



**COUNTY OF NEVADA  
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## COVID-19 Restaurant Operations UPDATE

### Guidance from California Department of Public Health – Food and Drug Branch

March 30, 2020

These recommendations are based on the release of substantial guidance from the California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) Food and Drug Branch March 27, 2020, updated guidance.

**Intended audience (including but not limited to):** all restaurants, and other food service operations.

Below are several frequently asked questions, specific to food facility operations related to drive-through windows, food deliveries, and self-service buffets and salad bars and the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

#### Q. How do I handle self-service food buffets such as salad bars in a retail setting related to COVID-19?

1. Nevada County restaurants should be closed to all in-restaurant dining. As such, food buffets or self-service hot and cold food lines should be placed out of service until notified by our Department. Again, there is no current evidence to support the transmission of COVID-19 associated with food or food packaging. Hot food and cold food self-service lines in Grocery Stores or Markets should also be closed down and said services transferred to behind the counter deli staff.
2. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or possibly eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. The coronavirus is mostly spread from one person to another through respiratory droplets. **It is always critical to follow the 4 key steps of food safety**—clean, separate, cook, and chill—to prevent foodborne illness.
3. As an extra precaution to help avoid the transmission of COVID-19 through surface contact, we recommend frequent washing and sanitizing of all food contact surfaces and utensils. Food-service workers also must practice frequent hand washing and glove changes before and after preparing food. Include frequent cleaning and sanitizing of counters and condiment containers. Consumers should wash their hands after using serving utensils.
4. In communities with sustained transmission of COVID-19, state and local health authorities have implemented social-distancing measures which discourage or prohibit dining in congregate settings.
5. Unlike foodborne gastrointestinal (GI) viruses like norovirus and hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a virus that causes respiratory illness. Foodborne exposure to this virus is not known to be a route of transmission.

**Q. What are methods delivery personnel conduct safe food/meal deliveries or for restaurant staff facilitating customer pick up or to go operations?**

1. Food facility workers should practice hand washing and glove policies to protect food while preparing, wrapping or packing for pickup.
2. Delivery personnel should refrain from collecting utensils and food condiments for orders. All food condiments, paper goods, and utensil for the food delivery order should be packed and contained within the delivery packaging.
3. Delivery personnel need to maintain safe handling practices while delivering food/meal orders.
4. Curbside pickup: restaurant staff should place the food in the customer's car rear seat or trunk to maintain the safe distancing.
5. Delivery vehicle should be kept clean and free of clutter.
6. Conduct frequent hand washing and sanitation practices – hands should be washed at minimum just prior to order pick up. A hand sanitizer can be used when hand washing facilities are not available while conducting the delivery.
7. Maintain social distancing by notifying client food is being delivered on doorstep.
8. Utilize pre/non-contact payment methods through available apps. Avoid personal contact through the transfer of cash/money if possible.

**AS A REMINDER:** Staff with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have indicated that person-to-person spread is the primary transmission method for coronavirus. Currently, we are not aware of any data that indicates the virus that causes COVID-19 can be transmitted through the ingestion of food.

**California Retail Food Code (Cal Code) sections that may be useful in reference to the Coronavirus COVID-19 and food facilities are as follows:**

1. Restrict ill food workers and emphasis that employee should stay home if sick. Cal Code, Chapter 3, Article 3 - Employee Health.
2. Implement strict hand hygiene practices by all employees. Cal Code, Chapter 3, Article 4 – Handwashing.
3. Perform routine cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces. Cal Code, Chapter 5 – Cleaning and Sanitizing of Equipment and Utensils.

**If a food facility reports that a food worker was sent home ill or has a concern that an ill patron visited their food facility, please contact our Department and provide all of the information surrounding the concern and possible ill patron/customer. Our Department will work with our Public Health Department to determine the risk and appropriate response for the incident.**

The Nevada County Environmental Health Department is here to support you and to answer any questions or concerns that you may have regarding your business or event operations. Please reach out to our department via email: [Env.Health@co.nevada.ca.us](mailto:Env.Health@co.nevada.ca.us) or via telephone (530) 265-1222 option #3. An EH staff member will return your email or phone call as quickly as possible.

## RESOURCES

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDPH <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>

FDA: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>

County of Nevada: <https://www.mynevadacounty.com/Coronavirus>