



## Reopening New York City: Checklist for Restaurants Offering Takeout, Delivery and Outdoor Dining

New York City (NYC) restaurants may currently operate for takeout and delivery and outdoor dining. Once NYC moves into NY Forward Phase Three, restaurants will be able to add indoor table service. We do not yet have the date for when we enter Phase Three.

Restaurants must follow New York State (NYS) [requirements](#) and [affirm compliance](#). Before opening, you must develop a [safety plan](#) and keep it on site.

Restaurants must also follow the requirements of the NYC Health Code, including rules related to [dining with dogs](#) in outdoor seating areas. Visit [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health) and search for “Operating a Restaurant” for more information.

**Remember, there is still community transmission of COVID-19 in NYC. Keep in mind the Core Four actions for preventing COVID-19:**

- **Stay home if sick:** Stay home if you are sick unless you are leaving for essential medical care (including [testing](#)) or other essential errands.
- **Physical distancing:** Stay at least 6 feet away from other people.
- **Wear a face covering:** Protect those around you. You can be contagious without symptoms and spread the disease when you cough, sneeze or talk. A face covering may help reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- **Practice healthy hand hygiene:** Wash your hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; clean frequently touched surfaces regularly; avoid touching your face with unwashed hands; and cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve, not your hands.

### Before Reopening

The NYC Health Department recommends you take these steps before reopening your restaurant if it’s been closed to be sure your establishment is ready for staff and customers.

- Make sure utilities are working properly, including electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting, gas, exhaust hood and fire suppression systems.
- Maximize outdoor air flow through the ventilation system.
- Make sure all equipment, including cooking, hot and cold holding, and refrigeration units are working properly and are able to maintain appropriate temperatures.
- Flush cold water from all outlets, such as faucets and spray nozzles. Then do the same for hot water outlets.
- Flush water line, and clean and sanitize all food equipment that uses plumbing, according to manufacturer instructions.
- Make sure hand-washing facilities are functioning and properly stocked with soap and paper towels.

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect all non-food contact areas of the restaurant, including restrooms and waiting areas (see [General Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting for Non-Health Care Settings](#)).
- Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces. Check the product label to make sure the sanitizer is safe to use on surfaces and equipment that touch food. Remember that products for cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces differ from those for non-food contact surfaces.
- Use [EPA-registered sanitizers and disinfectants](#) effective against COVID-19.
- Empty ice bins, and wash, rinse and sanitize them.
- Check all stored foods and appropriately discard anything that is no longer safe.
- Look for signs of pests and address any issues observed (see [Best Practices for Pest Proofing Food Service Establishments](#)).
- Resume needed services that may have been discontinued, such as pest control, trash and recycling services.
- Make needed repairs to physical facilities, including floors, walls and ceilings.
- Check all supplies and restock as needed.

### **Summary of New York State (NYS) Requirements and Best Practices**

These are the mandates and recommended best practices from the NYS [summary guidelines](#). Be sure to also review the [detailed guidelines](#), affirm compliance and develop a [safety plan](#) before you start.

### **Physical Distancing**

#### *Mandates*

- In outdoor spaces, all tables with seats must be at least 6 feet from any other table, seat, patron or pedestrian thoroughfare or corridor.
- Ensure an indoor capacity to accommodate patrons who may need to enter/exit through the indoor space to access the outdoor seating, restroom(s), or payment location, and allow such access/egress in a socially distanced manner.
- Close indoor dining and seating areas to customers.
- Employees must wear face coverings at all times.
- Patrons must wear face coverings at all times, except while seated; provided that the patron is over the age of 2 and able to medically tolerate one.
- Limit outdoor capacity to the number of tables that can be safely and appropriately arranged, such that each table is a minimum of 6 feet away from another.
- Wherever distancing is not feasible between tables, enact physical barriers between such tables.
- Individuals seated at the same table must be members of the same party (but may be from different households), with a maximum of 10 people per table.
- Communal tables are only permitted if at least 6 feet can be maintained between parties.
- Clearly signal 6 feet spacing in any lines for customers waiting to order, pick up food, be seated or use the restroom, as well as in any pick-up or payment location.

- Designate entrances/exits for customers and separate entrances/exits for employees, where possible.
- Limit in-person gatherings (e.g., staff meetings) to the greatest extent possible.
- Establish designated areas for vendor pickups and/or deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.

#### *Recommended best practices*

- Ensure a distance of at least 6 feet is maintained among workers at all times, unless the core activity requires a shorter distance. (e.g., cooking, cleaning, clearing tables).
- Prohibit the use of small spaces (e.g., freezers, storage rooms) by more than one individual at time.
- Modify the use and/or restrict the number of work stations/employee seating areas to maintain 6 feet distance.
- Designate discrete work zones for services, where possible. Servers should serve specific zones in the restaurant to minimize overlap.
- Ensure kitchen staff are dedicated to one station throughout their entire shift (e.g., salad or grill or desserts) to the extent possible.
- Encourage kitchen staff to place items on the counter for the next person to pick up, rather than passing items from hands to hands. Reduce bidirectional foot traffic by using tape or signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways or spaces.
- Encourage customers to wait in their car or outside until food is ready to be picked up or they're ready to be seated.
- Encourage customers to place orders online or by phone.
- Allow for contactless order, payment, delivery and pick-up, where possible.
- Allow customers to order food prior to arrival, and encourage customer reservations for seating.
- Ensure a one-at-a-time process for vendors, in which one vendor delivers a product at a time, employees disinfect high touch surface and the next vendor can come on premises.

### **Protective Equipment**

#### *Mandates*

- Provide workers with an acceptable face covering at no cost to the employees and have an adequate supply of coverings in case of need for replacement. Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), surgical masks and face shields.
- Clean, replace and prohibit sharing of face coverings. Consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as instructions on use and cleaning.
- Train employees on how to don (put on), doff (take off), clean (as applicable) and discard PPE.
- Limit the sharing of objects (e.g., kitchen tools, pens/pads), as well as the touching of shared surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, keypads, touch screens); or, require workers to wear

gloves when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched surfaces; or, require workers to perform hand hygiene before and after contact.

- Ensure all staff wear face coverings at all times and that they practice hand hygiene and use bare hand barriers consistent with State and local sanitary codes.
  - If employees wear gloves during non-food preparation activities, ensure they replace gloves frequently, and encourage them to change gloves when switching tasks (e.g., serving customers to pre-rolling silverware).
  - If employees do not wear gloves, ensure they frequently wash their hands with soap and water.
- Ensure that employees who are bussing tables wash their hands with soap and water and, if they wear gloves, replace the gloves before and after cleaning and disinfecting tables.

#### *Recommended best practices*

- Maintain adequate supply of face coverings, masks and other required PPE should a worker need a replacement, or should a vendor be in need.
- Require customers to wear face coverings when not seated at a table (e.g., when waiting for pick-up, placing order at counter/window, walking to/from table, walking to/from restroom).
- Encourage, but don't require, customers to wear face coverings when seated at a table and not eating and/or drinking.
- In food trucks and concessions where there are not running water stations, employees should wear gloves or regularly use hand sanitizer and continue to comply with federal, State and local food handling and hygiene requirements.

### **Hygiene and Cleaning**

#### *Mandates*

- Adhere to hygiene, cleaning and disinfection requirements from the CDC and NYS Department of Health (DOH) and maintain logs that document date, time and scope of cleaning.
- Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations including hand-washing with soap, running warm water and disposable paper towels, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where hand-washing is not feasible.
- Provide and encourage employees to use cleaning and disinfection supplies for shared surfaces for use before and after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene.
- Regularly clean and disinfect the establishment and more frequently clean and disinfect high risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces (e.g., restrooms). Cleaning and disinfection must be rigorous and ongoing and should occur at least after each shift, daily or more frequently if needed.
- Ensure that equipment is regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants, including at least as often as employees change workstations. Refer Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) products identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID 19.

- Provide cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event of an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high touch surfaces.
- Before returning to work, complete pre-return checks and assessments of kitchen systems to ensure a healthy and safe environment.
- Prohibit the use of devices (e.g., buzzers) to provide alerts to customers that seating or an order is available, unless such devices are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- For takeout/delivery:
  - Provide hand hygiene stations for customers waiting for food and/or drinks.
  - Ensure staff wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer; if staff use gloves, regularly replace them.
  - If pick-up/delivery is indoors, ensure windows/doors are opened to allow for ventilation.
- Ensure all condiments provided directly to customers are in single-use disposable containers or reusable containers that are regularly cleaned/disinfected.
- If non-disposable menus are used, clean and disinfect the menus between each party's use.
- Use pre-packaged silverware or pre-rolled silverware. Silverware must be pre-rolled while wearing masks and gloves.

#### *Recommended best practices*

- Wherever possible, increase ventilation of outdoor air (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining safety precautions.
- Discourage food preparation employees from changing/entering each others' work stations during shifts, unless they are appropriately cleaned/disinfected.
- Provide guests with a single use, paper, disposable menus and/or display menus on white boards/chalk boards/televisions/projectors.
- Encourage customers to view menus online (e.g., on their own smartphone or electronic device), where possible.
- Make hand sanitizer available throughout high touch areas (e.g., outside restrooms), and place it in convenient locations, such as at entrances, exits and cashiers. Install touch-free hand sanitizer, where possible.

### **Communication**

#### *Mandates*

- Affirm you have reviewed and understand the State-issued industry guidelines, and that you will implement them.
- Post signage to remind employees and patrons to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE and cleaning and disinfection protocols.
- Immediately notify the State and local health department if a worker was in close contact with others and tests positive for COVID-19.
- Cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts in the workplace, while maintaining confidentiality required by State and federal law and regulations.

- Conspicuously post completed safety plans on site.

#### *Recommended best practices*

- Use audio announcements, text messages or notices on screens to communicate with customers waiting on an order/seating.
- Establish a communications plan for employees, vendors and customers that includes a consistent means to provide updated information.

### **Screening**

#### *Mandates*

- Employees who are sick should stay home or return to home, if they become ill at work.
- Implement mandatory daily health screening practices of their employees and, where practicable, vendors, but such screening shall not be mandated for customers and delivery personnel (e.g., questionnaire, temperature check) for employees, and asking about (1) COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or (3) close contact with confirmed or suspected COVID 19 case in past 14 days.
- Refer to NYS DOH guidance regarding protocols and policies for employees seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the employee had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.
- Establishments cannot mandate that customers complete a health screen or provide contact information.
- Screeners should be trained by employer identified individuals familiar with CDC, NYS DOH and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) protocols and wear appropriate PPE, including at a minimum, a face covering.
- Identify a point of contact as the party for workers to inform if they, later, are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, as noted in the questionnaire.

#### *Recommended best practices*

- Prevent employees from intermingling in close or proximate contact with each other prior to completion of the screening (e.g., perform screening remotely).
- Daily temperature checks may be conducted per Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or NYS DOH guidelines.
- Maintain a log of every person, including workers and vendors, who may have close or proximate contact with other individuals at the work site or area, such that all contacts may be identified, traced and notified in the event a worker is diagnosed with COVID 19; excluding customers and deliveries performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means.
- Provide an option for customers to provide contact information so they can be logged and contacted for contact tracing.

**The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.**

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