

COVID-19 RECOVERY STRATEGY FOR RESTAURANTS

As a result of the unprecedented COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, your organization may need to modify its existing disaster recovery plan or create a new plan to re-staff and re-open business locations and workplaces.

Disaster Situation Priorities

- Ensure the safety of employees and visitors in the building(s)
- Mitigate threats or limit the damage that threats can cause
- Have advance preparations to ensure that critical business functions can continue
- Have documented plans and procedures to ensure the quick, effective execution of recovery strategies for critical business functions

Disaster:

Any event that renders a business facility inoperable or unusable so that it interferes with the organization's ability to deliver essential business services and generate revenue.

Disaster Recovery Plan:

Clear guidelines and detailed instructions on how to act before, during, and after a disaster to minimize its negative effect on an organization and restore normal operations.

As stay-at-home restrictions and travel warnings expire, businesses should prepare to implement plans and strategies to expedite restoration of business operations while ensuring the health and safety of employees, customers, visitors, and guests in the workplace. The following guide highlights short-term and long-term recovery measures.

RESTAFF

I. Train returning managers and supervisors on the following topics:

- Recognizing COVID-19 symptoms
- Taking COVID-19 precautions
- Process for notifying and responding to emerging employee/customer infection

II. Verify the health of all new or returning personnel and their ability to work.

- Utilize a health questionnaire
- Implement pre-/post-work shift temperature checks. Employees should not be permitted to work with temperatures over 100.40F

Sample Health Questions

Have you or an immediate family member living in your home returned from an international location within the last 14 days?

Have you or an immediate family member living in your home returned from a domestic (US) coronavirus epicenter in the last 14 days?

Have you had close contact with or cared for someone diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days?

Have you experienced any cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days (to include fever, dry cough, sore throat, respiratory illness, difficulty breathing, gastrointestinal discomfort, or disease)?

Acknowledgment of negative responses should be documented for each new or returning employee. New and returning employees should be instructed to notify management of any emerging symptoms or potential person-to-person contact with an infected person.

III. Provide refresher compliance safety training for all new and returning employees.

Employees who appear to have COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival to work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees and customers and sent home. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule.

RE-OPEN

I. Increase air circulation/ventilation through the HVAC system for five to seven days prior to re-opening.

II. Consider flushing/hyper chlorination of domestic water system if shut down.

- Verify water chemistry is within acceptable parameters

III. Deep clean the entire site/facility using approved disinfectant (EPA List N: disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2).

- Door handles and push plates
- Hand railings
- Tabletops and dining surfaces
- Trash receptacles
- Point-of-purchase and service countertops
- Point-of-purchase terminal touchscreens and hand-held scanners
- Display cases
- Public and staff restrooms
 - Sink faucet and toilet handles
 - Towel dispenser handle
 - Soap dispenser push plates
 - Baby changing station
 - Light switches
- Breakroom equipment and surfaces
- Material handling equipment (pallet jacks, hand trucks, carts, etc.)
- Cleaning equipment
 - Vacuum cleaner handles and cords
 - Broom/mop handles
 - Mop bucket handles
- Ladders and steps-tools
- Office equipment and surfaces
 - Shared computers
 - Shared telephones
 - File cabinet handles
 - Safe and deposit bags
- HVAC vents

IV. Use a rope-and-stanchion system (or floor markings) to prevent patrons from queuing or congregating near entrances, waiting areas, and work areas. Providing signage to instruct and remind patrons to maintain adequate social distancing may be effective.

Whenever possible, it is recommended to have a maximum of four persons for approximately every 107 square feet (or 10 square meters). Tables should be arranged so that the distance from the back of one chair to the back of another chair is more than 3 ¼ feet (1 meter) apart and that guests face each other from a distance of at least 3 ¼ feet (1 meter) as well.

Buffets

Guests should avoid handling food. When necessary, change tongs and ladles more frequently, always leaving these items in separate containers. Clean and disinfect the buffet surfaces after each service.

Coffee and Soda Machines

The parts and surfaces most in contact with the hands of users should be cleaned and disinfected at a minimum of after each service, and more often if necessary.

Washing Dishes, Silverware, and Table Linen

The usual procedures should be used. All dishes, silverware, and glassware should be washed and disinfected in a dishwashing machine, including items that have not been used, as they may have been in contact with the hands of guests or staff.

If for any reason, manual washing is required, the usual steps should be followed (wash, disinfect, rinse), taking the maximum level of precautions. Drying should be carried out using disposable paper towels. Likewise, tablecloths and napkins should be washed in the usual manner.

Surfaces touched most frequently by employees and patrons should be prioritized for routine cleaning, as soiled and frequently touched surfaces can be an exposure pathway for transmission to people through contact with these surfaces. Frequent and routine (at least daily) cleaning of these prioritized surfaces is essential for proper infection control.

REVISE

Modify business operations and work practices in the post-coronavirus environment to discourage transmission of all contagious diseases in the workplace.

- I. Add hand sanitizing dispensers, tissues, disposable wipes, no-touch disposal receptacles, and hand-washing posters at key locations in the front and back of the house/workplace.**
- II. Patrons, visitors, and guests should be reminded when entering and leaving the restaurant, breakfast, or dining room to disinfect their hands with disinfectant gel, preferably located at the entrance to those facilities.**
- III. Encourage non-contact methods of greeting.**
- IV. Promote tap and pay to limit the handling of credit cards and cash.**
- V. Implement duty-to-warn procedures if COVID-19 exposure/outbreak is reported at a particular location.**
- VI. Encourage employees to perform daily self-health checks prior to returning to work.**

VII. Consider options for additional employee breaks to increase the frequency of handwashing by staff

VIII. Consider continuous disinfection technologies.

IX. Evaluate your infectious disease preparedness/response plan and modify and update it as needed.

- Supply chain resources
- Environmental strategies (cleaning and disinfecting practices)
- Procedures for staff illness
- Procedures for customer illness
- Staff/customer notifications
- Business continuity plan

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Make the most of takeout and delivery.

- a. No-contact takeout and delivery may become the new norm
- b. Invest in mobile or order-ahead options with limited or no-contact pick-up
- c. Consider providing a meal with multiple portions in lieu of individual entrees; (i.e., a whole pan of lasagna with a large salad will save on packaging, avoid delivery and/or third-party fees, and generate revenue for multiple meals rather than one or two – also providing a family or couple gets a few days' worth of meals with limited outside contact)

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Compliance Safety Training Sample Curriculum

COVID-19 Personal Precautions

- Social distancing
- Handwashing
- Utilizing hand sanitizers
- Covering nose/mouth when sneezing or coughing with flexed elbow (or tissue)
- Avoiding touching the face with unwashed hands
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick

Hazard Communication (Cleaning and Disinfecting Chemicals)

- Reviewing safety data sheet (SDS) for all cleaning and disinfection chemicals
- Following the manufacturer's label instructions for application
- Ensuring proper ventilation
- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures
- Verifying that cleaning products are not past expiration dates

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements and Process

- When is PPE necessary?
 - Handling and processing incoming food and supplies
 - Preparing and serving food
 - Handling credit cards and/or cash
- What kind of PPE is necessary?
 - Disposable gloves
 - Face mask (optional)
- How do I put on, adjust, wear, and remove PPE?
- Where and how do I locate and obtain PPE?
- What are the limitations of PPE?
- How do I care for, maintain, and dispose of PPE?
- How do I report a breach of PPE or potential infection exposure to management?

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