

# Phase Three Requirements for Food Establishments

## Mandatory Requirements:

Businesses must strictly adhere to the physical distancing guidelines, enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices, and enhanced workplace safety practices provided in the “Guidelines for All Business Sectors” document. Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services regulated facilities must continue to follow requirements related to prohibiting sick employees in the workplace, strict handwashing practices, and procedures and practices to clean and sanitize surfaces.

During Phase 3, businesses should continue to offer takeout and delivery options. If businesses choose to open to dine-in customers, they may do so in indoor and outdoor spaces and must adhere to the following additional requirements for service:

- Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19, or known exposure to a COVID-19 case in the prior 14 days, is permitted in the establishment.
- Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding physical distancing, gatherings, options for [high-risk individuals](#), and staying home if sick (See samples at the bottom of this document).
- All parties must be separated by at least six feet, including in the bar area, (i.e., the six feet cannot include the space taken up by the seated guest). If tables are not movable, seat parties at least six feet apart, including in the bar area. Spacing must also allow for physical distancing from areas outside of the facility’s control (i.e., provide physical distancing from persons on public sidewalks). All parties, whether seated together or across multiple tables, must be limited to 250 patrons or less.
- Bar seats and congregating areas of restaurants must be closed to patrons except for through-traffic. Non-bar seating in the bar area (i.e., tables or counter seats that do not line up to a bar or food service area) may be used for customer seating as long as a minimum of six feet is provided between parties at tables.
- If live musicians are performing at an establishment, they must remain at least ten feet from patrons and staff.
- Employees working in customer dining and service areas are required to wear face coverings over their nose and mouth, such as using [CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings guidance](#).
- Prior to each shift, employers should ask that the employee self-measure their temperature and assess symptoms. Please see [VDH Interim Guidance for Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers During Widespread Community Transmission](#).
- Buffets may be open for self-service, with continuous monitoring by trained staff required at food lines, and serving utensils must be changed hourly during peak meal times. Facilities must provide hand sanitizer at buffets, and employees and patrons must use barriers (e.g. gloves or deli tissue) when touching utensils.
- Provide hand sanitizer stations or hand washing stations for patrons and employees.
- Perform thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces including digital ordering devices, check presenters, self-service areas, tabletops, bathroom surfaces, and other common touch areas every 60 minutes during operation. Tabletops and credit card/bill folders must be disinfected between patrons.
- Table resets must be done by an employee who has washed their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds just prior to reset activities.
- Patrons may wait for takeout or for seated dining in the lobby area, but they must maintain six feet of physical distance between parties.

## Best Practices:

Establishments are encouraged to utilize the following best practices to the extent they are feasible:

- Utilize reservations for dining on the premises.
- Use staff facilitated seating where appropriate. If seating is not staff facilitated and tables cannot be moved to meet the physical distancing requirements outlined above, tables that should not be used must be clearly marked that they are out of service.
- Assign employee(s) to monitor and clean high touch areas while in operation.
- Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction, including mobile ordering and menu tablets, text on arrival for seating, and contactless payment options.
- Consider methods to make point of sale terminals safer, including use of no contact applications, placement of a glass or clear plastic barrier between the employee and the customer, and providing a hand sanitizer station for customer and employee use after handling credit/debit cards, PIN terminals, or exchange of cash.
- Servers should avoid touching items on tables while customers are seated. Dedicated staff should remove all items from the table when customer(s) leave.
- Consider scheduled closure periods throughout the day to allow for cleaning and disinfecting, including bathrooms (i.e., after lunch service).
- Use separate doors to enter and exit the establishment when possible.
- When protective equipment such as face coverings are used, launder daily and wash hands after touching/adjusting the face covering while working.
- Single-use items should be discarded after use. Consider using rolled silverware and eliminating table presets.
- Consider installing touchless door and sink systems or providing single-use barriers (e.g., deli tissues, paper towels) for use when touching door and sink handles.
- Implement procedures to increase how often the back-of-house areas are cleaned and sanitized.

## Additional Considerations:

**Take-out and Delivery providers are encouraged to utilize the following recommendations:**

- Notify customers as the delivery is arriving by text message or phone call.
- Ensure transport containers are cleaned and sanitized between uses.
- Establish designated pick-up zones for customers, including separate entrances and exits where possible.
- Offer curb-side pick-up.
- Encourage cashless transactions where possible.
- Practice physical distancing by offering to place orders in vehicle trunks.
- Seal food packages to safeguard the integrity of contents.
- If an establishment uses a delivery service, implement a contactless pick-up option where drivers do not have to come into the restaurant.

**Food Trucks/Mobile Units are encouraged to utilize the following recommendations:**

- Provide signage and aids to help customers maintain six feet of distance while ordering or waiting for an order.
- Food and other items should not be returned after they are loaded onto the mobile unit.
- Schedule frequent cleaning and disinfecting of order pick-up areas and other commonly touched surfaces.

