



COVID-19: Recommendations and Best Practices for Texas Businesses That Remain Open in Compliance with the Executive Order of the Governor

This guidance is based on the best information currently available and will be updated when appropriate. Please visit dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus and cdc.gov/coronavirus for updates.

These recommendations are intended to minimize the medical, social, and economic impacts of COVID-19.

Information for All Employees

- Any employee who is not feeling well or has potential exposure, fever, or symptoms of COVID-19, SHOULD NOT report to their worksite.
- If any employee has had an exposure, they should contact their supervisor to notify them of the potential exposure and should contact their local health department to undergo a risk assessment. The employee should not return to work until the risk assessment is completed by the local health department and clearance is given. Employees who have had an exposure and/or undergone a risk assessment should notify their supervisor of their return-to-work date.

In some circumstances, the local health department will be unable to perform a risk assessment. In these cases, anyone with an exposure should stay home, if possible, and monitor themselves for fever and COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days after the exposure. For employees who become ill, CDC guidance for discontinuation of isolation should be followed (see the Resources section below).

- All employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommended precautions.
- All employees should avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, and other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs. Clean dirty surfaces with soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface. Guidelines to cleaning can be found at the CDC (see the Resources section below).
- All employees should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, employees should use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- All employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- All employees should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use the inside of their elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, they should use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Employees can learn more about coughing and sneezing etiquette by visiting the CDC website.
- Employees should practice social distancing by avoiding large gatherings and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.

Information for All Employers

Teleworking

- Encourage staff to telework when feasible, depending on job type.
- Make arrangements for extended periods of teleworking when feasible.

Leave Policy

- Consider expanding sick leave policies.
- Ensure flexible leave policies for staff who need to stay home due to school/childcare dismissals. Encourage individuals to stay home when they are sick.

Onsite Measures

The following measures should be used for all managers and staff who must report to any indoor workplace.

- Implement social distancing measures, such as spacing workstations at the worksite.
- Stagger work schedules to reduce the number of people who are at work at the same time.
- Decrease social contacts in the workplace, and limit in-person meetings.
- Ensure break areas are spacious enough to allow for distancing. Disinfect all frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- Eliminate large work-related gatherings, such as staff meetings and after-work functions.
- Consider health checks for when employees arrive each day and when and visitors enter the building. Health checks may include temperature and respiratory symptom screening.
- Arrange for frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs, to be cleaned and disinfected regularly. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.
- Deliver services remotely, such as by phone or video conferencing, when possible.
- Install physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards, where feasible.
- Place signs around workplace to encourage employees to take actions that safeguard themselves and others. Those actions include staying at home when sick, washing hands often and social distancing.

Travel and Offsite Meetings

- Cancel or postpone non-essential work travel.
- Cancel or postpone work-sponsored conferences, tradeshow, and so on.

Information for Specific Employers

The following section applies to retail beverage service venues, food service venues, and food distribution venues and markets. Please also refer to the All Employees and All Employers sections above.

Retail Beverage Service Venues

Bars, breweries, pubs, and wineries with full kitchens that provide meals for delivery or pick-up should follow the restaurant guidance below.

Restaurants and Cafeterias

At this time, restaurants should be closed for in-restaurant dining. Restaurants should be open only to drive-through or other pickup and delivery options.

- Encourage employees to follow best hygiene practices, including washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing per CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection guidance of all hard surfaces (see the Resources section below). Hard surfaces include tables and counter tops that are being used by employees and patrons during pickup and delivery.
- If open for pickup, consider posting signs asking patrons not to enter if they have symptoms or are sick.

Food Trucks

- If possible, take orders by phone or text. Or, allow patrons to place orders from a six-foot distance away or through a barrier, shell or shield to protect employees.
- Increase cleaning frequency of menus, cash registers, receipt trays, condiment holders, pens and other writing instruments, and other non-food contact surfaces frequently touched by patrons and employees.
- Create procedures that encourage social distancing of six feet per person. Consider limiting the number of people in lines. Consider using signage or floor markers to convey where patrons and others should stand.
- Encourage employees to follow best hygiene practices, including washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing per CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection guidance of all hard surfaces (see the Resources section below). Hard surfaces include tables and counter tops that are being

used by employees and patrons during pickup and delivery.

Grocery Stores and Charitable Food Distribution Sites

Because the food distribution chain is critical to the public's health, grocery stores and charitable food distribution sites should remain open and operational.

- Promote online ordering with curbside pickup or delivery options, when possible.
- Consider arranging for special hours for those at higher risk, including people 65 years and older. Consider special hours for other special groups, such as healthcare workers.
- Create procedures that encourage social distancing of six feet per person. Consider limiting the number of people in lines. Consider using signage or floor markers to convey where patrons and others should stand. Consider regulating how many people can be in the store or distribution site at one time.
- Encourage employees to follow best hygiene practices, including washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing per CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection guidance of all hard surfaces (see the Resources list below). Hard surfaces include counter tops, checkout surfaces, doors, sink fixtures and other hard surfaces that are being used by employees and patrons during operation. Clean restrooms, high-contact areas and surfaces frequently.
- Consider providing handwashing and/or sanitizing stations throughout the store or site to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
- Encourage pre-bagging and other measures to expedite purchasing.
- Discontinue non-essential services, such as food and beverage sampling and entertainment.
- Continue to accept Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) payments, if possible.
- Consider posting signs asking patrons not to enter if they have symptoms or are sick.

Certified Farmers Markets

- Create procedures that encourage social distancing of six feet per person. Consider limiting the number of people in lines. Consider using signage or floor markers to convey where patrons and others should stand. Consider regulating how many people can shop at the market at one time. Consider increasing spacing between vendor booths.
- If possible, take orders by phone or text. Or, allow patrons to place orders from a six-foot distance away or through a barrier, shell or shield to protect employees.
- Consider home delivery options, if possible.
- Encourage employees to follow best hygiene practices, including washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available at farmers markets, encourage use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing per CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection guidance of all hard surfaces (see the Resources list below). Hard surfaces include counter tops, checkout surfaces, doors, sink fixtures and other hard surfaces that are being used by employees and patrons during operation. Clean restrooms, high-contact areas and surfaces frequently.
- Consider providing handwashing and/or sanitizing stations throughout the store or site to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. If soap and water are not available, vendors, patrons and others should use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Encourage pre-bagging and other measures to expedite purchasing.
- Discontinue non-essential services, such as food and beverage sampling and entertainment.
- When the market closes, consider donating extra food products to local food recovery systems to provide for populations in need.
- Continue to accept Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) payments, if possible.
- Encourage employees to avoid close contact with patrons, such shaking hands, hugging and other greetings that involve close contact.
- Consider posting signs asking patrons not to enter if they have symptoms or are sick.

Because the novel coronavirus (the virus that causes COVID-19) response is rapidly changing, this is interim guidance.

Reliable Information Sources

Find up-to-date novel coronavirus information at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus, and on DSHS's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at @TexasDSHS. Also visit the CDC's website at cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Resources:

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

Operational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations Interim Recommendations for US Community Facilities with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

COVID-19: Guidance for Public Health Home Service Providers
<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/docs/DSHS-GuidanceforPublicHealthHomeServiceProviders.pdf>

Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 (Interim Guidance)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html>

Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 (Interim Guidance)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce
<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>

TDEM GA-14 Essential Services Designation
<http://tdem.texas.gov/essentialservices/>