

Guidance for Food Service Establishments During Statewide Re-Opening

The state's framework to resume business operations — “Ad Astra: A Plan to Re-Open Kansas” — provides guidance for businesses statewide as they resume operations. As of Tuesday, May 26, 2020, these are no longer enforceable under a statewide executive order, but they remain in place **as recommendations only** for individuals and businesses across Kansas. Statewide travel-related quarantines established by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) are still in effect.

It is important to note that **local governments retain the authority to impose more restrictive orders or provisions**. Each business must be aware of any additional restrictions that may be issued by local authorities.

It is recommended (but not required by the state) that restaurants and other food service establishments continue to:

- Maintain at least **six feet of distance** between consumers (individuals or groups). Restaurants and dining establishments may consider using physical barriers sufficient to prevent virus spread between seated customers or groups of seated customers.
- Follow fundamental **cleaning and public health practices**. Businesses should follow industry specific guidelines and best practices guidance (see below).
- Avoid instances in which large groups are in one location and are unable to consistently maintain 6 feet of distance with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity. This does not limit the total occupancy of a business, but requires that businesses limit areas and instances in which consistent physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as in entrances, lobbies, break rooms, check-out areas, etc.

Are there still rules prohibiting buffets, salad bars, and self-service drink stations?

- Any rules regarding self-service food and beverages will be set by local health authorities. Please consult your local government to determine whether self-service food and beverages will be allowed in your area.

What kind of cleaning do restaurants need to do as they re-open?

- If your business has been closed to the public during this time period, it is recommended that the entire facility be cleaned and disinfected, including all table and counter surfaces, doors, and bathrooms before re-opening.
- Please refer to KDHE's document on [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Business/Facility](#) for more thorough guidance related to cleaning and disinfecting during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- As always, cleaning and sanitizing of your facility, equipment, and utensils should follow the guidelines in the "Safe and Clean" section of KDA's [Focus on Food Safety](#) booklet.
- Additional guidance can be found from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in their document [Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) and from the National Restaurant Association's [COVID-19 Reopening Guidance: A Guide for the Restaurant Industry](#).

How should restaurants monitor employees for potential illness?

Continue to follow KDHE's guidance for responding to sick employees:

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home. Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home until they are free of a fever and any other symptoms for at least 72 hours and at least seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- If employees appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms upon arrival to work or become sick during the day, they should be separated from other employees and sent home immediately.
- Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees
- Provide soap and water at handwashing sinks and alcohol-based hand sanitizer at appropriate locations in the workplace.
- Consult KDHE's document on [Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) for more thorough guidance.
- As always, consider the guidelines about sick food workers included in KDA's [Focus on Food Safety](#) booklet.

How can a restaurant achieve the recommended social distancing and limitations on mass gatherings? (Some counties may have requirements for restaurants.)

- Ensure that customer seating areas are at least six feet apart (tables, barstools, etc.) If tables/seating areas are separated by physical barriers sufficient to prevent virus spread between seated customers or groups of seated customers that can take the place of the six-foot distance.
- Outdoor seating areas should comply with the same social distancing requirements.
- Avoid seating large groups.
- Consider employee workspaces and develop a plan that maintains distance between staff.
- Develop a plan for spacing of customers who are waiting in the lobby and/or other shared spaces.
- Encourage six-foot distance between individuals in any lines: for payment, waiting for carryout food, for bathrooms, etc.

Additional Resources

- For current information about Kansas' response to COVID-19, and to sign up for updates, go to the Kansas COVID-19 Resource Center at www.covid.ks.gov.
- Please consult the Kansas Department of Agriculture's food safety and lodging program for additional information about food safety in Kansas: www.agriculture.ks.gov/FSL.
- Additional guidance has been provided by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on their website: [Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).
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