

COVID-19 Guidance for Food Establishments in Utah

Who is the guidance for?

This document provides interim guidance for food establishments during the outbreak of novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) to ensure the health and safety of employees and customers. Recommendations may need to be revised as more information becomes available.

Why is the guidance being issued?

Information provided is intended to help food establishment managers and employees understand how to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 within food establishments and other locations that provide food services.

What is the role of food establishments during the COVID-19 outbreak?

On February 27, 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a Fact Statement informing the public that “FDA is not aware of any reports at this time of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. However, it is always important to follow good hygiene practices (i.e., wash hands and surfaces often, separate raw meat from other foods, cook to the right temperature, and refrigerate foods promptly) when handling or preparing foods.”

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person sneezes or coughs between people who are in close contact (within less than six feet). In some affected areas of Utah, this virus has “community spread,” meaning people who have not left the community have become infected with the virus without knowing how or where they became infected.

General guidance for food establishments

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) recommends following the guidance issued on the [FDA’s FAQ page](#), [USDA’s website](#), and [CDC’s guidance on cleaning and disinfection](#). [Coronavirus.utah.gov](https://www.coronavirus.utah.gov) will have all the most recent information for the situation in Utah. Guidance on [social distancing](#) and the following items applies to both food delivery and food distribution.

- Employees who are sick or showing respiratory symptoms should not work until symptom free for at least 24 hours.
 - Symptoms of COVID-19 include flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.
 - Employees exhibiting symptoms of food borne illnesses should also be excluded (vomiting, diarrhea).
- Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is prohibited. Only individuals preparing food should be handling the food that is put into containers.

- Use a barrier like napkins or tissues when handling cards or cash; or wash hands regularly and use hand sanitizer between transactions. Gloves may be used if changed regularly and hands are washed before putting gloves on and after taking them off.
- Follow safe food handling requirements, including hand washing with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds. Wash hands after using a bathroom, touching your face (such as rubbing eyes or blowing your nose), and after entering a food preparation area.
- Take time to wash hands regularly.
- Those who handle cash or cards, or otherwise engage customers, should not prepare food.
- Normal sanitation practices, such as dishwashing utilizing an approved sanitizing cycle and proper use of sanitizing solutions with wiping cloths, are adequate at stopping the spread of germs. Be sure to have test strips and maintain the proper concentration of sanitizer, as recommended on the label.
- Routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is recommended, such as countertops, rails, and doorknobs.
- Food should be served only on or in containers supplied by the food establishment. Customer supplied containers should not be allowed on or in the premises of the food establishment.

Resource

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/etp/food.htm>