

Denver Retail Food Establishments Guidance, Re: COVID-19

On March 16, 2020, both the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (“Denver”) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (“the State”) issued similar orders restricting access to certain facilities to minimize the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). These orders impact retail food establishments.

To the extent the State order imposes more restrictive prohibitions than the Denver order, the State order preempts the Denver order. To the extent the Denver order imposes more restrictive prohibitions than the State order or where the State order is silent, the Denver order adds an additional layer of prohibitions.

Who can serve food in Denver?

Only those establishments that are licensed and approved to prepare and sell food, and those that can provide it directly to customers via the allowed activities below may serve food to the public under these orders:

Allowed activities	Prohibited activities
Delivery service, including room service in hotels	Sit-down on-site dining, including patios and outdoor seating areas
Takeout or carryout service, including sealed alcohol, packaged to-go for off-site consumption.	Dine-in restaurants or cafes located inside grocery stores or inside hotels serving food for onsite consumption
Drive-up service	Facilities that were not previously approved or licensed to serve food
Drive-through service	Alcoholic drink service for onsite consumption, including serving alcohol to customers while they wait for their food order. Only sealed alcohol, packaged to-go for off-site consumption may be sold.
Food trucks and kiosks with no on-site dining	Unlicensed pop-up food stands

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What can retail food establishments do to maintain safe operations?

The best practices for retail food establishments are **continuous and diligent implementation of the elements of the food code that help prevent illness**. Additional steps include paying special attention to the following areas in your daily operations.

Employee Health

Employee health should be evaluated and monitored before and during each employee's shift. Connect with staff often (before each shift, during the shift, and at end of shift) to monitor their health status and the health of anyone with whom they may be in close contact (family members, roommates, etc.).

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If a family member or close contact is confirmed to have COVID-19 or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the employee shall closely monitor themselves for symptoms. If symptoms develop, the employee should notify their supervisor and exclude themselves from work.

What symptoms to look for:

<u>COVID-19 Specific</u>	<u>Other symptoms for exclusion</u>
Fever (100.4°F or higher)	Vomiting
Cough	Diarrhea
Shortness of breath	Jaundice (yellowing of skin, eyes, nails)

If an employee is showing any of the symptoms above, they shall be excluded from work until all of the following are met:

<u>COVID-19 Specific</u>	<u>Other symptoms for exclusion</u>
They have had no fever for at least 72 hours (3 full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)	They have had no episodes of vomiting and/or diarrhea in at least 24 hours
Other symptoms have improved (cough and shortness of breath)	Other symptoms have improved (fatigue, nausea, stomach cramping, sore throat with a fever, etc.)
At least 7 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared	They have not been jaundiced for more than 7 days

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Hand washing practices required for food preparation shall be diligently followed by staff, including ensuring hand washing sinks are accessible, have hot water measuring at least 100°F, and stocked with soap and single-use paper towels during operation. A proper hand wash requires an employee to vigorously rub their hands together, paying attention to their fingers, tops of hands, wrists and nails, using soap for 20 seconds before rinsing and drying with a single-use paper towel.

In addition:

- To reinforce heightened hygienic practices, encourage peer observation (watch and coach teammates) and supervisor oversight (attention to techniques and frequency) to ensure staff are washing hands frequently and correctly.
- Guide staff to cough or sneeze into their sleeved arm or cover their nose and mouth with a tissue. Throw away the tissue after they use it and instruct them to correctly wash hands.
- Ensure staff do NOT share cups and eating utensils with others. Employees should also not share cigarettes or any other smoking devices.
- Ensure that staff avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Cleaning and disinfecting

- During routine business hours, thoroughly clean and disinfect all frequently touched objects often within the dining and customer areas (ex: door knobs, cabinet handles, handrails, light switches, kitchen counters, waiting areas, dining room tables).
- Regular cleaning and disinfection products can be used. Pre-mixed, commonly used products that are effective include PURELL Foodservice Surface Sanitizer, Clorox Disinfecting Wipes, Lysol Disinfectant Spray, and Oxivir. For an additional list of recommended disinfection products visit: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Clean and disinfect the entire facility, including restrooms, waiting areas, break areas for employees, kitchen, etc. during non-operational hours at least 2 times per week.
- Staff should wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after cleaning and disinfecting is completed. Ensure that staff properly wash their hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- Continue to clean and sanitize food preparation surfaces in the kitchen and other food storage areas routinely.

Take-out Guidance to Ensure Customer Safety

- In offering food or beverage, a retail food establishment may only permit up to five (5) members of the public at one time inside to pick up their food or beverage orders
- Individuals should be at least 6 feet apart from one another while on the premises.
- Customers visibly exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) should be asked not to enter the facility.
- Encourage customers to wash their hands prior to consuming food taken offsite to eat.

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Additional Guidance

- Establishments shall identify staff to dispense food from buffets or self-service areas (hot foods, salad bars, bulk bins, etc.) or discontinue self-service to prevent customer reuse of service utensils.
- If consumers will be self-serving any items, the facility shall provide single-use gloves along with guidance on glove usage to be used by guests for any self-service activity.
- Establishments shall discontinue services that allow customers to fill their own beverage cups such as coffee cups or growlers.
- Hand out single-use eating utensils, such as forks and spoons, from behind a counter instead of placing out a bulk bin for consumers to take from.

What are other ways a retail food establishment can support the community during this time?

If a food establishment encounters themselves in a situation where they have extra food or are not planning to maintain the same hours and will have food available to donate, please review the City's donation page for more information:

<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/environmental-health/news/coronavirus-info/donations---volunteering.html>

Please reference this guidance document for how to safely donate food:

https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/771/documents/PHI/Food/DenverFoodDonationGuidelines_digital_20190116.pdf

Restrictions on restaurants for the resale of bulk foods have also been lifted during this time; please refer to the temporary permissions that have been instituted.

Restaurants can provide certain goods to consumers for purchase or donation. Allowed products include household goods, such as toilet paper, paper towels, general cleaning supplies, and food items such as non-perishable goods and unopened containers of milk and dairy products, packaged cheeses, raw meats and poultry.

Please contact Public Health Investigations directly with any questions about this guidance.