



MONTGOMERY COUNTY HEALTH ORDER

COVID-19

Guidance for Food Service Establishments

Per Montgomery County Executive Order 122-20 AM, effective November 10, 2020, businesses will be required to adopt new behaviors and rigorous safeguards to reduce the risk of COVID-19 for all. This guidance is intended for food establishments until amended or until the state of emergency is lifted.



If providing services, food service establishment should implement the following measures to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among employees, patrons, and the community. For additional information, visit the County's reopening website at:

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/reopening/requirements/foodservice.html

Please note that any individual experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or who was recently exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, should not work or visit a food service establishment due to the risk of exposing others. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

General Information for Food Service Establishments

- Service is limited to outdoor and indoor service up to 25% capacity to seated patrons only (including hotel restaurants), with tables placed to ensure parties are seated at least six feet away from each other, or to carryout service.
- Customers seated at the bar area must comply with appropriate social distancing guidelines of at least six feet, except for households or a group seated together. **Standing in a bar area is not permitted.**
- Tables remain limited to six persons, preferably from the same household.
- Reservations are encouraged and food service establishments must maintain a daily record of all indoor and outdoor dining patrons to assist with contact tracing. **Daily records or logs** should include date, time and contact information (phone or email) for each patron or at least one member of the party. **Dining records must be saved for at least 30 days. Refusal by patrons to provide accurate and legible information will result in denial of service.**

The daily record requirement applies to all facilities providing any seating for patrons to consume food on premises. Prior to service all customers intending to consume food on premises must provide the required information.

Staff and Patrons Should Practice Everyday Prevention Measures

- **Stay at home if you are sick** or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Stay at least 6 feet from other people when possible.
- Employees must wear proper face coverings while working and wash hands frequently, including before and after using the restroom, before serving food and beverages, and after removing used dishware, glassware, utensils and napkins from table.
- Employees must wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Patrons must wear face coverings while not eating or drinking (e.g. while ordering food and prior to being served, and after completion of meal), and maintain 6 feet of distance from those not in your party.
- Perform frequent hand hygiene (with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
 - Key times to perform hand hygiene include:
 - Before eating food
 - After using the toilet
 - Before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings
 - Before and after work shifts and work breaks
 - Before and after services to each patron
 - After handling another person's belongings
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

Employer Considerations to Encourage Employee and Patron Safety

Facility Considerations

- Post signage stating that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted to enter the facility and that individuals must wear a mask or face covering.
- Hand sanitizer must be made easily accessible at the entrance of every establishment.
- Provide supplies to allow for good hand hygiene. Supplies include soap and water, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.
- Inform and remind third-party delivery drivers and any suppliers about social distancing, face covering and hand hygiene requirements.
- The use of disposable paper menus is strongly encouraged. Disposable menus should be discarded after each patron use. If reusable menus are used, they should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Items from self-service areas such as drink stations, condiment stations, and utensil and napkin stations should be removed, and employees should instead provide these items directly to patrons. The use of single use items is strongly encouraged.

Staff Considerations

- Provide staff with appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g., masks, gloves) and cloth face coverings.
- Stagger shifts, start times, and break times as much as possible.
- Implement leave policies that are flexible and non-punitive and allow sick employees to stay home. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.
- Educate employees about COVID-19. Visit the County's COVID-19 website for more information: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COVID19

For additional information specific to restaurants, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/business-employers/bars-restaurants.html

Avoid Close Contact and Reduce Touchpoints

- If possible, have a separate entrance and exit for the establishment to allow one-way flow of patrons.
- Design and implement a process to ensure patron separation while they wait to be seated (e.g., floor markings, outdoor distancing, or waiting in cars.) Do not allow patrons to congregate in waiting areas or bar areas.
- Prohibit activities that require patrons to cluster.
- When possible, employees must be spatially staggered to prevent congregating and to maintain six feet social distancing guidelines.
- Hand-shaking and other person-to-person contact between employees or with customers is discouraged in the workplace.
- Employees should avoid using other employee's phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment (e.g., pens, pencils, check holders, etc.).

Screening and Monitoring for Symptoms

- Perform screening (e.g., symptom questionnaires) of employees daily, prior to entering the business, over the phone or in person.
- Employees who report symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19 should not enter the business.
- Separate employees who become sick at work from other employees and customers. Send sick employees home immediately.
- Maintain a daily record of individuals in the food service establishment for at least 30 days.

Clean and Disinfect/Sanitation

- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched or used by employees (e.g., door handles, work stations, computers) at least every four to six hours, and shared objects and surfaces (e.g., ordering and payment terminals, cash registers, tables, countertops/bars, receipt trays) between uses.
- All table items must either be single use and disposed of after use or cleaned and sanitized between uses/table seatings. This includes digital ordering screens, utensils, dinnerware, drinkware, tablecloths, and napkin and condiment containers (i.e., any items that may have been touched by customers).
- Tables and chairs must be cleaned and disinfected after each seating, and check presenters are to be cleaned and disinfected after every use. Ensure that cleaning or disinfecting product residues are not left on table surfaces.
- Restrooms must be cleaned and disinfected frequently and appropriately marked and monitored to ensure social distancing guidelines are followed. Ensure an adequate supply of soap and paper towels are present at all times.
- All food contact surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized at least every two hours. Cleaning procedures throughout the food service establishment must be developed in advance of opening and shared with employees so that they can be properly trained.
- Verify that dishwashing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures and ensure adequate supplies of appropriate detergents and sanitizers.

For more information about disinfectants that are effective against the virus that causes COVID-19, see the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html

Building Considerations

If the building was closed for an extended period of time, remember to check HVAC systems and ensure all water systems are safe to use. For more information, see the CDC's guidance for reopening buildings at:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html

Establish a Plan for COVID-19 Exposure

- Establish a plan in the event that an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Identify a point of contact at the establishment that an employee can notify if they test positive for COVID-19 and choose to disclose this information.
- If an employee chooses to report to the establishment that they are positive for COVID-19, the establishment should have a notification process to share the following with staff:
 - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Find information on the CDC's website at:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov
 - Provide information on COVID-19 testing options in Montgomery County, available at:
www.MoCoCOVIDTesting.org
- If an employee notifies the establishment they tested positive for COVID-19 AND the employee had extensive contact with patrons/visitors OR if a patron/visitor notifies the establishment they tested positive for COVID-19, then the establishment should:
 - Notify the Montgomery County Department of Health Disease Control at 240-777-1755. Be ready to provide the name and direct phone number of the best point of contact at the establishment, as well as:
 - Estimated number of patrons/visitors potentially exposed
 - Short summary of incident/situation
 - An investigator from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services will follow up to all appropriately submitted notifications.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves. Please visit the County's at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COVID19 regularly for the most current information.



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