



Interim Guidance: In-Person Outdoor Dining

UPDATED July 1, 2020

(revised to strengthen face covering requirements and add information about Pop-Ups)

The following guidance was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health for use by local facilities and will be posted at www.sfgdcp.org/foodfacilities. This interim guidance may change as knowledge, community transmission, and availability of PPE and testing change.

AUDIENCE: Food facilities who are offering In-Person Outdoor Dining. Food facilities include restaurants, bars, distilleries, brewpubs, and wineries that provide bona fide meal service.

BACKGROUND: On June 11, 2020, the Health Officer issues Directive No. 2020-16 authorizing and providing guidance for Outdoor Dining. On July 1, 2020, the Health Officer issued [Directive No. 2020-16b](#) strengthening and clarifying some of the requirements under which Outdoor Dining Establishments are allowed to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic response.

PURPOSE: This document highlights the main points of the Directive, outlines steps you should take and gives you resources and more information to help you comply with the mandatory requirements that are fully detailed in the Directive.

To qualify as an Outdoor Dining Establishment, a business must serve food, and is not permitted to provide alcoholic beverage service without also providing real meal service in a [bona fide manner](#).

Prepare

Create a Health and Safety Plan

The Social Distancing and Health Plan is in a checklist format and serves as a reminder of all the best practices that your business needs to follow including universal requirements such as requiring face coverings, [signage](#), and enforcing six foot distances between people.

Educate and Train Personnel

Personnel must be trained to implement the Social Distancing and Health Protocol and may need training on cleaning and disinfection and how to monitor the number of customers in the store or in line. Customers should maintain a distance of 6 feet if they are not in the same household while waiting in line for pick up or waiting to be seated. Consider training personnel on de-escalation with customers who do not comply with policies and provide resources to employees to address anxiety, stress, and mental health. Recognize the fear in returning to work, communicate transparently, listen, and survey regularly.

Provide information on employer or government-sponsored sick leave and other benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home (see [Paid sick leave in San Francisco](#)). Remember that employees cannot be fired due to COVID-19 results or needed time off for recovery.



Check your space after the long period of low usage

Check for pest infestation or harborage, and make sure all pest control measures are functioning. Perform routine maintenance on ventilation systems including air ducts and vents. Consider flushing out the stagnant water from the plumbing lines by running water through fixtures. Detailed guidance may be found at: <https://www.sfwater.org/flushingguidance>.

Create a Safer Space

You may need to change the physical layout of your business to help social distancing for customers and personnel. Modifications to consider include creating separate entrances and exits and marking spaces with tape or other decals to indicate six-foot distances.

Serving Bona Fide Meals in Your Outdoor Dining Establishment

To qualify as an Outdoor Dining Establishment, a business must serve food, and is not permitted to provide alcoholic beverage service without also providing real meal service in a bona fide manner.

Bona fide meals means prepared and served by the outdoor dining establishment or another person or business operating under an agreement with the outdoor dining establishment. The service of prepackaged food like sandwiches or salads, or simply heating frozen or prepared meals, shall not be deemed as compliant with this requirement.

To serve **bona fide meals** under this Directive, the Outdoor Dining Establishment must have a **valid permit-to-operate as a food establishment** and any other relevant permits required to normally operate.

Follow all of the Best Practices in the Social Distancing and Health Protocol. To help compliance, you may need to ask your Personnel to make changes and customers to change the way they interact with you. Changes may include the following.

Changes For Personnel:

- As always, employees should wash hands before serving food and in between tasks.
- Employees who wear an apron should change it frequently.
- Dishwashers should be provided with equipment to protect the eyes, nose, and mouth. Dishwashers must be provided impermeable aprons that are changed frequently.
- Employees should each have their own pen/pencil.
- Employees must wear a face covering at all times.
- Limit the number of staff serving each party.

Changes to the dining table:

- Patrons at a single table are limited to 6 customers. We strongly encourage that only individuals in the same household should sit together in an outdoor dining setting. People in the same party seated at the same table do not have to be six feet apart.
- Patrons must wear face coverings while seated and any time they leave the table, such as to



use a restroom. Patrons must wear their face coverings unless they are eating or drinking.

- Patrons must be seated and remain seated while eating their meal. Socializing between tables is prohibited. Patrons may only leave the table to use the restroom or pay for their meal.
- Limit the number of passable objects on table and provide condiments such as ketchup, mustard, hot sauce in single servings upon request.
- Encourage patrons to view the menu on their mobile device or provide laminated menus that are disinfected after each use.
- Discontinue presetting tables with utensils and glassware, provide utensils in a prewrapped cloth or paper napkin and use disposable napkins or tablecloths where possible.
- Tablecloths must be changed after each use.
- Patrons are **not allowed to eat or drink indoors** in the dining establishment. Patrons may enter inside to use the restroom or to pick-up/order food. Paths to restroom or pick-up/take out counter should be clearly marked.
- Provide leftover containers only upon request. Staff should not fill the leftover container. Each party should fill its own leftover containers.

Other business changes for preventing and managing COVID-19 transmission

- Disinfect dining location after every use. This includes tables, chairs, and highchairs/boosters. Follow instructions on disinfectants, inform your guests to allow time to be disinfected.
- Disinfect high touch surfaces such as door handles, counter tops, faucets, etc., at least once per hour.
- Ask customers to voluntarily provide a contact name and phone number for their group for possible contact tracing. Customers are not required to provide contact information.
- Make sure you know who worked each shift in order to facilitate contact tracing..

Traffic, bike and sidewalk safety is very important:

- Parties waiting in line outside your business must remain at least 6 feet apart from each other and from customers who may be waiting in line for other businesses nearby.
- People must be able to freely move on the sidewalk. Avoid blocking anyone’s ability to pass safely, including avoiding blocking ADA-compliant sidewalk access.
- You should address any other traffic, bike lane or mobility safety issues specific to your location.

Monitoring and Adjusting

At least on a weekly basis, think about how your business and personnel are doing, how well you are complying with your Social Distancing and Health Plan, and what changes are needed to improve your response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Look for new guidance from the [SFPDH Communicable Disease Control and Prevention](#) or the frequently updated page on sf.gov with [comprehensive resources for businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How often should restrooms be disinfected.

A. Restrooms should be disinfected at the beginning of the workday (or done at closing) and should be disinfected every 3-4 hours.

Q. What is a bona fide meal?

A. See definition above. A bona fide meal does not include prepackaged food. Bars that do not have a valid permit to operate as a food establishment are not allowed to open.

Q. Can I partner with a Pop-Up to serve bona fide meals at my bar?

A. Yes, bars can establish partnerships with restaurants that have appropriate permits. More information on the [requirements to establish a Pop-Up are found on the Environmental Health website](#).

Resources

More resources and information: The [CDC has considerations for Restaurants and Bars](#). The [FDA has useful information about Restaurants](#). California Department of Public Health and Cal OSHA have an [industry guidance for Restaurants, Bars, and Wineries](#).

The Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) has information on their [website](#) dedicated to COVID-19 Applications for Shared Spaces can be found [here](#).

[Downloadable signage to print yourself](#), or to request [printed posters](#)

How to get tested for COVID-19 in San Francisco sf.gov/citytests/;

Information from the [San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development about COVID-19](#), such as employer requirements, employee benefits, and resources.

[Paid sick leave in San Francisco](#)

CAL OSHA [information on protecting workers from COVID-19](#).

CDC: Resuming Business Toolkit: [CDC Resuming Business Toolkit](#)