

COVID-19: CDC Issues Reopening Guidance for Restaurants and Bars

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) recently released guidelines to help restaurants and bars safely reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. The one-page decision tree maps out different courses of action and outcomes based on the food service establishment’s ability to meet certain safeguards. Before implementing public health safeguards and moving forward with reopening plans, the CDC lists the following initial considerations:

- Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- Are you ready to protect employees at higher risk for severe illness?

If a food service establishment responds “yes” to both questions, then the CDC outlines the safeguards in two paths that a bar or restaurant should implement before reopening the business to the public. These actions encourage behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 among employees and customers, maintain healthy environments and operations, and implement ongoing monitoring.

Ultimately, businesses should be prepared to adjust operations according to state and local orders or issues specific to the facility. The different courses of action and listed safeguards outlined in the CDC’s restaurants and bars reopening decision tree document can be reviewed on the following page.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The purpose of this tool is to assist businesses in the food service industry, such as restaurants and bars, in making (re)opening decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to check with state and local health officials and other partners to determine the most appropriate actions while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community.

Should you consider opening?

- ✓ Will reopening be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- ✓ Are you ready to protect employees at higher risk for severe illness?

ANY NO



Are recommended health and safety actions in place?

- ✓ Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing and employees wearing a cloth face covering, as feasible
- ✓ Intensify cleaning, sanitization, disinfection, and ventilation
- ✓ Encourage social distancing and enhance spacing at establishments including by encouraging drive-through, delivery, curbside pick up, spacing of tables/stools, limiting party sizes and occupancy, avoiding self-serve stations, restricting employee shared spaces, rotating or staggering shifts, if feasible
- ✓ Train all employees on health and safety protocols

ALL YES

ALL YES

ALL YES

ANY NO



ANY NO



Is ongoing monitoring in place?

- ✓ Develop and implement procedures to check for signs and symptoms of employees daily upon arrival, as feasible
- ✓ Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home
- ✓ Plan for if an employee gets sick
- ✓ Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities and employees
- ✓ Monitor employee absences and have flexible leave policies and practices
- ✓ Be ready to consult with the local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area

OPEN AND MONITOR



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Restaurants and Bars During the COVID-19 Pandemic. 2020. Center for Disease Control, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/restaurants-and-bars-decision-tree.pdf>



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