

ALERT: Stay up to date on Maine's COVID-19 Response

COVID19 Prevention Checklist Industry Guidance

Last updated: *May 27, 2020*

The State of Maine has adopted a staged approach, supported by science, public health expertise, and industry collaboration, to allow Maine businesses to safely open when the time is right. The plan is available at www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine (<http://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine>).

This is one of many industry guidance documents that the State is preparing for businesses so they can be prepared to meet health guidelines and reopen safely. Please make sure you pair this document with the general guidance document that applies to all industries, which is available on [maine.gov/decd](https://www.maine.gov/decd) (<https://www.maine.gov/decd>).

Please note: This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available.

Phase 2: Restaurants

The following restaurant activities are permitted by the checklist standards below:

- Curbside pickup and delivery for all restaurants in all counties.
- Dine-in and outdoor service for all restaurants in Aroostook, Piscataquis, Washington, Hancock, Somerset, Franklin, Oxford, Kennebec, Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, and Sagadahoc counties as of May 18.
- Dine-in and outdoor service for all restaurants in Penobscot County as of June 1.
- Outdoor service for all restaurants in York, Cumberland and Androscoggin counties as of June 1. [Dine-in service is not permitted at this time, per latest public health guidance \(https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/news/mills-administration-announces-update-restarting-maines-economy-plan-2020-05-27\)](https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/news/mills-administration-announces-update-restarting-maines-economy-plan-2020-05-27).

Employees

- Require employees to wear cloth face coverings and practice good hand hygiene. It is acceptable for kitchen staff to wear face shields in lieu of masks when the kitchen or weather is warm. (Updated 5/20/20)
- Good hand hygiene prevents spread of disease. The best hand hygiene is frequent handwashing. Remind employees to practice good hand hygiene with frequent handwashing and hand sanitizing especially between contact with customers and customer items.
- Gloves are not a replacement for good hygiene. If you wear gloves, change them frequently and wash between customers and activities.
- Hand sanitizer may not be used in place of handwashing for food production.
- Where possible, stagger employee shifts and meal breaks to avoid crowding in common work areas.
- Ensure employees stay 6 feet apart whenever practical.
- Adjust seating in break rooms and other common areas to reflect physical distancing practices.
- Prohibit gatherings or meetings of employees of 10 or more during working hours.
- Permit employees to take breaks and lunch outside, or in such other areas where physical distancing is attainable.
- Do not allow employee food or drink in food service areas.
- Limit interaction between employees and outside visitors or delivery drivers; implement touchless receiving practices if possible.
- Adjust training and new employee orientation to limit number of people involved and allow for 6 foot spacing; use virtual/video/audio training when possible.
- Limit sharing of handheld equipment, phones, desks, workstations, and other tools and equipment between employees to the extent possible.
- Provide employee training for:
 - physical distancing guidelines and expectations
 - monitoring personal health
 - proper wear, removal, disposal of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - laundering of face coverings and uniforms as listed below
 - cleaning protocols as listed below
 - how to monitor personal health and body temperature at home
 - guidance on how to launder cloth face coverings and uniforms: [see CDC, Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility, How to Disinfect: Laundry \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)
 - cleaning protocol, including how to safely and effectively use cleaning supplies.
- Consider employee training in safe de-escalation techniques.
- Entertainment personnel should follow the same physical distancing and cloth face covering guidelines as other employees.

Customers

- Inform your customers of your COVID policies and procedures in advance, if possible.
- Place signage at entrances and throughout the store alerting customers to COVID policies, especially to maintain 6 feet physical distance to the extent possible.
- Consistent with Executive Order 49 FY 19/20, customers should wear cloth face coverings when in a food service facility where social distancing is difficult (e.g., waiting in line for pickup, entering or exiting, walking to the restrooms). Customers do not need to wear face coverings when seated at the table.
- Use reservations with call ahead or online as a best practice.
- Establishments may call, use a text alert or intercom system to alert guests that their table is ready. Only one member of a party may wait inside in the waiting area and must remain at least 6 feet apart.
- Avoid crowding at restaurant entrance and maintain physical distancing in any waiting line.
- Maintain physical distancing protocols during guest check-in and seating.
- Communicate to customers that they should not come to the restaurant if they have a fever or cough.
- Consider offering exclusive early hours to seniors and other high-risk individuals.
- Consider adjusting store hours of operation, as necessary, to support social distancing efforts by limiting number of customers at one time.
- Minimize customer and staff interactions by assigning wait staff to 'areas' and tables.
- If possible, keep staff work groups to same days/shifts to minimize staff exposures.
- For contact tracing purposes, maintain records of customers, including one customer name and contact information per party and the server of the table, for at least 21 days. This does not apply to counter- and window-service establishments without wait staff. (Updated 5/27/20)
- Limit restroom occupancy for group restrooms to incorporate physical distancing and avoid formation of waiting lines outside of restrooms.
- Menus should be laminated or plastic covered and sanitized after each use, or single use paper.
- Continue take out, curbside and delivery with beer, wine and cocktails.
- Maximum group party size of eight people.
- Dining room tables should be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- The total number of people any one time should be no more than 50 people per room and each party must be 6 feet apart from other parties. This also applies to outdoor seating areas. Have a back-up plan for outdoor seating that adheres to physical distance requirements in case of inclement weather.
- Bar or counter service within restaurant establishments must follow physical distance guidelines. Provide physical barriers to protect customers and wait staff such as partitions or plexiglass barriers or face coverings plus face shields for staff if there is not 6 feet of distance between customers and counter staff.

- Establishments where counter service is combined with liquor service must also take measures to ensure customers do not congregate at the counter.
- Bar areas within restaurants must close at the same time the kitchen closes for dining patrons.
- Where practical, especially in booth seating, physical barriers are acceptable.
- Use EPA-approved cleaning and disinfectant products to wipe down dining room tables and chairs after each party.
- Provide only single use condiments at this time.
- Suspend salad bars buffets at this time.
- Minimize other self-service areas such as drink stations. To the extent possible, use contact-less dispensers to minimize hand touching. Replace multi-use condiments with single-serve packets. Other suggestions to minimize multi-touch surfaces include providing single-wrap utensils, straws, and lids provided at any take-out or self-seating point of sale. Self-service areas require frequent cleaning and disinfection.
- Allow expanded seasonal outdoor dining, with distancing protocols, in parking lots, sidewalks and expanded patios, etc.
- Use disposable napkins and table covers instead of cloth linens. If cloth linens are used, change between customers.
- Children need to remain seated with their party. No play areas or shared toys; single use crayons only.

Operations

- Consider ways to maximize air flow, if practical, to increase fresh air circulation (e.g., opening screened windows, or doors).
- Widen high-traffic areas to the extent possible.
- Note that staff or customer use of elevators or escalators will require regular attention to physical distance guidelines and frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces.
- Minimize shared touch surfaces such as kiosks, tablets, pens, credit cards, receipts and keys.
- Establish protocols for regular disinfection and handling of received material shipments and inventoried materials.
- Establish protocols for handling and processing shipping and receipts (including disinfection).
- Advise contractors, drivers, and vendors that they are required by Executive Order #49 to wear cloth face coverings while on the premises.
- Notify vendors of re-opening, and any revised protocol as it relates to store entry, deliveries, paperwork, etc.
- Consider implementing measures to ensure vendor safety, including:
 - Disabling/suspending access (e.g., suspending all non-employee delivery drivers from entering restaurant).
 - Transitioning to contactless signatures/e-signatures for deliveries.
 - Where practical, adjusting store delivery times to spread out deliveries.
- Request that vendors direct their employees to follow all social distancing guidelines and health directives issued by the applicable public authorities.

- Require regular and frequent sanitization of high-touch areas like restrooms, handrails, doors, PIN pads, and common areas that are accessible to staff, customers, and suppliers.
- Ensure operating hours allow downtime between shifts for thorough cleaning.
- Provide sanitization materials, such as sanitizing wipes, to employees to clean handhelds/wearables or other work tools and equipment before/after use.
- Consider providing cleaning “kits” including disinfectant wipes or sprays, disposable gloves, paper towels, cloth face coverings, hand sanitizer and other cleaning supplies that are readily accessible throughout the restaurant for areas that will be cleaned periodically throughout the day.
- Note the focus areas of cleaning include:
 - Door and drawer handles
 - Light and other power switches (consider signage to keep lights on at all times, or utilizing exiting motion sensor capabilities)
 - Shared tools
 - Chairs, tables, and benches
 - Refrigerators, microwave, and other frequently touched objects and surfaces in service areas
 - Time clocks
 - Entry way
 - Cash register, including touch screens, keyboards, mouse
 - PIN Pads (touch screen, keypad, and pen)
 - Restrooms
 - Toilet bowl, toilet paper holder, and flush lever
 - Sinks and faucets
 - Paper towel holders and/or air dryers
 - Diaper-changing stations
- Utensils and dishes used by customers should be treated as potentially contaminated and should be handled carefully. Wash hands after busing tables and handling used tableware.
- Note that vending machines are not recommended at this time due to the challenge of keeping surfaces clean.
- Provide hand sanitizer for customers and employee use, including restaurant entrance.

Sales

- Promote “Contactless” payment options:
 - On-line shopping

- Contactless payment options (e.g., RFID credit and debit cards, Apple Pay, Google Pay, etc.)
- Self-checkout
- Pickup and delivery services
- Wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) after handling cash.
- Consider increasing pickup hours to serve more online customers.
- Consider adding physical barriers such as partitions or plexiglass barriers at registers.
- Restaurants vary significantly in terms of size, models, such as wait service, self-service, counter and window service, take-out, as well as types of seating arrangements. In all cases, take appropriate steps to minimize risk to customers and employees through effective physical distancing, attention to hand hygiene, and facial coverings.

Addendum: Additional Considerations for Outdoor Service (Updated 5/27/20)

This addendum summarizes public health considerations from Maine CDC's Health Inspection Program (HIP) regarding restaurants in Maine moving toward outdoor dining operations.

Considerations when Setting up Outside Dining Areas:

- Provide at least 6ft of physical distance among tables.
- Follow Maine Food Code requirements for food safety and protection from outside elements.
- If restaurants prohibit or discourage patrons from going inside, restaurants must provide handwashing stations outdoors.
- If restaurants prohibit or discourage patrons from going inside, provide portable toilets per Internal Plumbing Code, as needed. Restaurants must also ensure that a contract is in place to maintain emptying and cleanliness of such facilities.
- For establishments on private septic systems, remain within allowed seating capacity on HIP eating place license. This will avoid having to review septic system capacity. If on municipal sewer, this is not an issue. If an owner wishes to increase capacity beyond its current license, they should contact HIP.
- Take necessary measures to prevent odor, insect, rodent, road dust and other nuisance conditions.
- Provide adequate lighting for outside dining areas. Additional electrical system and equipment may be needed for service.
- Consider municipal safety issues: use of sidewalks, parking lots, zoning, street lighting, and installation of barriers to protect customers.
- Consider the accessibility of refuse containers and frequency of emptying of refuse.
- Clean and disinfect tables before establishment opens each day to eliminate contaminants that may have settled on surfaces. Continue with normal cleaning procedures in between uses.
- Must be authorized by municipality and BABLO (if alcohol being served) for new outside seating areas.
- Provide signs stating alcoholic beverages must stay in designated areas.

- Plan for inclement weather - set up fire rated tents.
- Review location for tripping hazards-cobblestones, tree limbs, roots, uneven pavement, etc.

Unacceptable Outdoor Dining Activities:

- Buffet events that would result in people being close together in lines without the ability to establish physical distancing and without sneeze guards on serving tables.
- Outdoor concerts or other events that would encourage congregation of people in small space within the outdoor dining area (i.e., dancing). This does not preclude musical entertainment if appropriate physical distancing can be maintained.

COVID-19 Prevention Form

In order to open, businesses must commit to complying with requirements of these checklists by

filling out this short online form (<https://appengine.egov.com/apps/me/covidpreventionform>) . Please note that religious organizations and licensed health care providers are not required to use this form.

If you have questions, please contact us at business.answers@maine.gov (<mailto:business.answers@maine.gov>) or [1-800-872-3838](tel:1-800-872-3838) (<tel:1-800-872-3838>).

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