

Planning Guide for Food Establishments



This guidance is to assist food establishments during the phased reopening of businesses in Nevada. The health and safety of employees and customers regarding food safety, as well as continuing to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community, are top priorities. As you plan your reopening, please take into consideration the following:

Contacting Employees about Return to Work

Begin to contact employees to determine a schedule for preparing your business for operation. Southern Nevada Health District's "[COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire for Food Establishment Employees](#)" may be used to screen employees by phone. If an employee answers yes to any of the questions, exclude the employee from work. Employees should follow the steps recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on "[What to Do if You Are Sick](#)." Keep a record of employee screening using the Health District's [Employee Illness Log](#).

Employees with confirmed COVID-19 and those with symptoms should not return to work until:

1. No fever for at least three days (72 hours) without the use of medicine that reduces fever and other symptoms (such as, cough, shortness of breath) have improved; *and*
2. at least 10 days have passed since the first symptoms appeared.

Facility Checklist for Reopening

Use the checklist in "[Guidance for Food Establishments During Phase 2](#)" for verifying operation of utility services in the facility. Also, check that the hot water system is working and providing water at a minimum of 120°F. Verify electrical power and natural gas services are operating.

Before opening the business to customers, run hot- and cold-water valves at each faucet for 5 minutes to flush. Water sitting in pipes for long periods may have allowed for small amounts of germs to grow. Flushing for 5 minutes prior to reopening will replace the stale water in the facility's plumbing with a fresh and safe water supply.

Contacting Suppliers

Check with your suppliers for the availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is needed for your operation, such as gloves and aprons. Cloth face coverings based on the CDC recommendations should be worn by all staff, especially when social distancing is hard to control. These coverings are not surgical masks or N95 respirators. See the Health District's "[Guidance for Cloth Face Coverings in Food Establishments During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)" for more information. Have a plan for any additional PPE needed and train employees how to use it.

Check with your suppliers to have an adequate supply of chemicals and materials to clean, sanitize, and disinfect the facility prior to reopening. Also, secure a supply of hand sanitizer to provide for staff and customers.

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Plan for Reopening Operations

Use the Health District's "[Reopening Guidance for Checklist for Food Establishments](#)" to evaluate your operation. Verify equipment is ready for operation and working properly. Evaluate the employee areas to consider improving social distancing by removing or relocating workstations. Similarly, look at the customer interface area to allow for increased social distancing, reduced lines, or removal of high-touch surfaces. Review what types of services or the menu you will offer customers. Consider a soft open for basic service and increase to full operation over a period of weeks.

Cleaning Surfaces

Prior to reopening, cleaning with soap and water to remove soil accumulation will work for most surfaces. Since people have not been in the facility, extra disinfection will not be required until after business has resumed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and train employees for the use of all chemicals (e.g., concentration, application method, personal protective equipment, contact time, etc.). Gloves used during cleaning, sanitizing, or disinfection must not be used for other tasks. Wash hands after removing gloves.

Once the facility is open, be prepared to conduct more frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch and high-use surfaces used by the public and staff. Visit the CDC's website "[Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)" for information on how to clean and disinfect. Use a disinfectant on the [EPA's List N](#) to make sure it is effective against the virus that causes COVID-19. For electronics, follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. If no guidance is provided, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol and dry the surface thoroughly.

Employee Training

Train staff on the new operational plan and the increased precautions in place to reduce the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Explain the plans to use social distancing, what types and how to use PPE, proper use of chemicals, and the difference between cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Create an Employee Illness Policy if the facility does not have one in place. Explain to employees that anyone who appears to have symptoms upon arrival at work or who becomes sick during the shift will immediately be sent home as recommended by the CDC.

Food Handler Safety Training Cards (Health Cards) that have expired since the program closed in March 2020 will be considered valid until the end of the year; new employees or employees that need to renew their cards are allowed to temporarily work without cards. No additional late fees will be applied for renewing expired cards through December 31. First-time Food Handler Safety Training Card applicants will have 90 days from the date the program reopens to obtain their Food Handler Safety Training Card.

Continuing Operations

Follow the current guidelines published by the CDC in maintaining adequate social distancing or other measures to decrease the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Review and implement the Health District's "[Guidance and Checklist for Food Establishments During Phase 2](#)" as applicable to the facility. More information can be found at this CDC link: [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). You can sign up to receive updates to this document at www.snhd.info/reopen.

If you have any questions on this guidance document, please contact environmentalhealth@snhd.org.