

Alaska

STR^{AK}ING

Guidelines for reopening our
hospitality industry.



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To reopening hospitality operators...

The purpose of guidance is just that – to offer you direction and provide a framework for best practices as you reopen.

But as the saying goes, the devil is in the details, and not every establishment is the same and not every opening scenario will align. We recognize that not everyone has access to guidance, and that is where the Alaska Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant, and Retailers Association (Alaska CHARR) can provide help.

- Make sure your person-in-charge has an up-to-date ServSafe Food Manager certification. The Food and Drug Administration requires every restaurant to have a person in charge on site during open hours and also directs that the person in charge should have a food manager certification.
- Provide ServSafe food handler training for your workers. They're your front line; educating them protects them, you, and your guests.
- Make technology your friend. Contactless payment systems, automated ordering systems, mobile ordering apps, website updates, and simple texts can help you to communicate and conduct business with reduced need for close contact. As you begin to reopen, keep communicating with customers (your hours, menu items, reservations, etc.), and help promote your social distancing and safety efforts.
- And some of the best advice comes from the Food and Drug Administration, which develops the Food Code we all rely on. Its newest guide, *Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, was just released. You can link to it [here](#).

As we continue to learn more about operating businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to share with you the most current direction and advice from the experts at FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other agencies. These documents will continue to reflect those best practices and will continue to be updated.

Returning hospitality to service **SAFELY**

Alaska CHARR is the Alaska partner of the National Restaurant Association, who worked with representatives of the Food and Drug Administration, academia, the Conference for Food Protection, Ecolab, public health officials, and industry representatives to develop a set of opening and operating guidelines to help establishments return to full operation safely when the time comes.

This guidance is designed to provide you with a basic summary of recommended practices that can be used to help mitigate exposure to the COVID-19 virus, including:

- Food safety
- Cleaning and sanitizing
- Employee health monitoring and personal hygiene
- Social distancing



Combine this guidance with your existing policies as well as this new resource from the FDA, *Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/ Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Armed with information, ServSafe training, and the recommendations of your local health departments, you can help secure a safe opening.

For the most comprehensive and up-to-date COVID-19 resources and information for Alaska's hospitality industry, visit:

alaskacharr.com/coronavirus-and-hospitality

COVID-19 **HOSPITALITY RESPONSE**

Food safety has always been a priority for the hospitality industry, for both guests and employees.

The basis of an effective food safety culture is the Food and Drug Administration Food Code, which for decades has served as the foundation for restaurant operating procedures as they relate to safe food handling. The guidance outlined in the Food Code is science-based and is designed to reduce and prevent the incidence of foodborne illness. Food Code requirements related to sanitation and personal hygiene, in particular, are the most reliable protocols available to combat risks related to the spread of COVID-19.

Local, state, and federal regulators use the FDA Food Code as a model to develop or update their own food safety rules and to be consistent with national food regulatory policy.

Among the requirements of the Food Code that apply today are:

- Prohibiting sick employees in the workplace
- Strict handwashing practices that include how and when to wash hands
- Strong procedures and practices to clean and sanitize surfaces
- Ensuring the person in charge of a foodservice facility is a certified food safety manager
- Ensuring the person in charge is on site at all times during operating hours

Reopening guidance **FOR EMPLOYERS**

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE IS TO BUILD ON THE ALREADY ESTABLISHED BEST PRACTICES AND REQUIREMENTS AVAILABLE that address specific health and safety concerns related to the spread of COVID-19, and to put those protocols into practice as state and local officials begin to open our communities and businesses. Operators should make use of these guidelines as they relate to their existing policies and procedures and in conjunction with instructions they receive from authorities during their reopening phase-in.

Local officials may tailor the application of opening criteria to local circumstances (eg: metropolitan areas that have seen more prevalent COVID-19 cases vs. rural areas where outbreaks have not occurred or have been minimal).

To prepare to comply with opening procedures, operators should update their existing policies and operating procedures in accordance with the latest FDA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Environmental Protection Agency guidance.

Operators should produce a written COVID-19 Mitigation Plan in accordance with current state and local health mandates or advisories. **EMPLOYERS SHOULD PROVIDE TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES REGARDING THE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE HEALTH MANDATES AND THE COVID-19 MITIGATION PLAN**, and have a copy of the written COVID-19 Mitigation Plan on the premises at all times.

Among the recommended topics to be described in the written COVID-19 Mitigation Plan are:

- Plans to minimize direct contact between employees and customers/groups, and to increase social/physical distancing
- Employee health and hygiene
- Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting

Reopening guidance **ON FOOD SAFETY**

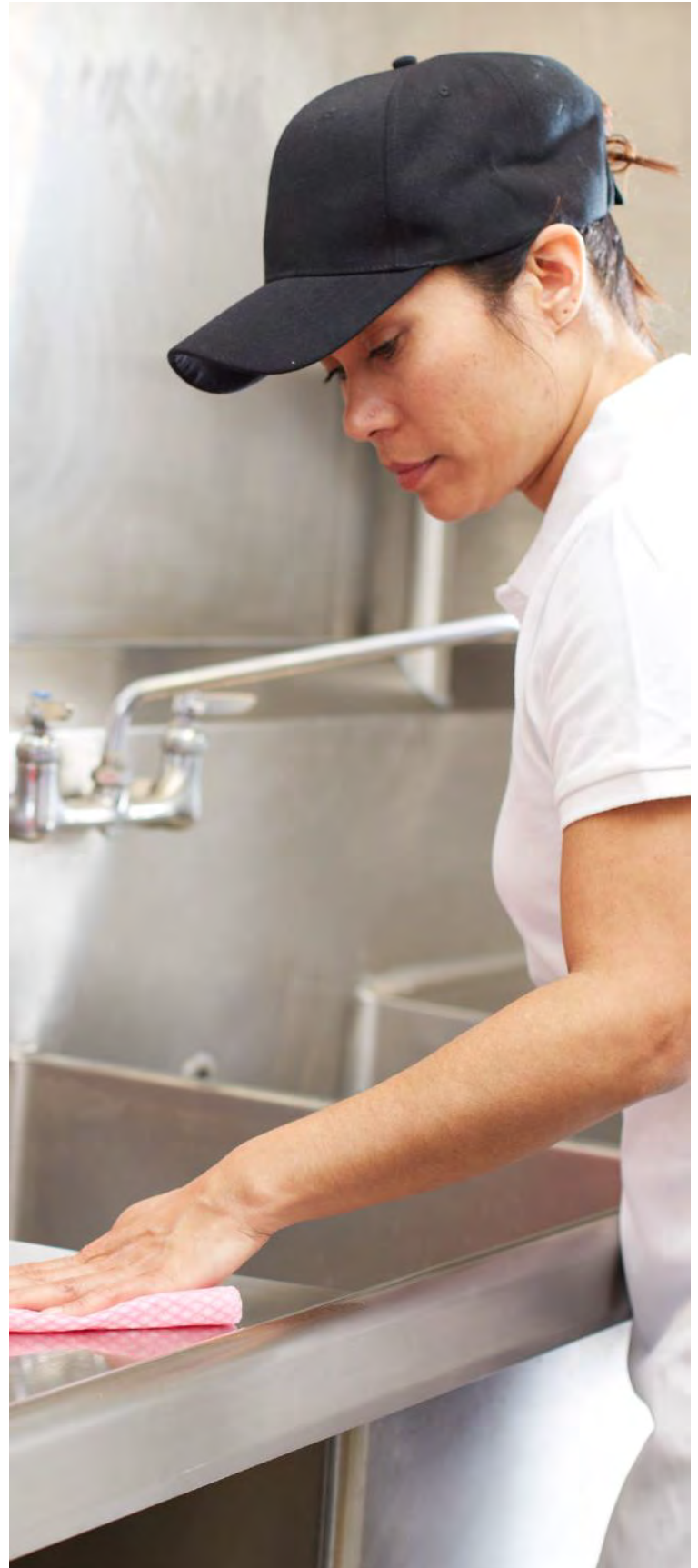
- Discard all food items that are out of date.
- Where salad bars and buffets are permitted by local officials, they should have sneeze guards in place. Change, wash, and sanitize utensils frequently and place appropriate barriers in open areas. Consider cafeteria style (worker-served) salad bars and buffets, rather than self-service stations.
- If providing a “grab and go” service, stock coolers to no more than minimum levels.
- Ensure the person in charge is ServSafe certified and that her/his certification is up to date; provide food handler training to refresh employees.



Reopening recommendations for

CLEANING & SANITIZING

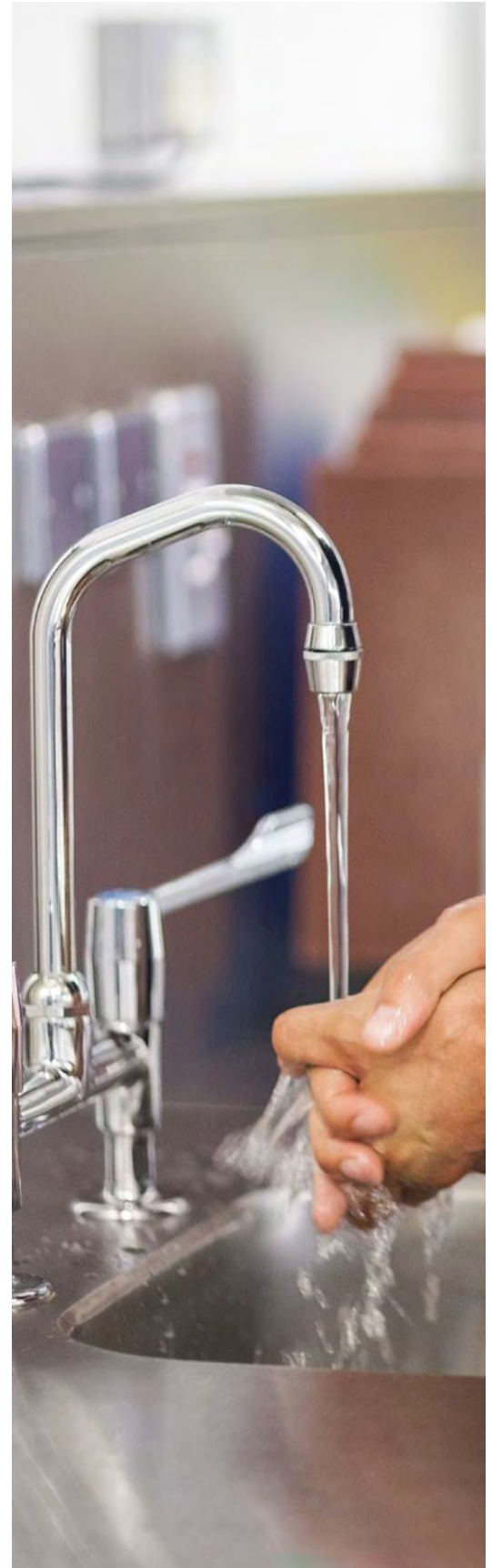
- Thoroughly detail-clean and sanitize the entire facility every week, in compliance with the [CDC protocols](#). Focus on high-contact areas that would be touched by both employees and guests. Do not overlook seldom-touched surfaces. Follow sanitizing material guidance to ensure effective sanitizing strength and to protect surfaces.
- Avoid all food contact surfaces when using disinfectants.
- Between seatings, fully clean and sanitize tables and chairs, bars and stools, reusable condiments, reusable digital ordering devices, check presenters, self-service areas, tabletops, and common touch areas. Single-use items should be discarded. Disposableware and condiments in single-use packages or single-serving containers should be used when available. Consider using rolled silverware and eliminating table presets. Reusable condiments should only be provided by request.
- Remove unwrapped straws from drink stations.
- Clean and sanitize reusable menus. Discard any paper menus after each customer use. Consider using menu boards. Implement procedures to increase how often you clean and sanitize surfaces in the back-of-house.
- Conduct regular touch-point sanitization of high-contact areas (workstations, equipment, screens, doorknobs, restrooms).
- Make hand sanitizer and/or hand washing readily available to guests, including at the entrance. Consider touchless hand sanitizing solutions.



Reopening recommendations on monitoring

EMPLOYEE HEALTH & PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Per existing FDA Food Code requirements, employees who are sick should remain at home.
- If an employee becomes ill or presents signs of illness, the operator should identify the signs during a pre-work screening and follow the business's established policies on when the ill employee is allowed to return to work. At a minimum, however, follow [CDC guidelines](#). Suggest the employee contact a health care provider. The employee should be symptom-free before returning to work, and should not have had a fever for three days without medication.
- Taking employees' temperatures is at the operators' discretion. The State has not mandated taking an employee's temperature, and any operator who chooses to do so should engage health officials first and adopt policies aligned with proper procedures. CDC guidance states the minimum temperature that indicates a fever is 100°F.
- The State strongly suggests cloth face coverings to be worn by all employees who are interacting with the public. Per CDC recommendations, face coverings have been shown to be effective tools to mitigate risk from individuals who show symptoms as well as those who don't, especially in close environments where it's hard for people to maintain a three- to six-foot distance. Those coverings worn by employees should be kept clean in accordance with CDC guidance. CDC provides overall cleaning guidance [here](#).
- Train all employees on the importance of frequent hand washing and the use of hand sanitizers with at least 70% alcohol content. Give them clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.
- An adequate supply of soap, disinfectant, hand sanitizer, and paper towels must be available.

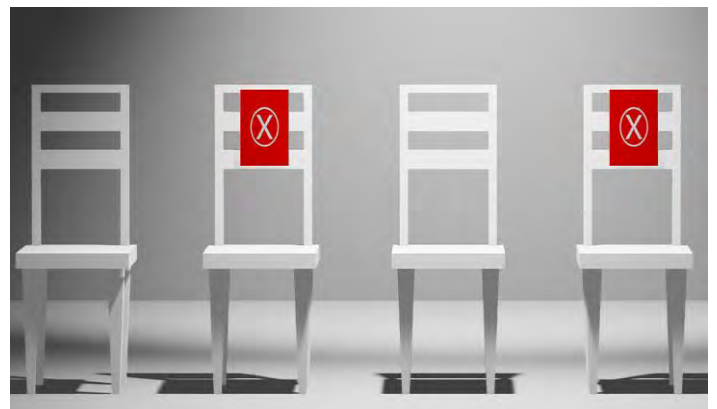


Reopening guidance on

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Consider updating floor plans for common dining areas, redesigning seating arrangements to ensure adequate separation between table setups to enable six-foot physical distancing between parties from separate households.
- Any social distancing measures based on square footage should take into account service areas as well as guest areas.
- Remind third-party delivery drivers and any suppliers that you have internal distancing requirements.
- Consider posting signage at the entrance that states that no one with symptoms of COVID-19 is to be permitted on the premises.
- Limit contact between waitstaff and guests.
- If practical, physical barriers such as partitions or Plexiglas barriers at registers are acceptable.
- Limit the number of employees allowed simultaneously in break rooms.
- Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction: mobile ordering and menu tablets; text on arrival for seating; contactless payment options.
- With larger staffs, use communication boards or digital messaging to convey pre-shift meeting information.
- Provide hand sanitizer for guests to use, including contactless hand sanitizing stations, and post signs reminding guests about social distancing. Thank them for their patience as you work to ensure their safety.
- Do not allow guests to congregate in waiting areas or bar areas. Design a process to ensure guests stay separate while waiting to be seated. 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.
- Where possible, workstations should be staggered so employees avoid standing directly opposite one another or next to each other. Where six feet of separation is not possible, consider other options and increase the frequency of surface cleaning and sanitizing.

Note: When worn, face coverings should be cleaned daily according to CDC guidance. The operator should consider collecting and cleaning all face coverings from staff at the end



of each day and redistributing at the beginning of each shift; alternatively, enforce mandatory daily washing by staff.

Reopening recommendations on

OTHER BEST PRACTICES

- Develop a written COVID-19 Mitigation Plan using the corresponding checklist. A printed copy of the Plan should be kept on the premises at all times. Train all employees on the material within the Plan. Provide a printed copy of the Plan to each employee, and have each employee certify in writing that she/he has received a written copy of the Plan and understands the material within.
- Screen each employee before she/he begins each shift for symptoms of COVID-19. Document each screening on the accompanying spreadsheet, have the employee certify whether she/he displays any symptoms of COVID-19. Employees displaying any symptoms should immediately leave the premises and contact a health care professional. Employee screening logs must be kept confidential and should remain in the appropriate employee's personnel file. Records should be retained for two years for employer protection.
- If an active employee is identified as being COVID-19 positive by testing, you should conduct cleaning and disinfecting in compliance with [CDC guidelines](#), or shut down the business for at least 72 consecutive hours.
- Consider spacing tables to maintain physical distancing between parties.
- Encourage outdoor seating, when available.
- Customers from different households who are seated at the bar should be at least six feet apart.
- Consider disallowing communal food among customers from different households.
- On-premises alcohol service may be provided to diners, if permitted with a corresponding license issued by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Consider posting entryway signage stating that any customer who has symptoms of COVID-19 must not enter the premises.

Additional Recommendations

- It is strongly encouraged that cloth face coverings be worn by all employees who are interacting with the public or regularly working within six feet of others.
- Continue to prioritize entryway, curbside, and home delivery, as well as telephone and online ordering to minimize contact during pickup and delivery.
- Utilize paperless transactions when possible and offer to email receipts. Encourage customers to use cards or other cashless payment options.
- Where possible, utilize different entry and exit points using one-way traffic.
- Implement additional safety and sanitization house policies.

BEST PRACTICES

for retail food stores, restaurants, and pick-up/delivery services during the COVID-19 pandemic

FDA is sharing information about best practices to operate restaurants, retail food stores, and associated pick-up and delivery services during the COVID-19 pandemic to safeguard workers and consumers. This addresses key considerations for how foods offered can be safely handled and delivered to the public. This is not a comprehensive list. FDA encourages consulting the references and links provided below (by CDC, FDA, EPA, and OSHA) for more detailed information. This will be updated as FDA receives additional information.

- [Managing Employee Health \(Including Contracted Workers\)](#)
- [Personal Hygiene for Employees](#)
- [Managing Operations in a Foodservice Establishment or Retail Store](#)
- [Managing Food Pick-up and Delivery](#)

Be Healthy, Be Clean



- Employees - Stay home or leave work if sick; consult doctor if sick, and contact supervisor
- Employers - Instruct sick employees to stay home and send home immediately if sick
- Employers - Pre-screen employees exposed to COVID-19 for temperature and other symptoms



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer per CDC
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Wear mask/face covering per CDC & FDA



- Never touch Ready-to-Eat foods with bare hands
- Use single service gloves, deli tissue, or suitable utensils
- Wrap food containers to prevent cross contamination
- Follow 4 steps to food safety: Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill

Clean & Disinfect



- Train employees on cleaning and disinfecting procedures, and protective measures, per CDC and FDA
- Have and use cleaning products and supplies
- Follow protective measures



- Disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently
- Use EPA-registered disinfectant
- Ensure food containers and utensils are cleaned and sanitized



- Prepare and use sanitizers according to label instructions
- Offer sanitizers and wipes to customers to clean grocery cart/basket handles, or utilize store personnel to conduct cleaning/sanitizing

Social Distance



- Help educate employees and customers on importance of social distancing:
 - Signs
 - Audio messages
 - Consider using every other check-out lane to aid in distancing



- Avoid displays that may result in customer gatherings; discontinue self-serve buffets and salad bars; discourage employee gatherings
- Place floor markings and signs to encourage social distancing

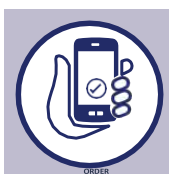


- Shorten customer time in store by encouraging them to:
 - Use shopping lists
 - Order ahead of time, if offered
- Set up designated pick-up areas inside or outside retail establishments

Pick-up & Delivery



- If offering delivery options:
 - Ensure coolers and transport containers are cleaned and sanitized
 - Maintain time and temperature controls
 - Avoid cross contamination; for example, wrap food during transport



- Encourage customers to use "no touch" deliveries
- Notify customers as the delivery is arriving by text message or phone call



- Establish designated pick-up zones for customers
- Offer curbside pick-up
- Practice social distancing by offering to place orders in vehicle trunks



Alaska Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant, and Retailers Association

COVID-19 Reopening Guidance

A Guide for the Hospitality Industry

Phases 3 & 4

alaskacharr.com/coronavirus-and-hospitality

