

# Outdoor Dining Reference Guide for Restaurants and Food Establishments



As we continue to address the COVID-19 pandemic, **Somerset County Department of Health** is providing this food safety checklist to restaurants and other licensed food and beverage establishments who wish to offer outdoor dining.

This checklist addresses key COVID-19 prevention steps as announced by the New Jersey Department of Health on June 3, 2020.<sup>1</sup> This is not a comprehensive list, and all establishments are still required to follow existing food safety regulations.<sup>2</sup>

All restaurants wishing to operate outdoors must first receive written approval from their local health department.

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## Facility Operations

- Did you obtain all required municipal approvals and permits?

## Customer Seating

- Is seating limited to a maximum of 8 customers per table?
- Did you clearly mark tables and chairs that will not be used?
- Is seating arranged 6 feet apart?

## Social Distancing

- Do you have visual signs or markings to keep people 6 feet apart in dining areas, rest rooms, in line, while waiting, etc.?
- Have you installed a physical barrier or partition at cash registers, bars, host stands and places where keeping 6 feet apart is difficult?
- Have you trained employees on social distancing in shared spaces, including kitchens, break rooms, and offices?
- Do you have a policy to ensure 6 feet of physical distancing between workers and customers except when actively serving?

## Operation Changes

- Has your operation discontinued self-service (e.g. buffets, salad bars, customer operated drink and beverage stations)?
- Are self-service items that are touched a lot removed from use (e.g. condiments such as ketchup bottles and salt/pepper shakers, and reusable menus)?

## Cleaning Policies

- Do you have policies to disinfect customer tables, chairs, and shared items (such as menus, condiments, pens) after each use?
- Do you have a routine plan for frequent disinfection of high-touch areas (such as credit card machines, keypads, counters, door knobs)?
- Are all areas of the food establishment, including restrooms and waiting areas, properly cleaned, stocked, sanitized, or disinfected, as appropriate?
- Do you have sufficient stocks of cleaning and disinfecting supplies to accommodate ongoing cleaning and disinfection?
- Are staff properly trained on cleaning procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants?

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/6-3-20\\_ExecutiveDirectiveNo20-014\\_OutdoorDining.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/6-3-20_ExecutiveDirectiveNo20-014_OutdoorDining.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.state.nj.us/health/ceohs/documents/food-drug-safety/chapter24\\_effective\\_1207.pdf](https://www.state.nj.us/health/ceohs/documents/food-drug-safety/chapter24_effective_1207.pdf)

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## Handwashing and Hygiene Policies

- Do you require employees to wash their hands after removing their gloves and after directly handling used food service items?
- Have you trained and reminded employees of effective hand hygiene practices including washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing and after removing gloves?
- Are all the handwashing sinks accessible and fully stocked (e.g. soap, paper towels, hand wash signs, and trash bins)?
- Are you providing hand sanitizer stations (minimum 60% alcohol), as appropriate, in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene by employees to supplement handwashing?
- Are employees required to cover coughs and sneezes properly?

## Weather Policy

- Do you have a policy to transition to only takeout or delivery during bad weather?

## Employee Health

- Are you following CDC and New Jersey Department of Health guidance and practices for employee health checks/screenings?
- Will you require employees with symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) be sent home?
- Do you have a policy to provide employees with break time for repeated handwashing throughout the day?
- Have you provided employees with face coverings and gloves?
- Is there a plan to assure an adequate supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and/or cloth face coverings? Cloth face coverings should only be used if PPE is not required, and changed as needed if worn.

## Customer Policies

- Do you have a policy for customer social distancing, including wearing face coverings when away from their table or unable to social distance?
- Are you helping customers social distance by encouraging reservations, recommending waiting in cars, and alerting customers via calls/texts?
- Do you require a phone number when making reservations to facilitate contact tracing?
- Are you supplying a hand sanitizer station (minimum 60% alcohol), for customers' use?

## Signs

- Are signs posted to promote everyday protective measures to stop the spread of COVID-19?
  - No one with a fever or COVID-19 symptoms should enter
  - Everyone entering must wear a face covering
  - Everyone should practice social distancing and stay 6 feet apart
  - Handwashing / hand hygiene reminders