afterwards
- Avoid using food and beverage implements brought in by customers.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, other methods. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk to employees, children, or customers.

- Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.

Ensure social distancing

Phase 1

- Limit service to drive-through, delivery, or curb-side pick-up options only.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and to ensure that customers remain at least six feet apart in lines or ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while waiting to pick up food. Post signs to inform customers of food pickup protocols.
- Consider installing physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions at cash registers, or other food pickup areas where maintaining physical distance of six feet is difficult.
- Restrict the number of employees in shared spaces, including kitchens, break rooms, and offices to maintain at least a six-foot distance between people.
- Rotate or stagger shifts to limit the number of employees in the workplace at the same time.

Phase 2

- Provide drive-through, delivery, or curb-side pick-up options and prioritize outdoor seating as much as possible.
- Reduce occupancy and limit the size of parties dining in together to sizes that ensure that all customer parties remain at least six feet apart (e.g., all tables and bar stools six feet apart, marking tables/stools that are not for use) in order to protect staff and other guests.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signage on walls to ensure that customers remain at least six feet apart in lines or waiting for seating.
- Ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while waiting to be seated. If possible, use phone app technology to alert patrons when their table is ready to avoid touching and use of "buzzers."
- Consider options for dine-in customers to order ahead of time to limit the amount of time spent in the establishment
- Avoid offering any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets, salad bars, and drink stations.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions at cash registers, bars, host stands, and other areas where maintaining physical distance of six feet is difficult.
- Limit the number of employees in shared spaces, including kitchens, break rooms, and offices to maintain at least a six-foot distance between people.

Phase 3

- Provide drive-through, delivery, or curb-side pick-up options and prioritize outdoor seating as much as possible.
- Consider reducing occupancy and limiting the size of parties dining in together to sizes that ensure that all customer parties remain at least six feet apart (e.g., all tables and bar stools six feet apart, marking tables/stools that are not for use) in order to protect staff and other guests.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signage on walls to ensure that customers remain at least six feet apart in lines or waiting for seating.
- If possible, use phone app technology to alert patrons when their table is ready to avoid touching and use of "buzzers."
- Consider options for dine-in customers to order ahead of time to limit the amount of time spent in the establishment.
- Avoid offering any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets, salad bars, and drink stations.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions at cash registers, bars, host stands, and other areas where maintaining physical distance of six feet is difficult.

Train all staff (Phases 1-3)

- Train all employees in the above safety actions while maintaining social distancing and use of face coverings during training.

Monitoring and Preparing

Checking for signs and symptoms (Phases 1-3)

- Consider conducting daily health checks (e.g., temperature and symptom screening) of employees.
- If implementing health checks, conduct them safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Confidentiality should be respected. Employers may use examples of screening methods in CDC's General Business FAQs as a guide.
- Encourage staff who are sick to stay at home

Plan for when an employee becomes sick (Phases 1-3)

- Employees with symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) at work should immediately be sent home.
- Inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone sick to their home or to a healthcare facility.
- Notify local health officials, staff, and customers (if possible) immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or other applicable laws.
- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not sure them until after cleaning and disinfection. . Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- Advise sick staff members not to return until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.

Maintain healthy operations (Phases 1-3)

- Implement flexible sick leave and other flexible policies and practices, if feasible.
- Monitor absenteeism of employees and create a roster of trained back-up staff. Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees and customers should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Create and test communications for employees and customers for self-reporting of symptoms and notification of exposures and closures.

Closing

Phases 1-3

- Check State and local health department notices about transmission in the area daily and adjust operations accordingly.
- Be prepared to close for a few days if there is a case of COVID-19 in the establishment and for longer if cases increase in the local area.