Common Questions & Answers for Retail Food Establishments

Provided by Vigo County Health Department

**How do I screen my employees?**

*Ask employees on a daily basis, the following:*

* *Do you have a fever, cough, diarrhea, vomiting, or other signs of illness?*
* *Have you be around a person with COVID-19? Or someone who was quarantined for COVID-19?*

*Take temperatures of employees and record (optional)*

**Am I to screen customers coming in to dine in? If so, how does that look?**

*Yes, this could be a simple sign asking patrons who are sick or from a vulnerable population not to enter or having a host/hostess monitor guests for signs of illness.*

**Can I tell anyone over 65 that they can’t come in?**

*No, but signage on the door can advise them that they are in a high risk population*

**Do ALL my employees have to wear a mask?**

*Yes*

**Do customers have to wear masks?**

*No, but it is recommended*

**If I keep my dining room closed and only offer curbside or delivery, do my employees still have to wear masks?**

*Yes*

**When can I open my restaurant dining room?**

*Restaurants and bars that serve food can open on May 11th at 50% seating capacity, tables spaced 6 feet apart, and no more than 6 people per table*

**How do I reduce my seating to 50% capacity?**

The easiest way to calculate this is take the number of seats you currently have and divide by 2. This can be achieved by removing chairs, tables, using signs or caution tape to discourage patrons from using these seats.

**Do I have to put plexi-glass up to protect my hostess area?**

*No, but it’s a good idea. This will protect your employees and customers.*

**Can I have people wait for a table in our waiting room or at the hostess station?**

*No. Use pagers, cell phones or intercom to announce when tables are ready*

**What is the maximum number of people allowed to sit at an individual table?**

*6*

**Can we allow a family to have a birthday party if in a separate dining area away from other patrons?**

*No. Only parties of 6 or less can be seated at a restaurant.*

**Can customers use outside seating areas?**

*Yes, but tables should be spaced 6 feet apart with less than 6 people per table.*

**When can I open my bar?**

*Bars that serve food may open May 11th, 2020 at 50% seating capacity, tables spaced 6 feet apart, and no more than 6 people per table.*

**What if my bar serves only chips and pizza, when can I open?**

*Bars that serve food may open May 11th at 50% seating capacity, tables spaced 6 feet apart, and no more than 6 people per table.*

**When can I open if my bar does NOT serve food?**

*Bars and nightclubs may open at 50% capacity on June 14th*

**Do I have to rope off my bar rail?**

*Yes*

**Do I have to rope off my bar seating at my restaurant?**

*No. All restaurants and bars have to rope off bar rail, but can have bar seating as long as the tables are spaced at least 6 feet apart and seating capacity is 50%*

**I’m a country club/ private club that has a bar/serves food. Can I be open?**

*Private, country, and social clubs are closed at this time. If they serve food at their restaurant/bar, then they can open that portion of the club on May 11th. They will have to adhere to the guidelines in this document and posted on our website.*

**Can people use pool tables, dart boards or do karaoke at my establishment?**

*No. Please block off, unplug or physically remove these items for the time being*

**Can I have bands or DJs perform in my establishment?**

*No live music or entertainment for the time being.*

**Can I serve buffet style?**

*No. Buffet style restaurants can plate food for customers and hand to them as long as customers are socially distancing while in line.*

**How do I keep customers from using the self-serve beverage stations?**

*Rope off this area or unplug/turn off machines so patrons do not have access*

**Can my establishment sell hot dogs, fountain drinks, donuts, pizza, or coffee in a self-serve manner?**

*No, these areas shall be roped off and/or turned off. A masked employee can prepare and serve these items to a customer.*

**Can I leave cups, lids, straws and condiments out for customers to grab for themselves?**

*No*

**Can I leave condiments and single serve packets of sugar, sweetener, etc on the tables?**

*No. Your wait staff can provide single servings of these items by request.*

**Do I have to provide hand sanitizer for the public?**

*No. If you are able, we recommend to provide it for patrons in the lobby, at cashier’s stations and restrooms.*

**What areas should I focus on for extra cleaning?**

*High contact areas such as door handles, tables, chairs, and restrooms should be cleaned frequently. Items customers handle like laminated menus, pagers, pens and keypads shall be cleaned after each use.*

**Do I have to use disposable silverware, plates, cups and menus?**

*No. It is recommended if you are able to substitute these items in your establishment*

**Do I have to post the seating capacity?**

*No, but is recommended by the Vigo County Health Department to post it on the door*

**Do I have to have separate entrances and exits for customers?**

*No, unless it helps customers to better social distance.*

**Can my establishment hold a benefit or fundraiser?**

*Yes, if ALL of the following conditions are met:*

* *6 or less people at each table*
* *Tables spaced at least 6 feet apart*
* *50% seating capacity*
* *Benefit is food ONLY, no entertainment*

**What if my certified food handlers is expired and I can’t get into a class?**

*Please keep copy of expired certificate until you are able to renew. We will not be citing this as a violation until further notice.*

**Do I have to be inspected prior to opening on May 11th?**

*No, but if you have questions after reading this document, please call our office Monday-Friday at (812) 462-3281. We will be spot checking establishments at random to check for compliance.*