

FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

FOOD & LODGING | 600 East Boulevard Ave, Dept. 301 | Bismarck, ND 58505-0200 | health.nd.gov | 701-328-1291

PROTECTING YOUR EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS FROM CORONAVIRUS

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness. While **food has not been identified as a primary mode of transmission for COVID-19**, foodservice establishments could serve as a source of potential community spread. This document is meant to provide recommendations on steps that can be taken to protect employees and customers.

By Executive Order, effective at noon on March 20, 2020, through April 6, 2020, all restaurants, bars, breweries, cafes, food courts, self-service breakfast bars, salad bars, buffets, and similar on-site dining establishments in North Dakota are closed to on-sale/on-site patrons. Take-out, delivery, drive-through or off-sale services may continue. This executive order does not apply to grocery stores, gas stations, or convenience stores.

Food Establishment Employees, Nutrition Providers, and Volunteers

- ❖ Food workers should stay home if you feel sick
 - Stay home while sick and report your illness to your manager. Employees having symptoms of respiratory illness, fever (100.4°F [37.8°C] or greater), excessive coughing and sneezing, or other symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea, or jaundice) should be excluded from working with food or food-contact surfaces.
 - Stay home until free of symptoms for at least 24 hours without the use of medications (cough suppressant or fever reducers).
 - **For questions related to COVID-19, call the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) hotline at 1-866-207-2880 from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. 7 days a week. Individuals who need medical advice should contact their health care provider. If someone in the household has tested positive with COVID-19, keep the entire household at home.**

- ❖ Practice good personal hygiene every day
 - [Wash hands](#) often with the proper technique using soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with the inside of your elbow or with a tissue; then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.

Clean and Disinfect

Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface and follow the manufacturer's label instructions.

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Hard Surfaces (non-porous)

- Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect all surfaces, utensils, and equipment according to Food Code cleaning requirements with the cleaners typically used. Use disposable single-service articles where appropriate.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (menus, digital ordering systems, condiment containers, salt and pepper shakers, light switches, door handles, faucets, railings, desks, tables, countertops, chairs, sinks, faucets, and bathrooms) more frequently.
 - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
 - For disinfection, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions can be prepared by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water (1,000 ppm).
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date.
- Never mix bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.**
- Cleaning staff should use disposable gloves when cleaning high touch surfaces and ensure gloves are changed frequently, especially when changing cleaning locations to avoid the additional spread of any contamination. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves and in between glove changes.

Soft Surfaces (porous)

- Launder wiping cloths, aprons, towels, etc., using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely
- Use products with [EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims](#) that are suitable for porous surfaces
- Do not shake dirty laundry to minimize the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air.
- Items that have been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other items.
- Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry at least weekly following the cleaning guidance above.
- Store clean laundry/linens away from any soiled items that have not yet been laundered or cleaned.

Plan, Prepare, Communicate, and Take Additional Precautions

- Plan and prepare for essential business functions during times of increased employee absences.
 - How will you communicate with employees and patrons?
- Implement flexible staff attendance and sick-leave policies (if possible).

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- Ensure adequate supply and convenient placement of alcohol-based hand sanitizers for use by customers inside food establishment.
- Consider discontinuing buffet-style, salad bars, or other customer self-service done within the establishment where there is evidence of community-wide spread.
- Pre-portion and individually package items for customer self-service such as condiments, salt, and pepper.
- Promote online transactions if possible, drive-thru, pickup, or delivery options.
- Cancel or postpone events that consist of 10 people or more.
- Place seating and tables a minimum of 6 feet apart.

Food Delivery and Additional Sanitation Procedures

- Employees or volunteers delivering food who are sick should stay home. Equip drivers with a sanitation kit for use before, during, after, and in-between deliveries. Sanitation Tool Kit: Hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, one-time-use gloves*, Kleenex, a receptacle for garbage (used Kleenex, gloves, etc.)
- Call ahead to announce the delivery time if possible.
- Drop the meal off on the doorstep, ring the doorbell/knock, watch and wait in the delivery vehicle until the customer receives the food.
- Gloves may be worn if drivers are concerned about direct contact with symptomatic patrons and customers. If worn, remove the gloves after use, discard in the receptacle provided, and immediately follow with hand sanitizer.

Ensure Continuity of Meal Programs (Meals on Wheels, Senior Citizen Centers, School Meals, Nutrition Providers, Food Banks, Soup Kitchens, and other Community-based Meal Programs).

- **People in need of meals in your community can call 1.855.462.5465. State agencies are working as one to ensure everyone has access to healthy meals.**
- Consult with local health officials to determine strategies for modifying foodservice offerings to the community.
 - Check-in with other meal providers in your community – how can you partner?
 - Develop emergency plans on response to increased absenteeism of staff and volunteers, changes to operations and meal services, resources that will be necessary to keep essential business operations functioning, and how to communicate with team members and volunteers.
- Consider ways to distribute food to patrons, particularly those who may be isolated due to possible exposure or symptoms.
 - Who can help deliver foods in your community – law enforcement, mail delivery services, other?

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- Consider how existing dining services should be scaled back or adapted.
 - Congregate facilities servicing people can stagger mealtimes with cleaning in between services or serve meals in rooms or classrooms
 - A religious or community-based organization may close some or all meal services to discourage people from gathering in group settings and use grab-n-go or home delivery options instead.
- Avoid food distribution in settings where people might gather in a group or crowd of 10 or more people. Consider options such as “grab-and-go” bagged lunches or meal delivery.
 - How will you communicate with and notify patrons when changing congregate meal settings to home-delivery services?
- Ensure all volunteers and staff supporting food services receive the necessary training to protect themselves and those they serve from the spread of COVID-19.

Stay informed and updated on this rapidly changing situation using reliable information sources. For questions regarding COVID-19, contact the NDDoH hotline at 1-866-207-2880 from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. 7 days a week.

People in need of meals in your community can call 1.855.462.5465.

Additional Resources

- [NDDoH Coronavirus](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
 - [CDC Guidance on Workplaces, Homes, Schools and Commercial Establishments](#)
 - [CDC Guidance Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Food and Drug Administration Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Association of Food and Drug Officials Coronavirus Resource Page](#)
- [National Restaurant Association Coronavirus Information and Resources](#)
- schoolnutrition.org/learning-center/emergency-planning/coronavirus-resources/