

RESTAURANT GUIDELINES

Posted: May 12, 2020



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

BACKGROUND

As Alabama's "safer at home" orders end in connection to COVID-19, a measured strategy with well-defined benchmarks will be needed to allow for safe interactions in the food service industry. With that, also comes a focus on the safety of the restaurant staff and patrons. This document will serve as a guideline for Birmingham restaurants as they work to reopen and serve the public.

Previously, restaurants were limited to just pick-up and curbside orders because of the threat of COVID-19. On May 8, 2020, the state announced that restaurants would be allowed to serve patrons inside their facilities, but with certain restrictions. One of those restrictions was that restaurants could only reopen at one-half the normal maximum capacity. Restaurants may continue to do curbside and call-in orders and continue to practice six feet social distancing.

The City of Birmingham requires that those within the City limits wear face coverings. While there are exceptions in different situations, those working in restaurants, however, are required to wear face coverings. On May 12, 2020, the Birmingham City Council amended its face covering order to extend it until May 22, 2020.

This document includes Phase 1 of restaurant guidelines. Additional guidelines will be provided as state and city orders connected to COVID-19 develop. Any additions or changes to this document will be posted on www.birminghamal.gov/coronavirus.

PHASE OF RESTAURANT OPENING	RESTAURANT OPERATIONS ALLOWED	BENCHMARK FOR MOVING TO NEXT PHASE
Phase I	<p>Continue to promote curbside ordering/pickup</p> <p>Restaurants can re-open at 1/2 of normal maximum occupancy as defined by the Fire Marshal as long as 6 feet maintained between parties and staff and other patrons</p> <p>Bar areas should be closed to prevent congregation of patrons. Alcohol service can continue.</p> <p>Employees should have a daily self-reported symptom screening performed, and if an employee reports symptoms, work from home options should be considered or the employee should be excluded from work.</p> <p>Employees should be required to wear face coverings</p> <p>No live music or events which might draw too large of a crowd</p>	Improvement/stability in Jefferson County rates of new cases of COVID-19 per day should be stable for 28 days



ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

1. Continue with sound food safety practices.
2. Restaurants should continue to promote online ordering and curbside pickup.
3. Restaurants should continue to expand capacity for touchless payment methods, online ordering apps.
4. Restaurants should create clearly demarcated lines to keep distance between employees and patrons (e.g. a line demarcating 6 feet from counter for placing an order and 6 feet spacing from other patrons).
5. Restaurants should consider, where feasible, to move to counter service models where a customer makes an order, retrieves food, and disposes of waste to minimize the interactions between the staff and patrons.
6. Signs
 - i. Signage should be posted at the entrance to the facility reminding patrons that they will not be permitted if they have a fever or other symptoms connected to COVID-19.
 - ii. Post signs inside premises that remind patrons to stay 6 feet apart.
 - iii. Signs in bathroom should include hand hygiene reminders alongside soap dispensers and/or sanitizer.
 - iv. Consider signs indicating limited occupancy of rest rooms to ensure social distancing.
7. Restaurants should either remove seats from the waiting area or ensure at least 6 feet between seats to discourage close quarters congregation. This applies to waiting areas and ques both inside and outside of the restaurant.
8. Employee workstations and break rooms should have occupancy limits in place to avoid congregation of staff.
9. At a minimum, all tables should be 6 feet apart.
10. Partitions should be used, where feasible, between patrons and staff.
11. Due to high numbers of repeated contacts and the formation of lines, buffets should be avoided.

CLEANING

1. Thoroughly detail-clean entire facility at the end of each workday. Focus on high-contact areas that would be touched by both employees and guests. Follow sanitizing material guidance to ensure it is at effective sanitizing strength and to protect surfaces.
2. Between seatings, clean table condiments, digital ordering devices, check presenters, self-service areas, tabletops, and common touch areas. Single-use items should be discarded. Consider using rolled silverware and eliminated table presets.
3. Remove lemons, and unwrapped straws from self-service drink stations.
4. Clean and disinfect reusable menus. If you use paper menus, discard them after each customer use.
5. Implement procedures to increase how often you clean and disinfect touch points and back of the house work spaces.



STAFF & PATRONS

PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR RESTAURANT STAFF

1. Employees should not work while ill. In the case of COVID-19, symptoms such as fevers, chills, muscle aches, shortness of breath, headaches, sore throat, or a new loss of taste or smell should prompt an employee to stay home and seek testing.
 - i. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
2. Employees must wash hands followed by application of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with more than 60% alcohol or soap and water multiple times per day.
3. For large staff, use communication boards or digital messaging to convey pre-shift information without congregant meetings
4. Gloves should be utilized as required by health codes for food preparation. However, when serving food, gloves may give a false sense of security and may diminish hand washing. Gloves are not advised for the serving of food to patrons.
5. Facemasks should be used by the patrons and staff in accordance with local ordinances.
6. While efforts should be made to keep a 6 feet distance between staff and patrons, delivering food to the patron is allowable. Otherwise, attempts should be made to maximize the distance between the staff and patrons.

PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR PATRONS

1. Disinfection Measures
 - i. Use CDC and FDA approved cleaning solutions to disinfect tables between patrons.
 - ii. Use CDC and FDA approved cleaning solutions to disinfect high-touch common surfaces frequently throughout the day (counters, food pick up areas, door handles, restroom surfaces).
2. Provide public use hand sanitizer to patrons at entry/exit doors.
3. Where grab-and-go options are available, limit the number of items to a minimum.
4. If an employee becomes ill or presents signs of illness suggestive of COVID-19, he/she should go home and not return to the work site until at least seven days from the onset of illness and following three days of symptom-free period without medication, at a minimum. Follow CDC guidance for disinfection following possible COVID exposure. Additionally, if a vendor, service tech, or delivery person shows signs concerning an illness, they should be asked to not enter the business.
5. Design processes within your establishment that control the flow and distance between patrons. For example, floor markings at intervals of 6 feet to indicate where to stand in line.
6. Consider a call ahead model or reservation only to appropriately limit crowds.
7. Floor markings or outdoor distancing should be used when waiting for cars on in queue for seating.