

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RELATED TO RESTAURANTS AND FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDERS 20-68, 20-71, 20-80, 20-82, 20-112, 20-123, 20-139, AND 20-192.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-192 IS EFFECTIVE ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2020

EMPLOYEE SCREENING

How should food service establishments screen employees for illness?

Managers/supervisors shall meet each employee outside the establishment upon an employee's arrival for a work shift. The manager shall evaluate the employee for obvious signs of illness and send the employee home if symptoms such as cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, or signs of a respiratory infection are directly observed.

What should a food service establishment do if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19?

*Employees diagnosed with COVID-19 shall not be permitted to work and shall not be allowed to return to work until at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, at least 24 hours have passed since their last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, **and** all symptoms have improved. For employees who were diagnosed with COVID-19 but who were never symptomatic, they shall be permitted to return to work after at least 10 days have passed since the date of their last positive lab test.*

What should a food service establishment do if it is believed an employee had or may have COVID-19?

*Employees who believe they had or may have COVID-19 shall not be permitted to work and shall not be allowed to return to work until at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, at least 24 hours have passed since their last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, **and** all symptoms have improved.*

What should a food service establishment do if an employee has had close contact with a person having COVID-19?

Employers shall ensure that employees do not perform work in a food service establishment if they have in the past 14 days had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

What is considered to be "close contact" with a person having COVID-19?

"Close contact" is defined as:

- *Being present (for 15 minutes or more) within 6 feet of someone sick with COVID-19*
- *Providing care at home to someone sick with COVID-19*
- *Engaging in direct physical contact with a person sick with COVID-19 (physically touched them)*
- *Sharing eating or drinking utensils with a person sick with COVID-19*
- *Being sneezed or coughed on by a person sick with COVID-19, or through other means in which you come into direct contact with their respiratory droplets*

Should food service establishments continually monitor their employees for illness?

Managers/supervisors shall continue to instruct their employees to notify them if they are experiencing symptoms of illness, as is required by the 2017 FDA Food Code. Employees who report symptoms of an illness shall follow established restriction and exclusion protocols.

Does an employee need two consecutive negative tests to return to work?

No. An employee may return to the restaurant premises if the employee answers “yes” to ALL of the following questions:

- 1) If you were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 or believe you had COVID-19, have 10 consecutive days passed since your initial symptoms appeared?*
- 2) If you were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 or believe you had COVID-19, has it been at least 24 hours since you experienced fever without the use of fever-reducing medications?*
- 3) If you were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 or believe you had COVID-19, have all symptoms improved?*

Where can I find additional information related to managing suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the workplace?

Managers/Supervisors should consult the Center for Disease Controls General Business Frequently Asked Questions page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html> for any additional guidance and best practices.

SAFETY AND SANITATION

What precautions are recommended for proper separation between guests while seated?

Establishments may redesign seating arrangements to ensure at least six (6) feet of separation from table to table. If tables, chairs, booths, or other seating areas cannot be moved, signage or other markings may be used to show that the area is not available for service. Where social distancing of tables is not readily feasible at a six-foot distance, licensed businesses also may utilize a hard-surface partition or other impermeable physical barrier to minimize risks of exposure between guests.

CAPACITY AND SEATING OF PATRONS

May a restaurant or food establishment licensed by DBPR under Chapter 509, Florida Statutes, increase their outside food service seating capacity to offset inside seating restrictions due to social distancing requirements?

The Division of Hotels & Restaurants will allow an establishment to add food service seating outside, provided the establishment strictly adheres to social distancing requirements currently in effect. The establishment should also consult with their local government agencies to ensure compliance with any applicable local regulations.

During the effect of the Executive Order 20-123, how should restaurants calculate the number of seats allowed inside the establishment? How should restaurants calculate 50% of the indoor seating capacity?

The number of seats available to customers inside the establishment will be half of (50%) the number of seats listed on the establishment’s DBPR food service license, provided the establishment also adheres to all social distancing requirements that are currently in effect. Outside seating must also adhere to social distancing requirements and any applicable local regulations.

Does an establishment's number of employees factor into the number of patrons who can be served within the indoor seating area under the provisions of this order?

No. For example, a restaurant licensed for 80 seats may seat up to 40 guests inside the establishment at any given time, without regard to the number of employees present at the establishment.

Are food establishments located within entertainment venues (such as bowling alleys, movie theaters, and family recreation centers) allowed to operate, provided that the establishments adhere to the interior seating limitations and social distancing requirements currently in effect?

Yes. Food establishments within these venues may operate subject to the requirements of other food establishments and should ensure strict adherence to the social distancing and sanitation requirements within the dining areas.

May a food establishment or venue host a reception, meeting, convention, or other gathering comprised of more than 50 individuals?

Yes, provided the establishment or venue seats its guests in groups of no more than 10 individuals per table, adheres to social distancing and sanitation requirements, and does not exceed 50 percent of the capacity of the room in which the gathering is held.

May a licensed location continue to utilize outside space in order to comply with social distancing requirements?

Yes, so long as the use of outside space is compliant with local regulations and requirements.

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