COVID-19 Guidance for Restaurants, Bars and other Food Service Premises

The following guidance should be used by owners and operators of restaurants, bars and other food services premises, to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Owners and operators are responsible for ensuring that their restaurant, bar or other food service premises is in compliance with all applicable legislative requirements under provincial and municipal law, including all emergency orders made under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act and the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020. As every restaurant, bar or other food service premises will be different, it is the responsibility of owners/operators to review their own policies, procedures, and site-specific operations, while ensuring that the appropriate infection prevention and control measures are implemented and maintained. As well, food premises must comply at all times with O. Reg. 493/17: Food Premises made under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

More information about COVID-19 can be found in the Toronto Public Health (TPH) COVID-19 Fact Sheet.

Prohibition on Indoor and Outdoor Dining

- Restaurants, bars, food trucks, concession stands and other food or drink establishments may open only for the purpose of providing take-out, drive-through or delivery service O. Reg. 82/20.
- Nightclubs and strip clubs may open solely as food or drink establishments only for the purpose of providing take-out, drive-through or delivery service O. Reg. 82/20.
- Indoor dining is allowed only at food establishments in the following settings if the conditions set out in O. Reg. 82/20 and O. Reg. 263/20 are met:
  - Hospitals
  - Airports
  - Within a business or place where the only patrons permitted at the establishment are persons who perform work for the business or place in which the establishment is located.

Opening or Reopening a Food Premises

There is no requirement for restaurants, bars or other food service premises to be inspected by Toronto Public Health before opening/reopening. However, if you are opening a new restaurant, bar or other food service premises, you must notify Toronto Public Health before opening by phone at 416-338-7600 or by email at dinesafe@toronto.ca.
Measures for all Workplaces, Businesses and Organizations

Review the Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace to plan and implement protocols to keep staff and customers safe, including:

- **Staff attendance and operations**
- **Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette**
- **Health screening for staff and customers**
  - As per O. Reg. 82/20, staff must complete a health screening prior to their shift. Questions can be answered on paper, online or by asking people directly.
  - Post signs at entrances requesting customers to self-screen and explaining the conditions for entry.
  - Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, who has been in contact with a person with COVID-19, or has traveled outside of Canada in the last 14 days, should not enter the establishment.
- **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - As per O. Reg. 82/20, appropriate PPE that covers the eyes, nose and mouth must be worn if, while providing service in an indoor area, the person:
    - is required to come within two metres/six feet of another person who is not wearing a mask or face covering; and
    - is not separated by plexiglass or other impermeable barrier from a person described above.
- **Cleaning and disinfection**
  - Develop enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection policies and procedures.
  - Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces at least twice a day and more frequently as needed.
  - For cleaning and sanitizing food contract surfaces, equipment and utensils, follow standards prescribed in O. Reg. 493/17: Food Premises. The province has also provided additional COVID-19 guidance for food premises.
- **Managing COVID-19 in the workplace**
  - Employers must immediately notify Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 as soon as they become aware of two or more people who test positive for COVID-19 within a 14-day interval in connection with their workplace premises, as per Toronto Public Health Instructions for Workplaces.
  - In the event that a case of COVID-19 is reported in a staff member or customer, it is not necessary for the establishment to discard any food that they may have been in contact with.
  - See guidance document for more information.
Safety Plan

As per O. Reg. 82/20, operators must prepare and make available a safety plan, and the plan must:

- Describe measures/procedures that have been or will be implemented in the business, place, facility or establishment to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Include measures for screening, physical distancing, masks, cleaning, disinfecting and PPE.
- Be in writing and made available to any person for review, on request.
- Be posted in a visible place to come to the attention of those working or attending the location.

To further assist businesses in preparing a safety plan, Toronto Public Health has made available the following resources:

- COVID-19 Safety Plan Checklist
- Instructions for Completing the COVID-19 Safety Plan Checklist

Use of Masks and Face Coverings

- All staff and customers must wear a mask or face covering indoors, as per City of Toronto bylaw and O. Reg. 82/20.
  - Some exceptions apply, including children under the age of two, and people with medical conditions that make wearing a mask difficult.
- Masks or face coverings are strongly recommended outdoors when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- See Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace for more information.

Staff Training

- Staff should receive clear instructions on the mask policy, and understand who is exempted from wearing a mask. Proof of exemption by customers is not required.
- Educate staff on the proper use of masks/face coverings. They should change masks when moist or dirty, but in areas away from customers (e.g. lunch room, private office).
- More information on use of non-medical masks or face coverings can be found here.
- Discourage staff from gathering together in the lunchroom or common areas.
- Educate staff on hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette:
  - Wash hands frequently with liquid soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds, or use hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) if water and soap is not available.
  - Cover cough or sneeze with the elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash hands.
• Educate staff on the proper use of gloves. If staff use gloves, it is important to change them every hour, or more often, as necessary.
  o Hands should be washed and/or sanitized between changes.
  o Remove gloves when changing tasks.
  o When gloves are removed, new gloves must be used each time.
• Encourage staff to download the [COVID Alert app](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/coronavirus-covid-19/stop-spreading-covid/covid-alert-app.html) so they can be notified directly if they have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.

**Capacity Limits**
As per O. Reg. 82/20, operators shall limit the number of people in the place of business or facility so that:

• the members of the public are able to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person; and
• the total number of members of the public in the business or facility at any one time does not exceed:
  o **25 per cent capacity** of the particular room for discount and big box retailers.
    ➢ This can be determined by taking the total square metres of floor space accessible to the public, not including shelving and store fixtures, dividing that number by 16 and rounding the result down to the nearest whole number.
  o **50 per cent capacity** of the particular room for other stores that primarily sell food.
    ➢ This can be determined by taking the total square metres of floor space accessible to the public, not including shelving and store fixtures, dividing that number by 8 and rounding the result down to the nearest whole number.
• Operators that engage in retail sales to the public must post a sign in a location visible to the public (e.g. at entrances) that states the maximum capacity they are permitted to operate under.

**Entrances and Managing Lines**
As per O. Reg. 82/20, operators must ensure that customers lining up or congregating outside their establishment:

• Maintain at least two metres/six feet physical distancing from other groups of people, and
• Wear a mask or face covering, unless entitled to an exemption.

*The following are suggestions for achieving compliance with these requirements:*
• Use visual markers, stickers or pylons to encourage physical distancing while waiting outside.
• Position an employee at the entrance to control customer entry.
- Stagger customer entry to prevent crowding.
- Monitor the number of customers entering and leaving.
- Once the capacity limit is reached, allow one customer in for every customer that leaves.
- Make alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) available for use by the entrance.

**Physical Distancing**

As per O. Reg. 82/20, every person in the premises of a business or organization must maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person, with the following exceptions:
- where necessary to complete a transaction or to receive a service, if the member of the public wears a mask or face covering unless an exemption applies.
- when passing one another in a confined location, such as in a hallway or aisle, if the member of the public wears a mask or face covering (unless an exemption applies).

The following are suggestions for achieving compliance with these requirements:
- Remind customers and staff to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres (six feet) from those outside their household.
- Post physical distancing signs at all entrances, service counters, and cashiers.
- Place markers or circles on the ground so customers know where to stand when waiting or interacting with staff.
- Design a walking flow for the establishment (e.g. creating one-directional aisles with prominent signage and/or floor markings), where appropriate.
- Install plexiglass/barriers, if possible, where there will be close contact between staff and customers, at service counters and cashiers.
- Rearrange equipment and/or processes in the kitchen and other areas used by staff so that at least a two metre (six feet) distance can be achieved at all times.

**Purchases**

- Menus in the form of menu-boards, chalkboards, online from customers’ mobile devices, or single-use paper menus are preferred. Regular menus (i.e. reusable) must be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Encourage electronic payment by debit or credit card, and touchless payment, instead of pin pad use, where possible.
- Limit the handling of credit cards and loyalty cards, wherever possible.
Deliveries
• Implement contactless delivery practices where possible. Contactless deliveries allow staff to leave a delivery at a doorstep, move back to a distance of at least two metres (six feet), while verifying receipt of the delivery with the person getting the delivery.
• Encourage customers to complete their transactions electronically (e.g. pre-payment in an app or over the phone). This eliminates the need for close contact between staff and the person getting the delivery.
• Delivery staff should keep interactions brief, maintain physical distancing as much as possible, wear a mask or face covering, and sanitize their hands after each delivery.
• Avoid customer handling of mobile payment terminals and pens, where possible. Clean and disinfect these items if shared with a delivery recipient after each use.

Self-Service of Food or Beverage
• Buffet-style or self-service of ready-to-eat food are not permitted.
• Self-serve beverages (e.g. soda, coffee) are also not permitted.
• Staff may serve customers cafeteria style, provided all public health measures outlined in this document are adhered to (e.g. physical distancing, one-way flow, and plexiglass barriers).

Sale of Alcohol
• The person responsible for a business or place that is open and in which alcohol is sold or served under a licence or a special occasion permit shall ensure that:
  o Alcohol is sold to a patron for removal from the premises, and that it is removed from the premises by the patron, only between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. O. Reg. 86/20.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)
Increase the introduction and circulation of outdoor air by maximizing the outdoor air ratio of the HVAC system settings, or by opening windows and doors, where possible. Avoid recirculating air.
• Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk.
• Ensure the HVAC system(s) are properly maintained.
• Where provided, use the highest efficiency filters that are compatible with the HVAC system.
• Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.
• Rooms where indoor ceiling fans are used should have an upward airflow rotation.
• If portable fans are used, limit the blowing of air across people and surfaces by positioning them to provide an upward movement of air.
• For more information, review TPHs COVID-19: Transmission, Aerosols and Ventilation fact sheet.

Communication
• Provide information to customers about business operations (e.g. public health measures, advance order options, curbside pickup).
• Designate a contact person (e.g. supervisor) to respond to COVID-19 concerns from staff and customers.
• Print and post signs in highly visible areas, including at entrances, service counters, cashiers, and washrooms as a reminder for everyone to practice public health measures:
  o COVID-19: Posters & Graphics
  o COVID-19 Fact Sheet

Other Resources
COVID-19 Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace
COVID-19 Guidance for Employers on Managing COVID-19 in the Workplace
COVID-19 Guidance for Food Stores
COVID-19 Guidance for Farmers’, Fresh Food & Holiday Markets
Tip Sheet - Restaurant and Food Service: Guidance for Health and Safety (also available in: Arabic; Farsi; Gujarati; Korean; Punjabi; Simplified Chinese; Tagalog; Tamil; Traditional Chinese; & Urdu)
Restaurant and Food Services Health and Safety during COVID-19
Guidance on Health and Safety for Restaurant Servers, Cooks and Dishwashers during COVID-19

More Information
For more information, visit our website at toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.

References