

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Environmental Health Section

Date: March 22, 2020

To: Food Establishment Owners/Operators

From: Food Protection Program
CT Department of Public Health

Subject: Guidance for Food Establishments During the COVID-19 Emergency

Food establishments are providing an essential service during the COVID-19 emergency. For this reason, it is critical that steps be taken to reduce the risk of infection by both customers and employees. Without an adequate workforce, food establishments will cease to operate creating a situation that will have serious consequences. Therefore, the Department of Public Health Food Protection Program is strongly advising food establishments to implement social distancing practices for workers and customers wherever possible as stated in Governor Lamont's Executive Orders. Although this may not always be practical, many establishments have already come up with ways to encourage social distancing and have reported that, for the most part, customers were doing their best to follow them. Reported practices include:

- Having managers/supervisors talk to staff about it and practice it themselves.
- Mark off 6' distances from counters, checkout lines, and sidewalks (if customers are lining up before opening) using signs, colored tape, or chalk.
- Limit the number of customers allowed inside the establishment.
- Have someone monitor and politely remind customers that complying with social distancing is for their safety and the safety of your employees. Or have all employees do this as needed.

It has also been reported that some workers are becoming worried about coming to work when everyone else is being told to be safe and stay home. Doing what you can to make the workplace safe can help to alleviate fear. It may also be helpful to remind employees that:

- According to CDC and the FDA, based on current evidence, the main way the disease is spread is by people, not surfaces.



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- Proper hand washing should always be practiced especially after blowing one's nose.
- Receptacles should be used for proper disposal of used tissues.
- Employees should stay home if they are sick and report symptoms to their manager.
- If employees become sick on the job, they should immediately report to their manager and go home. Close contacts of workers with COVID-19 symptoms (but not confirmed) should self-monitor for 14 days.
- Employees that test positive for COVID-19 must report their status to their manager and close contacts identified and told to self-quarantine for 14 days.

It is important to recognize that employees may be stressed. Try to maintain a positive and caring atmosphere with staff and remind them how critical their service is during this time.

Visit www.ct.gov/coronavirus or call your local health department if you have questions.

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