



July 13, 2020

To: Restaurants and bars in Butte-Silver Bow

From: Butte-Silver Bow Health Department

Re: CDC considerations for restaurants and bars

As restaurants and bars resume operations in the phased reopening of Montana and Butte-Silver Bow, the CDC offers some considerations for ways in which operators can protect employees, customers and communities, and slow the spread of COVID-19. Restaurants and bars can determine, in collaboration with state and local health officials, whether and how to implement these considerations, making adjustments to meet the needs and circumstances of Butte-Silver Bow. Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community. These considerations are meant to supplement – and not replace – any state or local safety laws, rules and regulations with which businesses must comply.

Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind

The more an individual interacts with others, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in a restaurant or bar setting as follows:

- **Lowest Risk:** Food service limited to drive-through, delivery, take-out and curbside pick-up.
- **More Risk:** Drive-through, delivery, take-out, and curbside pick-up emphasized. On-site dining limited to outdoor seating. Seating capacity reduced to allow tables to be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- **Even More Risk:** On-site dining with both indoor and outdoor seating. Seating capacity reduced to allow tables to be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- **Highest Risk:** On-site dining with both indoor and outdoor seating. Seating capacity not reduced and tables not spaced at least 6 feet apart.

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as handwashing, staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are important principles. Fortunately, there are a number of actions restaurant and bar operators can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread.



Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread

Restaurants and bars may consider implementing several strategies to encourage behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 among employees and customers.

- **Staying Home when Appropriate**
 - Educate employees about when they should stay home and when they can return to work.
 - Actively encourage employees who are sick or have recently had a close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home. Develop policies that encourage sick employees to stay at home without fear of reprisal, and ensure that employees are aware of these policies.
 - Employees should stay home **if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms**. The Butte-Silver Bow Health Department contacts all individuals who test positive.
 - Employees who have recently had a **close contact** with a person with COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health. The Butte-Silver Bow Health Department contacts all individuals who are identified as a close contact.
 - CDC criteria can help inform when employees they may return to work:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
- **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
 - Require frequent employee handwashing (before, during and after preparing food; after touching garbage) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence.
 - Encourage employees to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- **Cloth Face Coverings**
 - Require the use of close faceamong all staff, as feasible. Face coverings are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Information should be provided to staff on proper use, removal and washing of cloth face coverings.
 - Note: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:
 - Babies and children younger than 2 years old
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
 - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance



- Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators or personal protective equipment.
- **Adequate Supplies**
 - Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors. Supplies include soap, hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol (placed on every table, if supplies allow), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.
- **Signs and Messages**
 - Post signs in highly visible locations (at entrances, in restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs by properly washing hands and properly wearing a close face cover.
 - Include messages about behaviors that prevent spread of COVID-19 when communicating with vendors, staff, and customers (such as on business websites, in emails, and on social media accounts).
 - This email is accompanied by free CDC print and digital resources.

Maintaining Healthy Environments

Restaurants and bars may consider several implementing strategies to maintain healthy environments.

- **Cleaning and Disinfection**
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (door handles, cash registers, workstations, sink handles, bathroom stalls) at least daily, or as much as possible and as required by food safety requirements. Clean shared objects (payment terminals, tables, countertops/bars, receipt trays, condiment holders) between each use.
 - Continue to follow all required safety laws, regulations, and rules.
 - Use products that meet EPA disinfection criteria and that are appropriate for the surface. Allow the disinfectant to remain on the surface for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer.
 - Establish a disinfection routine and train staff on proper cleaning timing and procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.
 - Wash, rinse, and sanitize food contact surfaces with an EPA-approved food contact surface sanitizer. If a food-contact surface must be disinfected for a specific reason, such as a blood or bodily fluid cleanup or deep clean in the event of likely contamination with COVID-19, use the following procedure: wash, rinse, disinfectant according to the label instructions for the disinfectant, rinse, then sanitize with a food-contact surface sanitizer.



- Ensure that cleaning or disinfecting product residues are not left on table surfaces. Residues could cause allergic reactions or cause someone to ingest the chemicals.
- Develop a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of disinfectants to avoid food contamination and harm to employees and other individuals. This includes storing products securely away from children.
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands after removing gloves.
- **Shared Objects**
 - Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean, sanitize or disinfect.
 - Limit any sharing of food, tools, equipment or supplies by staff members.
 - Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (such as serving spoons) to the extent possible; otherwise, limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of workers at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
 - Avoid using or sharing items that are reusable, such as menus, condiments and any other food containers. Instead, use disposable or digital menus, single serving condiments, and no-touch trash cans and doors.
 - Use touchless payment options as much as possible, if available. Ask customers and employees to exchange cash or card payments by placing on a receipt tray or on the counter rather than by hand to avoid direct hand to hand contact. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as pens, counters or hard surfaces between use and encourage patrons to use their own pens.
 - Use disposable food service items (utensils, dishes, napkins, tablecloths). If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water, or in a dishwasher. Change and launder linen items (napkins and tablecloths) after each customer or party's use. Employees should wash their hands after removing their gloves or after handling used food service items.
 - Avoid use of food and beverage utensils and containers brought in by customers.
- **Ventilation**
 - Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors and prioritizing outdoor seating. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk to customers or employees (for example, risk of falling or triggering asthma symptoms).
- **Water Systems**
 - To minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water, take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (sink faucets, decorative fountains, drinking fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.



- **Modified Layouts and Procedures**
 - Change restaurant and bar layouts to ensure that all customer parties remain at least 6 feet apart (marking tables/stools that are not for use).
 - Limit seating capacity to allow for social distancing.
 - Offer drive-through, curbside take-out, or delivery options as applicable. Prioritize outdoor seating as much as possible.
 - Ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while waiting to pick up food or when waiting to be seated. Inform customers of food pickup and dining protocols on the business website and on posted signs.
 - Discourage crowded waiting areas by using phone app, text technology or signs to alert patrons when their table is ready. Avoid using “buzzers” or other shared objects.
 - Consider options for dine-in customers to order ahead of time to limit the amount of time spent in the establishment.
 - Avoid offering any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets, salad bars and drink stations.
- **Physical Barriers and Guides**
 - Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart. Barriers can be useful in restaurant kitchens and at cash registers, host stands, or food pickup areas where maintaining physical distance of at least 6 feet is difficult.
 - Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signage, to ensure that individuals remain at least 6 feet apart. Consider providing these guides where lines form, in the kitchen and at the bar.
- **Communal Spaces**
 - Close shared spaces such as break rooms, if possible; otherwise stagger use and clean and disinfect between use.

Maintaining Healthy Operations

Restaurants and bars may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy operations.

- **Protections for Employees at Higher Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19**
 - Offer options for employees at higher risk for severe illness (including older adults and people of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions) that limits their exposure risk (such as modified job responsibilities such as managing inventory rather than working as a cashier, or managing administrative needs through telework).
 - Consistent with applicable law, develop policies to protect the privacy of people at higher risk for severe illness in accordance with applicable privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations.



- **Regulatory Awareness**
 - Be aware of local or state policies and recommendations related to group gatherings to determine if events can be held.
- **Staggered or Rotated Shifts and Sittings**
 - Rotate or stagger shifts to limit the number of employees in the restaurant or bar at the same time.
 - Stagger and limit dining times to minimize the number of customers in the establishment.
 - When possible, use flexible worksites (such as telework) and flexible work hours (such as staggered shifts) to help establish policies and practices for social distancing (maintaining distance of approximately 6 feet) between employees and others, especially if social distancing is recommended by state and local health authorities.
- **Gatherings**
 - Avoid group events, gatherings or meetings where social distancing of at least 6 feet between people cannot be maintained.
- **Travel and Transit**
 - For employees who commute to work using public transportation or ride-sharing, encourage them to use transportation options that minimize close contact with others (walking or biking, driving or riding by car – alone or with household members only) or consider offering support, such as asking employees to wash their hands as soon as possible after their trip.
- **Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact**
 - Designate a staff person for each shift to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All staff members should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- **Communication Systems**
 - Put systems in place for:
 - Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having staff self-report to the establishment's point of contact if they have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with health information-sharing regulations for COVID-19, and other applicable privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations.
 - Notifying staff, customers, and the public of business closures, and restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (such as limited hours of operation).
- **Leave (Time Off) Policies**
 - Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable employees to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed, or caring for someone who is sick.
 - Examine and revise policies for leave, telework and employee compensation.



- Leave policies should be flexible and not punish people for taking time off and should allow sick employees to stay home and away from co-workers. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.
 - Develop policies for return-to-work after COVID-19 illness.
- **Back-Up Staffing Plan**
 - Monitor absenteeism of employees, cross-train staff and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- **Staff Training**
 - Train all employees in safety actions.
 - Conduct training virtually, or ensure that social distancing is maintained during training.
- **Recognize Signs and Symptoms**
 - Conduct daily health checks (temperature screening and/or symptom checking) of staff safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- **Support Coping and Resilience**
 - Promote employees eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep and finding time to unwind.
 - Encourage employees to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
 - Consider posting signs for the national distress hotline: 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

Preparing for Sick Employees

Restaurants and bars may consider implementing several strategies to prepare for when someone gets sick.

- **Advise Sick Employees of Home Isolation Criteria**
 - Communicate to sick employees that they should not return to work until they have met criteria to discontinue home isolation. The Butte-Silver Bow Health Department will be working with sick employees regarding home isolation.
- **Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick**
 - Make sure that employees know they should not come to work if they are sick, and they should notify their manager or other designated COVID-19 point of contact if they become sick with COVID-19 symptoms, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.
 - Immediately separate employees or customers with COVID-19 symptoms (for example, fever, cough, shortness of breath). Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are,



and follow Health Department guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick.

- **Clean and Disinfect**
 - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing them securely away from children.
- **Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts**
 - In accordance with state and local laws, restaurant and bar operators should notify the Butte-Silver Bow Health Department at (406) 497-5041 or (406) 490-9372 and staff immediately of any case of COVID-19 among employees, while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Advise those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 that they will be contacted by the Health Department and to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and follow Health Department guidance if symptoms develop.