

COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Retail Food Establishments. March 20, 2020

Supermarkets are on the front lines of emergency response both in preparation for an impending disaster and as one of the primary operations that must be up and running for a community to be able to recover after a disaster strikes. This message will provide you with the basic guidance needed to help protect your employees and customers from exposure to the Coronavirus "COVID-19". While retail food establishments are exempt from Executive Order No. 2020-9 (COVID-19), you can do your part in preventing community spread of the virus.

Prevention Recommendations

Although food has not been identified as a likely source of COVID-19 infection, following current and newly added food safety standards for retail establishments is imperative. Communicate with your customers and employees the steps your business is taking to protect against COVID-19.

What are the purposes behind this guidance document?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Close contact with people and groups of people not practicing social distancing leads to the spread of COVID-19. Grocery stores are a likely point of community contact. By adhering to the guidelines contained within this document, the spread of this virus can be substantially reduced and it is imperative that all places of public accommodation do so.

Waiting Lines

It is strongly recommended to keep the **six-foot social distancing** effective, including at retail outlets and grocery stores. The National Grocery Association supports asking customers to implement social distancing (six feet per person) while standing in checkout lines. Marking the floor with tape or an erasable marker every 6 feet is recommended for visible spacing. Expand remote shopping options if available (online, delivery, pick-up, shop-by-phone).

Seating Shall Be Closed

Any seating areas provided to the public for on premise food or beverage consumption within a retail food establishment must meet the requirements of Executive Order 2020-9. Seating areas must be closed to ingress, egress, use, and occupancy by members of the public. Consider temporarily closing salad bars, buffets, and other ready-to-eat or sample offerings in stores.

Increased Personal Hygienic Practices

- Provide sanitizing wipes for customers to wipe down grocery carts before use.
- All employees must wash their hands prior to work, **frequently**, and for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Provide daily screening of all employees for symptoms of illness. Employees with symptoms of illness shall be excluded from work. Employees who are sick or showing respiratory symptoms similar to COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath) should not work until they are symptom free.
- Have employees wear disposable gloves when stocking food shelves.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve. Do not cough or sneeze into your hands. Discard tissue after coughing or sneezing into it and apply hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth to slow the spread of germs.
- To help customers keep their germs to themselves, consider providing tissues, no-touch waste bins and alcohol based hand sanitizers or antiseptic rubs with at least 60% alcohol in customer areas for use by public and employees.
- Have employees use the hand sanitizer after every single cash transaction.

Clean and Sanitize

- COVID-19 is susceptible to EPA-registered sanitizers and disinfectants.
- The EPA has a list of registered sanitizers labeled for use against COVID-19: www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2
- Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces, **commonly touched surfaces (frequently throughout the day)** and other surfaces that may become contaminated.
 - Credit card key pads (inside store and outside gas pump pads)
 - Check out areas and service counters
 - Entrance door handles
 - Public and employee bathrooms: sinks, toilets, light switches, door handles
 - Shopping carts and hand held shopping baskets
 - Gas pump handles
- Read the label carefully and train employees thoroughly. **Certain disinfection chemicals or increased concentrations may not be used on food contact surfaces or may need to be rinsed prior to use with food.**

For current and up-to-date information regarding the Coronavirus, visit the following websites: www.wuphd.org, www.nationalgrocers.org/news/national-grocers-association-coronavirus/, www.CDC.gov/Coronavirus, or www.Michigan.gov/Coronavirus. If you have additional questions please contact the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department Special COVID-19 call center at (906) 487-5545.