

STL Regional Business Recovery Initiative

RETAIL OPERATING PROTOCOLS

Over the past several weeks we have collaborated with public health officials and leading retailers in the St. Louis region to prepare for the re-opening of in-store shopping or retail operations in our community in a safe and responsible fashion. We have sought input from a key group of industry leaders who understand the complexities associated with retail operations in our present environment including representatives from Schnucks, DowntownSTL, Saint Louis Galleria, Jefferson National Parks Association and Delmar Loop Retailers.

The goal of the protocols outlined in the document is to minimize contact reducing the risk of virus spread among both staff and customers. The core set of principles that together prevent the spread of infections by respiratory transmission (including COVID-19) include:

- 1) **Practice social distancing** – maintain 6 feet between and among employees and guests
- 2) **Monitor employee health** – ensure your employees are in good health and displaying no symptoms when they are at work
- 3) **Use protective equipment** – a fabric face cover must always be worn by employees and guests
- 4) **Clean/sanitize/disinfect** – wash and sanitize hands, and wipe down frequently touched surfaces with EPA-approved disinfectant (Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.)

A) General Responsibilities for Employers & Staff

- ✓ **Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices**
 - Enforce everyday preventive actions such as hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and use of a cloth face covering by employees when around others. Provide employees with appropriate equipment as necessary and as available. Communicate with the public about the importance of hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, and using cloth face coverings while in your store, including posting signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering.
 - Ensure adequate supplies to support employees, and passengers in your retail setting including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.

✓ **Cleaning, Disinfection and Ventilation**

- If taking public transportation to work, employees will wear protective masks, practice social distancing, use hand sanitizer and avoid other commuters.
- Staff must always wash hands when arriving at and before leaving the worksite using warm water (at least 100°F) and soap for at least 20 seconds. When a wash station is not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol may also be used.
- Using EPA-certified products, clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (for example, kiosks, digital interfaces such as touchscreens and fingerprint scanners, ticket machines, turnstiles, handrails, restroom surfaces, elevator buttons) at least twice daily.
- Clean, sanitize, and disinfect employee areas such as registers between shifts.
- Use touchless payment and no-touch trash cans and doors as much as possible, when available. Ask customers and employees to exchange cash or credit cards by placing in a receipt tray or on the counter rather than by hand and wipe any pens, counters, or hard surfaces between each use or customer.
- Avoid using or sharing items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash and wash hands afterwards.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety risk to employees, or other vulnerable individuals.
- Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.

✓ **Ensure Social Distancing**

- Institute measures to physically separate or create distance of at least six feet between and among employees and customers to the extent possible. This may include providing physical guides to ensure that customers remain at least six feet apart. For example, floor decals, colored tape, or signs.
- Use physical barriers such as plexiglass when possible at points of frequent face-to-face interactions between employees and customers, e.g. at cash registers or return counters.
- Close communal spaces, such as break rooms, if possible; otherwise, stagger use and clean and disinfect in between uses. Train employees and post signage to avoid congregating in any communal areas that must remain open.

✓ **Monitor Employee Health**

- Upon arrival at work, employees must be masked, and employers must conduct health checks (e.g., temperature and symptom screening) of employees at the start of each shift. Conduct health checks safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Confidentiality should be respected. Employers may use examples of screening methods in CDC's General Business FAQs as a guide.
 - Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, muscle aches, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell.
 - Screening should include 1) a temperature check if it can be performed with a touchless thermometer, 2) asking about the presence of new or worsened cough, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, fever, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell and 3) asking if the employee has had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
 - Employees with a temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or above, or who answer yes to any of the screening questions must not be allowed to enter the workplace. Employees who develop any symptoms of respiratory illness while at work must immediately be sent home.
 - Employees with symptoms should contact their healthcare provider for additional guidance.
- Employees who are sent home with symptoms should not return to work until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation or they have been cleared to return by their healthcare provider.

- If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, work with local health agencies to ensure all employees and customers who can be identified as having had close contact while the employee was infectious are contacted. While awaiting formal investigation, compile a list of employees, customers, or other people known to be in close contact with the person diagnosed with COVID-19. Employees identified as having close contact should be immediately sent home or told not to come into work until the investigation has been conducted.
- Close off areas recently used by an employee or customer who has tested positive for COVID-19 and do not reuse them until after cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.
- 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.
- Staff must always wash hands when arriving at and before leaving the worksite using warm water (at least 100°F) and soap for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing should be repeated after any of the following activities: using restrooms, sneezing, touching the face, blowing the nose, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, eating or drinking. When hand washing is not possible, alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol may also be used.
- Keep all personal items, including cell phones and laptops, in the designated areas to prevent contamination of workspaces. Personal items such as outerwear should be stored in a locker or other designated area. The hotel should consider providing each employee with a clear plastic bag for their items.

✓ **Maintain Healthy Operations**

- Implement flexible sick leave and other flexible policies and practices, if feasible.
- Monitor absenteeism of employees and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees and customers should know who this person is and how to contact them.

- Create and test communication systems for employees and customers for self-reporting of symptoms and notification of exposures and closures.
- Customer facing staff members should be given training or verbal tools to address customers not complying with regulations or intentionally spreading germs. Anyone intentionally spreading germs or creating fear of the virus spread should be reported to management and/or authorities as appropriate.
- Recommend that employers have the same team members working the same shifts whenever possible. This allows for containment and contact tracing in case of contamination or an employee testing positive.

B) Retail Venue Preparation

- ✓ Prop open frequently used interior doors to avoid /minimize contact. Where possible, doors should open hands-free by using automatic and foot-actuated openers. All door handles and high-touch areas should be disinfected by wiping down with a clear cloth and diluted bleach or certified EPA cleaner.
- ✓ Diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite) can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application, ensuring a contact time of at least 1 minute, and allowing proper ventilation during and after application. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
 - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- ✓ For a full list of EPA-approved disinfection techniques and tools, follow this link: <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/disinfectant-use-and-coronavirus-covid-19>
- ✓ Set up hand-washing/sanitizing stations at all entrances/exits/high-traffic areas.
- ✓ When possible keep entrances or exits to one-way passage only. If not possible, use barriers or enforce aisles to assist with social distancing efforts.
- ✓ Consider limiting store hours to reduce traffic and potential contact or exposure.

- ✓ Consider having dedicated store hours exclusively for individuals at high-risk for complications of COVID-19 including age over 60, compromised immune systems and chronic heart or lung disease.
- ✓ Utilize in-store announcements and frequent signage to remind customers of social distancing and additional new safety protocols.
- ✓ Limit the number of individuals in any particular location to 25 (twenty-five) percent or less of the entity's authorized fire or building code occupancy in facilities with square footage of less than ten thousand square feet (10,000 ft²); or ten (10) percent or less of the entity's authorized fire or building code occupancy in facilities with square footage of ten thousand square feet (10,000 ft²) or more. A system must be in place to monitor capacity by counting customers entering and exiting to ensure this standard is met.
- ✓ As best they can, staff should always maintain a distance of 6 feet from others in all areas. Exterior and interior seating should be adjusted to accommodate 6 feet of separation between dining parties unless there is a partition that physically separates the parties. All conditions outlined in Restaurant Protocols must be met if serving food & beverage in a retail facility.
- ✓ All demonstration areas and sampling of food, fragrances or other items is suspended.
- ✓ The use of fitting rooms should be limited or suspended. Any items returned or tried on should be isolated temporarily before returning it to sales floor.
- ✓ Any children's play or activity areas should remain closed.
- ✓ Designate trashcans specifically for staff protective equipment - always keep lid securely sealed. Empty protective equipment trash cans frequently - always wearing gloves that are then disposed of after removal.
- ✓ It is recommended that retailers maintain a log of customers to assist public health officials with contact tracing if necessary. Your POS system may provide this function, or use of a hand registry to write and record the name, date and phone number of each party.
- ✓ Staff should practice 'no-contact' transfers: place items down on a counter for the next person to pick up, rather than passing back and forth.

C) **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

- ✓ Wash hands frequently. Hand washing with soap and water should continue to remain a top priority. Employees should be allowed to take breaks as needed to maintain adequate hand washing.

- ✓ After hand washing, employees need to dry hands off and turn off the faucet with a paper towel. Special note: do not use clean hands to turn off the faucet or use cloth linens or towels to dry hands.
- ✓ Common touch surfaces, especially hand sinks, handles, counters and door knobs need to be wiped down with disinfectant or EPA-approved sanitizer at least every hour. A log should be created to document all practices with a checklist.
- ✓ Customers to cease utilizing reusable bags.
- ✓ Dedicate a team member to disinfect the areas commonly touched by customers including tables, counters, fitting rooms, etc. Gloves should be worn by staff and disposed of after cleaning each table. Consider the use of disposables.
- ✓ Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected regularly using EPA-recommended disinfectants, particularly high-touch surfaces such as faucets, toilets, doorknobs, and light switches. Make sure restrooms are regularly stocked with supplies for handwashing, including soap and materials for drying hands. Providing hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol is a supplement to hand washing, but not a replacement.

D) Protective Equipment and Face Coverings

- ✓ All staff must wear the following while on site:
 - Disposable gloves when handling food or inventory (please refer to Restaurant Protocols for complete guidelines for food service.
 - Face coverings (fabric or disposable masks)
- ✓ Employer must provide gloves and face coverings, or material to make face coverings
- ✓ Staff must wear face coverings at all times unless working alone in an enclosed space
- ✓ Staff should change their face coverings if they become torn, soiled or wet.
- ✓ Wash/sanitize hands before putting on a new pair of gloves.
- ✓ Change gloves when switching tasks, handling food, receiving deliveries, stocking inventory or after touching objects that should be considered contaminated (cell phone, computer, clothes, door handles, etc.)
- ✓ If the integrity of a glove is compromised (e.g. ripped, punctured) change gloves immediately - wash hands per proper protocols

- ✓ Face coverings worn by service staff may be made of launderable fabric.
- ✓ It is recommended that all guests be required to wear face coverings while in the store.

E) Payment and Delivery Procedures

- ✓ Limit physical contact with others as much as possible.
- ✓ To reduce contact, a central pay station is recommended, maintaining 6 feet of distance between staff and customers. A plexiglass barrier would help with separation. If a line forms, 6 feet of separation should be maintained with chalk marks or decals on the floor. Another option is using a portable payment system that can be administered at each table.
- ✓ Cash transactions or tips are not recommended in favor of credit card payments. If cash is transferred, the staff member should wash their hands after accepting.
- ✓ Invite guests to use their own pens when signing credit card authorizations. If not available, wipe the provided pen down with sanitary wipe after each use.
- ✓ Hand sanitizer should be placed conveniently at the payment station and be used by service staff and guests at the start and conclusion of each transaction.
- ✓ For curbside orders, pre-payment with a credit card over the phone or online, including gratuity, provides a contactless transaction.
- ✓ Practice contactless transfers by placing items down on a counter for the customer to pick up. In the case of curbside pick-up, ask the guest to open their trunk and place the order in.
- ✓ If delivering to a distribution site, avoid going inside the building(s). Have receiving contact meet outside and practice no-contact transfers.