



**Restaurants  
Canada**

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# **Restaurants Canada COVID-19 Reopening Best Practices**



# Best Practices For Reopening

In the restaurant industry, the health and safety of everyone we serve are always mission critical. This is just as true now as it was before the emergence of COVID-19.

Informed by lessons learned from those operating during the pandemic so far, this document provides best practices that your operation can implement to comply with requirements from government in the following areas:

- Physical Distancing
- Cleaning and Sanitation
- Health and Personal Hygiene

Together with recommendations from your local health authorities, you can ensure a safe and secure reopening of your dining rooms or expansion of your existing operations.

Note: This document is provided to support your operation during the initial phase of reopening. Over time these best practices may be adapted or expanded as measures continue to be eased, based on guidance from government and public health authorities.



# Physical Distancing

## General Best Practices

### Customer areas:

- ✓ Post signage promoting physical distancing upon entry.
- ✓ Display signs in multiple locations that indicate the maximum number of customers and staff a restaurant can accommodate at any one time.
- ✓ Size of parties cannot exceed that of current public health authority restrictions.
- ✓ Mark direction of travel, to designate entrances and exits, pick up areas and washrooms.
- ✓ Unless otherwise required by local authorities, redesign floor plans to demonstrate 50 per cent posted capacity or greater if floor plans can demonstrate required social distancing.
- ✓ Demarcate floor with markers for any areas where a line up may occur (restrooms, pick up areas, etc.) and/or provide directional signage to indicate flow through the restaurant as well as outside.
- ✓ Where furniture cannot be removed to adjust for physical distancing, mark certain tables and chairs unavailable for use.
- ✓ Temporary table dividers may be installed to make social distancing easier for restaurants with communal seating or larger tables.
- ✓ Where practical, separate booth seating with physical barriers.
- ✓ Bar seating should have physical barrier between guest and bar or kitchen and one seat every six feet. Alternatively, bar seating must be closed until physical distancing requirements are eased.
- ✓ Washroom capacity may need to be adjusted to allow physical distancing.



### Staff areas:

- ✓ Train staff on physical distancing and how to best serve food with the least amount of contact.
- ✓ Create separation from action stations or open kitchens. Must separate guest from the kitchen or plating team with high, clear dividers if the distance between guest and staff is less than six feet.
- ✓ Where possible, stagger workstations so employees avoid standing directly opposite one another or next to each other.
- ✓ Use, when possible, directional arrows on the floor in kitchen settings to control flow of traffic and reduce interaction and crossover between cooking and clearing areas.
- ✓ Remind third-party delivery drivers and suppliers of internal distancing requirements. Provide separate entrance where possible.



## Practices for Specific Model/Format

### In a full service dining environment:

- ✓ Consider a reservations-only business model or call-ahead seating to better place and space customers.
- ✓ Provide clear guidance to customers that they show up only at their designated time.
- ✓ Remove waiting area seating and create a process to ensure customers stay separate while waiting to be seated - could include floor markings, outdoor distancing, waiting in cars, etc.
- ✓ Clearly designate takeout/pick up locations when separate from dine-in operations.

### In a dining environment with self-serve areas:

- ✓ During the initial phases of reopening, and only where allowed, consideration may be given to staff member assistance in buffets, salad bars and other self-serve areas. Also, where salad bars and buffets are permitted, they should consider putting extended sneeze guards in place. Change, wash and sanitize utensils frequently and place appropriate barriers in open areas.
- ✓ Modify or reconsider customer self-serve stations to limit contact with items and other guests by utilizing strategies such as floor markings and individually-wrapped stir sticks, straws, utensils.
- ✓ If providing a “grab and go” service, stock coolers to no more than minimum levels and consider staff support for selecting items.

### In a quick service restaurant environment:

- ✓ Demarcate floor with markers for any areas where a line up may occur (order stations, pick up areas).
- ✓ Provide clear signage and guidance to guests regarding ordering and pick-up areas, including mobile orders.

## Reducing Contact

- ✓ Weather permitting, prop open entrances and exits to limit need for staff and customers to open/close doors
- ✓ Reduce the number of items on tables – discontinue on-table condiments, condiment caddies, table cards, marketing materials and candles.
- ✓ Bring customer items only once they are seated: glasses, cutlery, rolls, condiments (as needed), etc.
- ✓ Don't touch water glasses or coffee cups when refilling.
- ✓ Leverage technology where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction, eg. mobile ordering, menu tablets, text on arrival for seating, contactless payment options.
- ✓ Build physical separation between customers and staff in counter service and payment settings.
- ✓ Tables should be cleared one at a time to reduce potential for cross-contamination.

# Cleaning and Sanitation



## Continued Use of Approved Cleaning Products

Enhance environmental cleaning procedures and protocols with special attention to high-touch surfaces and objects. Per guidance under development from the Public Health Agency of Canada:

- ✓ Use only [approved hard-surface disinfectants](#) that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms the disinfectant product is approved for use in Canada.

## Cleaning Procedures

- ✓ Thoroughly clean the entire restaurant upon reopening.
- ✓ Avoid food contact surfaces when using disinfectants.
- ✓ Update cleaning schedules and logs to reflect increased cleaning for high touch areas including door handles, front of house counters, restrooms as well as in the back of house.
- ✓ Clean and sanitize shared equipment such as credit card machines, point of sale stations, safety vests, headsets, etc. after every use.
- ✓ When cleaning tables between every seating, any cutlery, salt and pepper shakers, sauce dispensers, or other items must be removed and cleaned as well. Tables should be left empty until the new guest arrives and only those items needed should be provided to customers.
- ✓ Clean and sanitize reusable menus. Paper menus should be recycled after each customer use.
- ✓ Make hand sanitizer available for staff and guests.
- ✓ Have deep cleaning response plan in place, in the event of an employee(s) testing positive for COVID-19.

# Health and Personal Hygiene



## Customers

- ✓ Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is to be permitted in the restaurant.
- ✓ Consider policies where customers can be refused entry if displaying signs of COVID-19.

## Staff

- ✓ Appoint a Health and Safety Point Person for every shift to ensure protocols are being adhered to and education is provided.
- ✓ Have the supervisor do roll call and sign-in for staff, provide separate pens, or have staff text the supervisor when they start.
- ✓ Clean any sign-in devices between users.
- ✓ Stagger start times and/or minimize contact during sign-in.
- ✓ Implement a pre-work screening “health check” for employees at the beginning of each shift which may include temperature checks.
- ✓ Do not allow staff on-site if they are sick or might be sick; they should return home or stay home.
- ✓ Establish a clear policy for what is expected of workers if they get sick, have symptoms, or if an exposure is reported at the restaurant or store.
- ✓ Provide separate lockers or sealed bins/bags for employees to store their personal items. Do not allow staff to leave any items overnight.
- ✓ Limit the number of employees allowed simultaneously in break rooms to allow for physical distancing.
- ✓ With larger staffs, use communication boards or digital messaging to convey pre-shift meeting information.
- ✓ From the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) staff should:
  - o Practice physical distancing by keeping more than 2 metres (6 feet) apart from coworkers and customers as much as possible.
  - o Stay home if they are sick or might be sick Follow the Public Health Agency of Canada’s steps for self-assessment: <https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>.
  - o Wash their hands at the start of their shift, before eating or drinking, after touching shared items, after using the washroom, after handling cash or credit/debit cards, after touching common items, after each transaction if contact was made, and at the end of their shift. At a minimum staff should wash their hands a minimum of every 30 minutes.
  - o Avoid touching their face.
- ✓ Where handwashing after each transaction is not possible, establish clear procedures to have separate staff handle cash transactions than those serving customers

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- ✓ Use of PPE should be aligned with guidance from Public Health Authorities.
- ✓ For staff that cannot always physically distance 2 metres (6 feet) from other staff or customers, encourage the use of non-medical masks or face coverings if suggested by Public Health Authorities.
- ✓ Gloves should be used when changing waste / recycling receptacles.

