

# Restaurant Industry

The “Tennessee Pledge” is a plan to help Tennesseans get back to work in a safe environment, restore their livelihoods and reboot our state’s economy.



# Restaurant Industry

## Safeguarding Guidance

The State recommends strict adherence to [CDC](#) and [FDA](#) guidelines, as well as the Universal Guidelines for All Businesses. Additionally, the State recommends restaurants put into place an assortment of measures to protect consumers and employees, including:

## Employee Protection

- **Allow employees to work from home as much as possible**
- **Screen all employees reporting to work for COVID-19 symptoms** with the following questions:
  - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
  - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or sore throat?
  - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
  - Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
  - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- **Temperature screening employees:**
  - Best practice: employers to take temperatures onsite with a no-touch thermometer each day upon arrival at work
  - Minimum: temperatures can be taken before arriving. Normal temperature should not exceed 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Have **dedicated face coverings and dedicated gloves** (i.e., only used by one person) worn by all employees, at all times
  - Should not be N-95 or medical variety – these should be saved for use by healthcare workers
- **Practice recommended social distancing** to the greatest extent possible—**“Further is safer”**
- **Employees should increase hygiene practices**—wash hands more frequently, avoid touching face, practice good respiratory etiquette when coughing or sneezing
- All employees should **stay home if feeling ill**, report any symptoms of illness to supervisor and require notification of COVID-19 positive case in employee’s household. Employees who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the CDC (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home
- **Direct any employee who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms** (i.e., answers yes to any of the screening questions or who is running a fever) to leave the premises immediately and seek medical care and/or COVID-19 testing, per Tennessee

Department of Health and [CDC guidelines](#). Employers should maintain the confidentiality of employee health information.

- **Plan for potential COVID-19 cases**, and work with local health department officials when needed (e.g., monitor and trace COVID-19 cases, deep clean facilities)
- **Covered employers and employees should be aware of the provisions of the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act**, which allows for paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons, such as for self-quarantining or seeking a medical diagnosis for COVID-19 symptoms
- **Update the Employee Illness Policy** to include the symptoms of “COVID-19” or create a COVID-19 specific policy. All staff should sign the policy, and the policy should be posted for confirmation
- **Post extensive signage on health policies**, including the following documents, in the workplace to help educate building occupants on COVID-19 best practices:
  - [CDC guidance to stop the spread of germs](#)
  - [CDC guidance on COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- **Follow sanitation frequency guidance** contained in this document at all times
- **Provide ServSafe COVID-19 training** for all food handlers as soon as possible

## Consumer Protection

- **Limit the number of customers** in the restaurant to 50% of seating capacity
- **Tables should be spaced at least 6 feet apart**
- Limit tables to **no more than 6 guests per table**
- **Mark any indoor or outdoor waiting area so that social distancing standards are met** (options can include a text system to alert guests of available seating, an intercom system, or only one member of a party being allowed to wait in the waiting area)
- **Bar areas should remain closed**
- **Live music should not be permitted**
- **Screen customers for illness** upon their entry into the restaurant:
  - Best practice: Temperature checks for every customer in addition to screening questions. Customers with temperatures above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should not be permitted on premise.
  - Minimum: Question customers regarding COVID-19 symptoms
    - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
    - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
    - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?

## Business Process Adaptations

- **Mitigate exposure in the workplace** by implementing social distancing guidelines and modify scheduling
- **Implement workplace cleaning and disinfection** practices, according to [CDC guidelines](#), with regular sanitization of high-touch surfaces at least every two hours
- **Sanitize all front-of-house contact surfaces** including door handles, screens, phones, pens, keyboards and other areas of hand contact every two hours, at a minimum
- **Place hand sanitizer stations** in restaurant lobby and bathrooms, as well as at cashier stations
- Use **menus that are disposable or sanitized** between each use
- Use **rolled silverware/napkins stored in sealed bins** (gloves should be used by staff while rolling silverware in designated sanitary areas)
- **Sanitize all tabletop items**, including condiments, after each table turns (or use disposables)
- **Sanitize chairs**, especially where contact occurs, after each table turns
- **Do not offer self-serve** buffets, condiments on a counter for use by multiple tables, or beverage station re-use