

New Jersey's Reopen "Safe Dining" Re-Opening Plan

NJRHA has come up with a 3-stage plan for eateries to reopen in NJ in response from Governor Murphy's ask to NJRHA of what reopening looks like for the restaurant and hospitality industry during and exiting Covid-19.

The guidelines will be broken up by the following parts:

1. Summary
2. Staff Safety Guidelines
3. Guest Safety Guidelines
4. NJRHA Industry Promise
5. NJRHA Suggested Best Practices

SUMMARY:

1. Industry Category: Restaurant/Hospitality
2. Name of Industry/Type of Business: Restaurant Dining Room Service
 - Full-Service Restaurant – server takes customer's order at table, delivers food to customer, used dishes and utensils are removed from table, payment is received from customer.
 - Limited Service Restaurant – customer's order is taken at counter, payment is made at counter, food is delivered to customer at counter or table, customer disposes of own utensils/trash or employees may do so.
 - Buffets and Venue Full-Service Businesses – self-serving food stations where payment of meal is handled separately.
3. Duration of Recommended Limitations: These limitations are for 30 days and they shall expire unless reissued affirmatively at the end of that time. If reissued they should be reviewed no less than every 14 days from that date until they are no longer required.
 - Stage 1: Applicable to all eating and drinking establishments, now until May 15th, current limitations and restrictions (strict guidelines provided by the Health Department and Food Code requirements).
 - Stage 2: Applicable to Limited and Full-Service Restaurants only, start May 15th, for 30 days and they shall expire unless reissued affirmatively at the end of that time for restaurants and bars. If reissued they should be reviewed no less than every 14 days from that date until they are no longer required.
 - Stage 3: Applicable to all eating and drinking establishments, start July 1st, business as usual, no limitations on guests or expanded seating plans, required or suggested gloves/masks/sanitation for guests.



STAFF SAFETY GUIDELINES:

Stage 2:

1. At least one manager per shift certified in ServSafe Manager. *
2. Mandate that all staff members to be certified in food handler.
3. Mandate guest-facing staff to wear masks.
4. Train all employees on the importance of frequent hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content and give them clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.
5. All staff required to take health check, survey and/or temperature prior to shift.
6. All employees are required to report any fever or illness to supervisor.
7. Any sick employees are prohibited from the workplace and may only return after the employee self-isolates for seven days from the onset of symptoms and be symptom-free for three days without medication (as per CDC guidelines).

Stage 3:

1. At least one manager per shift certified in ServSafe Manager. *
2. Mandate that all staff members to be certified in food handler.
3. No guest-facing staff are required to wear masks.
4. Train all employees on the importance of frequent hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content and give them clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.
5. All staff required to take health check survey.
6. All employees are required to report any fever or illness to supervisor.
7. Employees can wear masks at their discretion.
8. Any sick employees are prohibited from the workplace and may only return after the employee self-isolates for seven days from the onset of symptoms and be symptom-free for three days without medication (as per CDC guidelines).

GUEST SAFETY GUIDELINES:

Stage 2:

1. Post sign on door that no one with a fever or cough is to be permitted in the restaurant.
2. Limit the number of customers in the restaurant to comply with proper social distancing guidelines.
 - a. Customer seating and bar seating to be either 6' apart or reduced to 50% capacity.
 - b. If practical, physical barriers such as partitions or Plexiglas barriers at registers/booths are acceptable but are not required.
3. Seating to be limited to no more than 8 guests per table/bar table
4. Tables, chairs, and bars to be cleaned and sanitized after every use.
5. Common areas and high customer contact areas (i.e. door entrances) to be cleaned and sanitized at least once per hour.
6. Restrooms to be checked regularly and cleaned and sanitized based on frequency of use.



7. Place settings, utensils, and menus to become either single-use or cleaned/sanitized after every use.
8. Condiments are not to be left on table, instead provided upon request and cleaned after usage or personal packets should be used (salt, pepper, salad dressings, syrup, etc.)
9. Drink refills shall be in clean/unused glass/cups.
10. Lemons and unwrapped straws to be removed from self-service drink stations.
11. Hand sanitizer or washing stations upon exits/entrances.
12. Require the installment of certain equipment or markings, such as tape on the floor in checkout lines for limited service restaurant ordering in which customers stand in line.

Stage 3:

1. Post sign on door that no one with a fever or cough is to be permitted in the restaurant.
2. Normal capacity allowed. No restriction to the number of customers in the restaurant/bar areas.
3. Tables and chairs to be cleaned and sanitized based on frequency of use.
4. Common areas and high customer contact areas (i.e. door entrances) to be cleaned and sanitized at least once per shift.
5. Restrooms to be checked regularly and cleaned and sanitized based on frequency of use.
6. Place settings, utensils, and menus to be cleaned/disinfected at least every shift.
7. Condiments are not to be left on table, instead provided upon request and cleaned after usage or personal packets should be used (salt, pepper, salad dressings, syrup, etc.)
8. Drink refills shall be in clean/unused glass/cups.
9. Lemons and unwrapped straws to be removed from self-service drink stations.

NJRHA INDUSTRY PROMISE:

Welcome Back:

The hospitality industry is committed to protecting our employees and guests. As we return to our daily lives, we pledge to you, our guests, to continue to be a leader in health, safety, and sanitation practices.

Our Promise to You:

- We will continue to be a leader in safe sanitation practices.
- All employees will pass a health check or complete a health survey prior to each shift.
- All indoor and outdoor seating options will comply with the appropriate social distancing guidelines.
- Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations will be available to all customers and employees until phased out.
- We will clean and sanitize common areas and surfaces regularly.
- We will clean and sanitize each dining area after every use.
- Place settings, utensils, menus, and condiments will either be single-use or will be cleaned and sanitized after every use.
- We will post the *NJRHA Industry Promise* at our entrances so everyone understands the steps we must all take to keep our communities safe.



Your Promise to Us:

- If you have been exposed to COVID-19 recently or have symptoms of COVID-19 (including a fever, cough, or shortness of breath), please help us keep everyone safe by staying home and using our contactless delivery options.
- If you have underlying health conditions or are otherwise concerned about contracting COVID-19, please feel free to use our contactless delivery options.
- You agree to follow the social distancing and sanitary guidelines that have been put in place to protect you and our other customers and employees.
- If you have any questions about the *NJRHA Industry Promise*, please ask for a manager who will be happy to assist you.

NJRHA SUGGESTED BEST PRACTICES:

- Post the *NJRHA Industry Promise* in a prominent place in your facility and on your website to show your commitment to food safety, staff safety training, and the steps you are taking to go above and beyond in providing safe food and a safe dining experience and so everyone understands the steps we must all take to keep our communities safe.
- Consider automatic entrances/exits.
- Consider touchless hand sanitizing solutions.
- Consider touchless bathrooms including automatic doors, sinks, toilets, and stall doors (as able).
- Create, execute and publicly post a full scale “Safe Dining” cleaning and sanitizing protocol in preparation for welcoming customers.
 - Create a checklist of all front and back of house surfaces your staff and customers will come in contact with.
 - Never touch ready to eat food with hands. Use gloves correctly.
 - Takeout procedures include: Sanitize takeout boxes and bags and safe packaging (closed packaging).
 - Delivery procedures include: no contact delivery, no contact payment, cleaning and sanitizing cars, etc.
 - Train your staff on these surfaces and prepare procedures for elevated cleaning and sanitizing of these surfaces.
 - Post publicly in your facility and online.
- Allow customers to wear personal protective equipment such as masks or gloves within your facility, making them feel welcome and as safe as possible.
- Design a process to ensure guests stay separate while waiting to be seated making it hard for them to congregate in waiting areas or bar areas.
 - The process can include floor markings, outdoor distancing, waiting in cars, etc.
 - Consider an exit from the facility separate from the entrance.
 - Determine ingress/egress to and from restrooms to establish paths that mitigate proximity for guests and staff.
- Each business should determine, post and enforce a maximum number of customers allowed in a location at one time - based on factors such as square footage and layout of dine-in area

(perhaps leaning on some ratio of your fire occupancy number) and what the current social distancing rules are.

- Update floor plans for common dining and bar areas, redesigning seating arrangements to ensure proper social distancing between table setups and bar seats. This determination should be used for dine-out or patio seating areas.
- Post this conspicuously on your website and at your entrance so your customers know what to expect.
- Train your staff well on the best way to communicate this to your guests, especially those who may be disappointed when your determined capacity is reached.
- For certain restaurants and as appropriate a reservations-only business model or call-ahead seating to better space dinners.
- Consider limiting contact between waitstaff and guests.
 - Where face coverings are not mandated, suggest waitstaff to wear face coverings (as recommended by the CDC) if they have direct contact with guests. Reduce customer touch points by having food on cooks' line ready to serve.
 - Eliminate multiple touchpoints at the table by only having one person per table through their entire stay
 - Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction: mobile ordering and menu tablets; text on arrival for seating; contactless payment options.
- Require third party delivery drivers to take a food handler certification program.
- Remind third-party delivery drivers and any suppliers that you have internal distancing requirements.
- Where possible, workstations should be staggered so employees avoid standing directly opposite one another or next to each other. Where appropriate social distancing is not possible, consider other options (e.g., face coverings) and increase the frequency of surface cleaning and sanitizing. Limit the number of employees allowed simultaneously in break rooms.
- With larger staffs, use communication boards to or digital messaging to convey pre-shift meeting information.
- Allow your employees to wear masks or gloves if they want to. If possible, procure a supply to make available to your staff. NJRHA has preferred vendors for these types of products.
- In addition to cleaning tables/bars after each use, where possible, consider using disposable table coverings (linen tablecloths, butcher paper, etc.) to increase sanitation efforts and guest safety.
- Create an operating plan for any instance of an employee with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.
- In addition to health checks or surveys per shift, take staff members temperature upon reporting to work.
- In addition to ServSafe Manager and Food Handler, consider having your staff take ServSafe Allergen for an additional food safety certification.
- Consider removing self-serve spaces.
- Consider designating a single employee per shift, ideally with a clearly identifiable uniform or badge for customers to recognize, to oversee safety and sanitation measures.
- Make sure your online presence is robust and acknowledges fully all you are doing to operate safely.

- Keep regular operating hours and post them, make it clear when your facility is open for dine in.
- Spread the word through digital and social media platforms by using NJRHA's hashtag campaign, #safeeats and #njrhastrong
- Communicate, Train, Repeat. The way you welcome your staff back and meet them where they are in relation to potential anxiety over the current societal circumstances or any other issues, they are having will go a long way toward ensuring your long-term success. The same is true of your customers. Training your staff how to communicate to your customers completes this circle.

FOOTNOTES:

- At least one manager per shift certified in ServSafe Manager. * = This is a current DOL mandate. Currently, ServSafe Manager teaches:
 - Proper and safe food handling – types of contamination
 - Major Foodborne Illness Risk Factors
 - Proper Food Storage
 - Proper Cooking temperatures
 - HACCP Plan
 - Daily checklists about opening and closing that require cleaning and labeling food appropriately
 - Hair/head is covered or up and Proper handwashing enforced
 - Disinfecting and wiping down stations and tables in between guests