

Grocery Stores and Markets during COVID19

Thank you for your service to the community.

To help protect the health of your staff and the community, we have some recommendations on how to continue to serve and protect health during the COVID19 pandemic.

General principles

Throughout, we want to emphasize **excellent personal hygiene** and **social distancing**. Sites vary in how they are set up, so please use this to figure out how your site can accomplish this need. Please do not hesitate to email COVID19@minneapolismn.gov if you have any questions.

Retail establishments who sell food to be consumed off-site

Retail establishments which sell food to be consumed off-site are not included in the Governor's suspension so long as there is no on-site food consumption. Nevertheless, we want to encourage the direct order and pickup of product to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus and COVID-19.

- Farmers' markets
- Grocery stores
- Pharmacies
- Hardware stores
- Retail outlets

Best Practices

- Limit the number of shoppers who are in the store (must be less than 50 people, or a number that allows for appropriate social distancing, whichever is less)
 - Count the amount of staff and people that are in the store at one time.
 - Ensure people have enough space while in the store and in the checkout line. Individuals should be able to be at least 6 feet apart from each other.
- Have adequate space for customers waiting in line
 - Have markers on the ground, spaced 6 feet apart, that designate places for people to stand while they wait in line.
 - See more about social distancing in the next section.
- Clean the store frequently
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends regular cleaning as one of the most important preventative measures you can take.

- Clean areas that are frequently touched, such as credit card readers and pin pads, after every customer uses the object. (Stores like Target clean guest-facing surfaces like checklanes and touchscreens at least every 30 minutes).
- Clean shopping carts and baskets after use, or provide wipes so that customers can clean them before using them.
- See below section “Cleaning and Sanitizing Products” for full recommended guidelines.
- Designate a specific time of day for customers who are considered “high-risk”
 - Example: Lunds & Byerlys has reserved their opening hour of 7 to 8 a.m. every day for shoppers who are at a higher risk of severe illness by COVID-19. This includes older adults and those who have compromised immune systems.
 - The intent of this measure is to provide an opportunity for those individuals to be the first to shop after overnight cleaning and stocking, so they have increased access to essential products.
- Cease food sampling in store (stores such as Target and Lunds & Byerlys have implemented similar measures)
 - Temporarily close self-serve food bars. Continue to offer grab-and-go food, if applicable.

Social distancing

- Limit face-to-face interactions between staff and customers as much as possible.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet between staff, delivery drivers and customers. This distance applies to checkout lines as well.
- Whenever possible, strongly encourage customers to use online ordering and delivery or pickup instead of in-store shopping.
- Please see [Strategies to Slow the Spread of COVID-19 in Minnesota](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/action.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/action.html>) for updated actions you can take to protect yourself and your community.

Sick employees

- All of the normal employee illness requirements for reporting and exclusions apply. See [Illness Reporting for Food Establishments](#) (PDF)
- Employees who have **symptoms of acute respiratory illness should stay home** and not come to work until they are:
 - Free of fever (100.4°F. or greater using an oral thermometer), and
 - For at least seven days, are free of signs of a fever, cough, and any other symptoms, and
 - For at least three days, have not used fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines such as cough suppressants.

- FDA has provided additional guidance about employees with fevers and respiratory illness on their [website Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Frequently Asked Questions](#)

If one of your employees becomes ill with COVID-19

- Develop a protocol if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Use your [Minneapolis Employee illness log](#) (PDF).
- Make sure employees know your sick time policy and about their rights under the [Minneapolis Sick and Safe time ordinance](#).
- Refer to the [Sick and Safe time for food businesses flyer](#).
- If a staff member has a sick family member, the staff member should contact the Minnesota Department of Health to determine if it is ok to go to work.
- Communicate to employees.

Remember, [viruses don't discriminate and neither should we](#). (PDF)

You can find more information in a list of [frequently asked questions](#).

Personal health and hygiene

- Stay at home if you have a fever, runny nose, cough, sneezing or other respiratory symptoms, or if you believe you are sick.
- Ensure that handwashing facilities are readily available for employees and customers. Every sink needs warm running water, soap, and disposable towels.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Hand antiseptics (sanitizers) are not a replacement for proper handwashing. If you provide hand antiseptics in customer areas, it should be an alcohol-based hand product with at least 60% alcohol active ingredient.
- Cover your cough and sneeze. Cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

Cleaning and sanitizing products

What should I do to clean and sanitize?

- In addition to all of the regular requirements, The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) advises businesses to routinely clean high-touch surfaces. Examples of high-touch surfaces

include tables, doorknobs, light switches, faucets, point-of-sale systems, keyboards, telephones, etc.

- MDH recommends food businesses use products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogen claims:
 - [EPA's Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19](#)
 - American Chemistry Council Center for Biocide Chemistries - [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Fighting Products](#)
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (for example, concentration, application method, contact time, and the use of personal protective equipment, and don't mix them together!)
- Not all products are appropriate for food contact surface sanitizing.

Payments and transactions

- Exchange food orders in person while maintaining at least 6 feet between individuals.
- Keep orders in a secure location within your establishment while waiting for customer pick-up.
- Conduct payment transactions electronically, preferably online, when possible.

If a customer is suspected of being sick

- After customer leaves, clean and sanitize items the customer touched. The employee doing cleaning should wear gloves and wash their hands immediately after removing the gloves.

This guide was adapted from the: Food Safety for Delivery and Pick-up Services Guide.

Minnesota Department of Health
Food, Pools, and Lodging Services
PO Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-4500
health.foodlodging@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Food and Feed Safety Division
625 Robert Street N
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538
651-201-6027
MDA.FFSD.Info@state.mn.us
www.mda.state.mn.us

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