



COVID-19

REOPENING GUIDANCE

A GUIDE FOR THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY IN GEORGIA

*in accordance with Governor Brian P. Kemp's latest
Executive Order*

PUBLISHED: April 23, 2020

†UPDATED: June 11, 2020

For other resources:

GARESTAURANTS.ORG

RESTAURANT.ORG/COVID19



TO RESTAURANT OPERATORS GETTING READY TO REOPEN IN GEORGIA...

The purpose of guidance is just that, to offer you direction and provide a basic framework for best practices as you reopen. However, we have coupled the guidance with Governor Kemp's latest Executive Order Guidelines to provide you with the most comprehensive guidelines in Georgia.

We trust each individual restaurant will use the resources provided to make a responsible choice that is best for their business and their community.

- Make sure your person-in-charge has an up-to-date ServSafe Food Manager certification. The Food and Drug Administration requires every facility to have a person in charge on site during open hours and also directs that the person in charge should have a food manager certification.
- Provide ServSafe food handler training for your employees. They're your front line; educating them protects them, you and your guests.
- Make technology your friend. Contactless payment systems, automated ordering systems, mobile ordering apps, website updates and simple texts can help you to communicate and conduct business with reduced need for close contact. As you begin to reopen, keep communicating with customers (your hours, menu items, reservations, etc.), and help promote your social distancing and safety efforts.
- And some of the best advice comes from the Food and Drug Administration, which develops the Food Code we all rely on. Its newest guide, *Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, was just released. You can link to it [here](#).

As we continue to learn more about operating businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to share with you the most current direction and advice from the experts at FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other agencies. These documents will continue to reflect those best practices and will continue to be updated.



REOPENING GUIDANCE TASK FORCE

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The Georgia Restaurant Association has partnered with the National Restaurant Association, representatives of the Food and Drug Administration, academia, the Conference for Food Protection, Ecolab, public health officials, and industry representatives to develop a set of opening and operating guidelines specific to Georgia to help restaurants return to full operation safely when the time comes.

This guidance is designed to provide you with a basic summary of recommended practices that can be used to help mitigate exposure to the COVID-19 virus, including:

- ✓ Food safety
- ✓ Cleaning and sanitizing
- ✓ Employee health monitoring and personal hygiene
- ✓ Social distancing

Combine this guidance with your existing policies as well as this new resource from the FDA, *Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

Armed with information, ServSafe training and the recommendations of your local health departments, you can help secure a safe opening.

For the most comprehensive and up-to-date COVID-19 resources and information for the restaurant industry, visit: garestaurants.org or restaurant.org/covid19.

RETURNING
RESTAURANTS
TO SERVICE

SAFELY



RESTAURANT RESPONSE

Food safety has always been a priority for the restaurant industry, for both guests and employees.

The basis of an effective food safety culture is the Food and Drug Administration Food Code, which for decades has served as the foundation for restaurant operating procedures as they relate to safe food handling. The guidance outlined in the Food Code is science-based and is designed to reduce and prevent the incidence of foodborne illness. Food Code requirements related to sanitation and personal hygiene in particular are the most reliable protocols available to combat risks related to the spread of COVID-19.

Local, state and federal regulators use the FDA Food Code as a model to develop or update their own food safety rules and to be consistent with national food regulatory policy.

AMONG THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FOOD CODE THAT APPLY TO CORONAVIRUS MITIGATION ARE

- ✓ Prohibiting sick employees in the workplace
- ✓ Strict handwashing practices that include how and when to wash hands
- ✓ Strong procedures and practices to clean and sanitize surfaces
- ✓ Ensuring the person in charge of a foodservice facility is a certified food safety manager
- ✓ Ensuring the person in charge is on site at all times during operating hours



FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS, THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION'S SERVSAFE PROGRAM HAS PROVIDED FOOD SAFETY TRAINING FOR BOTH MANAGERS AND FOOD HANDLERS.

ServSafe food safety independently developed a certification exam, which follows standards adopted by the Conference for Food Protection.

The Conference for Food Protection also collaborates with the FDA to develop the Food Code.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE IS TO BUILD ON THE ALREADY ESTABLISHED BEST PRACTICES AND REQUIREMENTS AVAILABLE

that address specific health and safety concerns related to the spread of COVID-19, and to put those protocols into practice as state and local officials begin to open communities and businesses.

Operators should make use of these guidelines as they relate to their existing policies and procedures and in conjunction with instructions they receive from authorities during their reopening phase-in.



REOPENING GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS

To prepare to comply with opening procedures, operators should update their existing policies and operating procedures in accordance with the latest FDA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Environmental Protection Agency guidance and in accordance with state officials regarding:

- ✓ Social distancing and protective equipment.
- ✓ Employee health.
- ✓ Cleaning/sanitizing/disinfecting.
- ✓ Food safety.

ON FOOD SAFETY

- ✓ If providing salad bars and buffets, use cafeteria style service where a worker is responsible for serving the guest, handling the utensils, and ensuring proper distancing in lines, or require that hand sanitizer is provided on the buffet or salad bar, that a sneeze guard is properly in place, that social distancing is enforced, and that utensils are replaced regularly.
- ✓ If providing a “grab and go” service, stock coolers to no more than minimum levels.
- ✓ Ensure the person in charge is ServSafe certified and that their certification is up to date, and provide food handler training to refresh employees.
- ✓ Discard all food items that are out of date.

REOPENING GUIDANCE FOR CLEANING AND SANITIZING

- ✓ Thoroughly detail-clean and sanitize entire facility, especially if it has been closed. Focus on high-contact areas that would be touched by both employees and guests. Do not overlook seldom touched surfaces. Follow sanitizing material guidance to ensure it's at effective sanitizing strength and to protect surfaces.
- ✓ Avoid all food contact surfaces when using disinfectants.
- ✓ Between seatings, clean and sanitize table condiments, digital ordering devices, check presenters, self-service areas, tabletops, and common touch areas. Single-use items should be discarded. Use rolled silverware and eliminating table presets.
- ✓ Remove items from self-service drink, condiment, utensil, and tableware stations, and have employees provide items to guests directly wherever practicable.
- ✓ Clean and sanitize reusable menus. If you use paper menus, discard them after each guest use.
- ✓ Implement procedures to increase how often you clean and sanitize surfaces in the back-of-house.
- ✓ Frequently check and ensure adequate supply of soap dispenser & towels.
- ✓ Make hand sanitizer readily available to guests. Consider touchless hand sanitizing solutions.
- ✓ Verify that ware-washing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures with the appropriate detergents and sanitizers.

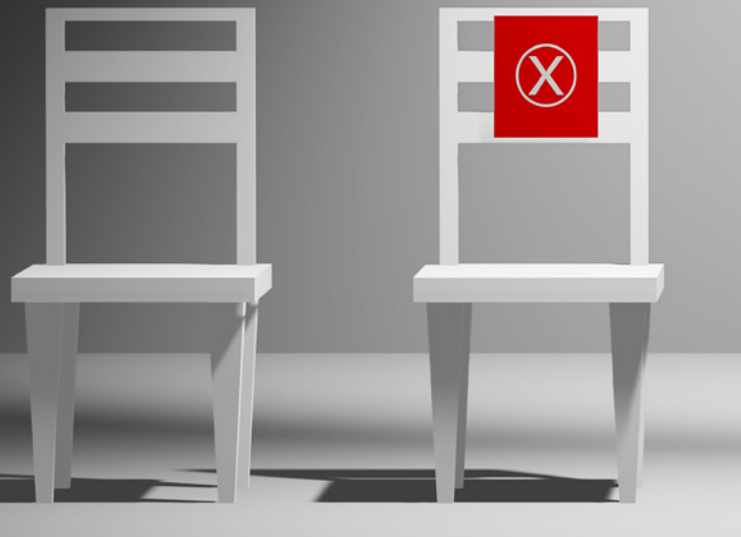




REOPENING GUIDANCE

ON MONITORING EMPLOYEE HEALTH & PERSONAL HYGIENE

- ✓ Per existing FDA Food Code requirements, employees who are sick should remain at home.
- ✓ If an employee becomes ill or presents signs of illness, the operator should identify the signs during a pre-work screening, employee should be sent home. If employee is suspected or confirmed COVID-19, employee must self-isolate for at least 10 days. After 10 days, employee must be fever free/symptom free for 3 consecutive days without medication before returning to work.
- ✓ Taking employees' temperatures is at the operators' discretion. The CDC has not mandated taking an employee's temperature and any operator who chooses to do so should engage health officials first and adopt policies aligned with proper procedures. CDC guidance states the minimum temperature that indicates a fever is 100°F.
- ✓ Require all employees wear face coverings while interacting with guests. Face shields may be worn in addition to face coverings. Face coverings and face shields should be cleaned or replaced daily.
- ✓ Train all employees on the importance of frequent hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content, and give them clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.



REOPENING GUIDANCE

ON SOCIAL DISTANCING

- ✓ Redesign seating arrangements to ensure at least six feet of separation from seating to seating or utilize physical barriers to separate groups of seating within six feet. Where practical, especially in booth seating, physical barriers are acceptable. Consider a reservations-only business model or call-ahead seating to better space diners.
- ✓ Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with symptoms of COVID-19 is to be permitted in the restaurant.
- ✓ Limit contact between waitstaff and guests. Increased physical space between employee and guests. In addition, prohibit handshaking and other unnecessary person to person contact in the workplace.
- ✓ If practical, physical barriers such as partitions or Plexiglas barriers at registers are acceptable.
- ✓ Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction: mobile ordering and menu tablets; text on arrival for seating; contactless payment options.
- ✓ Provide hand sanitizer for guests to use, including contactless hand sanitizing stations, and post signs reminding guests about social distancing. Thank them for their patience as you work to ensure their safety. *Note: Hand sanitizer is defined as any hand antiseptic, hand rub, soap, or agent applied to the hands for the purpose of removing common pathogens.*
- ✓ Try not to allow guests to congregate in waiting areas or bar areas. Design a process to ensure guests stay separate while waiting to be seated. The process can include floor markings, outdoor distancing, waiting in cars, etc. Consider an exit from the facility separate from the entrance. Determine ingress/egress to and from restrooms to establish paths that mitigate proximity for guests and staff.
- ✓ Where possible, workstations should be staggered so employees avoid standing directly opposite one another or next to each other. Where six feet of separation is not possible, consider other options (e.g., face coverings) and increase the frequency of surface cleaning and sanitizing.
- ✓ Limit the number of employees allowed simultaneously in break rooms.
- ✓ With larger staffs, use communication boards to or digital messaging to convey pre-shift meeting information.
- ✓ All restaurant and dining room playgrounds shall be cleaned and sanitized regularly if in use.
- ✓ Implement staggered shifts when possible.

BEST PRACTICES

FOR RETAIL FOOD STORES, RESTAURANTS & FOOD/PICK-UP DELIVERY SERVICES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

FDA is sharing information about best practices to operate restaurants, retail food stores and associated pick-up and delivery services during the COVID-19 pandemic to safeguard workers and consumers.

This addresses key considerations for how foods offered can be safely handled and delivered to the public. This is not a comprehensive list. FDA encourages consulting the references and links provided below (by CDC, FDA, EPA, and OSHA) for more detailed information. This will be updated as FDA receives further information and inquiries.

- [Managing Employee Health \(Including Contracted Workers\)](#)
- [Personal Hygiene for Employees](#)
- [Managing Operations in a Foodservice Establishment or Retail Food Store](#)
- [Managing Food Pick-Up and Delivery](#)

BE HEALTHY, BE CLEAN



- Employees - Stay home or leave work if sick; consult doctor if sick, and contact supervisor
- Employers - Instruct sick employees to stay home and send home immediately if sick
- Employers - Pre-screen employees exposed to COVID-19 for temperature and other symptoms



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer per CDC
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Wear mask/face covering per [CDC](#) & [FDA](#)



- Never touch Ready-to-Eat foods with bare hands
- Use single service gloves, deli tissue, or suitable utensils
- Wrap food containers to prevent cross contamination
- Follow 4 steps to food safety [Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill](#)

CLEAN & DISINFECT



- Train employees on cleaning and disinfecting procedures, and protective measures, per CDC and FDA
- Have and use cleaning products and supplies
- Follow protective measures



- Disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently
- Use EPA-registered disinfectant
- Ensure food containers and utensils are cleaned and sanitized



- Prepare and use sanitizers according to label instructions
- Offer sanitizers and wipes to customers to clean grocery cart/basket handles, or utilize store personnel to conduct cleaning/sanitizing

SOCIAL DISTANCE



- Help educate employees and customers on importance of social distancing:
 - Signs
 - Audio messages
 - Consider using every other check-out lane to aid in distancing



- Avoid displays that may result in customer gatherings; discontinue self-serve buffets and salad bars; discourage employee gatherings
- Place floor markings and signs to encourage social distancing



- Shorten customer time in store by encouraging them to:
 - Use shopping lists
 - Order ahead of time, if offered
- Set up designated pick-up areas inside or outside retail establishments

PICK-UP & DELIVERY



- If offering delivery options:
 - Ensure coolers and transport containers are cleaned and sanitized
 - Maintain time and temperature controls
 - Avoid cross contamination; for example, wrap food during transport



- Encourage customers to use "no touch" deliveries
- Notify customers as the delivery is arriving by text message or phone call



- Establish designated pick-up zones for customers
- Offer curb-side pick-up
- Practice social distancing by offering to place orders in vehicle trunks



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