Key Components under Consideration for the Forthcoming Outdoor Dining Directive

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Expected Criteria to Operate as an Outdoor Dining Establishment

Later this week the San Francisco Health Officer is anticipating finalization of a Directive with accompanying guidance allowing Outdoor Dining during the COVID-19 Pandemic. To assist regulated food establishments with preparing to open efficiently, this Preliminary Guidance describes some of the expected components of the forthcoming Directive. This Preliminary Guidance is not a comprehensive summary of the expected Directive; the final Directive may include elements that are not mentioned here, and some of this guidance may not be included in the final document. Furthermore, the final Directive is subject to further amendments as local conditions and knowledge about COVID-19 change. The final Directive and accompanying guidance will be posted at https://www.sfdph.org/directives and can also be found from www.sf.gov/reopening.

The Directive is expected to apply to restaurants and bars that provide real meal service in a bona fide manner, and have received the necessary permits to serve food outdoors (each an “Outdoor Dining Establishment”). Outdoor Dining Establishments are not expected to be allowed to provide alcoholic beverage service without also providing a bona fide meal.

Bona fide meals will be defined, most likely as a meal prepared and served by the Outdoor Dining Establishment or another person or business operating under an agreement with the Outdoor Dining Establishment, but is not expected to include the service of prepackaged food like sandwiches or salads, or simply heating frozen or prepared meals. Brewpubs, breweries, bars, pubs, craft distilleries, wineries, and tasting rooms that do not provide permitted bona fide meal service are not expected to be allowed to operate as an Outdoor Dining Establishment under this forthcoming directive.

Protocols Expected to be Required

The Directive is expected to require compliance with the Social Distancing Protocol (contained in Health Officer Order No. C19-07e (the Shelter in Place Order), issued on June 1, 2020, and any future amendment to that order.

Outdoor Dining Establishments are likely to be required to comply with the requirements for food preparation under the existing Food Preparation or Delivery Essential Businesses (Directive 2020-05), as that directive may be amended.

The Directive is likely to require the Outdoor Business Establishment create and implement a Health and Safety Plan.

Expected Best Practices for Outdoor Dining

The forthcoming directive is expected to establish service requirements including:

- Compliance with state and local laws, regulations, and permitting requirements (e.g. ADA access,
relevant permits for chairs and tables, compliance with applicable zoning, and California Department of Alcohol Beverage Control requirements).

- Ensure customers and Personnel comply with Social Distancing and Health Protocol:
  - Require all Personnel to use Face Coverings as required by the Face Covering Order, wash hands frequently, and maintain physical distance of at least 6-feet.
  - Advise customers that they must wear face coverings until seated and any time they leave the table, such as to use a restroom.
  - Establish designated areas/lines with markings on the ground to indicate 6-foot distancing for check-stands, restrooms, ordering food, take out, waiting to be seated.
  - Create directional paths of travel where feasible (e.g. separate entrance and exit for patrons, lines for restrooms).
  - Customers may only enter the establishment to (1) access a bathroom, (2) access an outdoor space that is only accessible by traveling through the restaurant, or (3) place an order at an indoor counter.

- The forthcoming Directive is expected to encourage that service tables be at least six feet apart, however the Directive will describe how Outdoor Dining Establishments can protect customers and Personnel using impermeable barriers if service tables cannot be spaced at least six feet apart. The Directive is expected to require signage or other techniques (e.g. removing chairs or using rope) to block tables that are not available for use.

  Patrons at a single table are expected to be limited to 6 customers, unless all are members of the same household. People in the same party seated at the same table do not have to be six feet apart.

- The Directive is expected to describe how Outdoor Dining Establishments can limit cross-contamination and touching of common items including:
  - Encourage customers to view menus using their own mobile device, or provide disposable, single use menus, or use laminated, menus and sanitize after each use.
  - Remove card stands, flyers, napkin holders, or other items (e.g. candle holders, or flower vases) from tables.
  - Set glassware and utensils after customers are seated. Utensils should be pre-wrapped in a cloth or paper napkin and stored in a clean container by Personnel who have washed their hands just prior to pre-rolling the utensils or napkins.
  - Disposable or cloth napkins are expected to be allowed, and tablecloths and the table completely stripped after each customer. Both used and unused napkins and tablecloths must be disposed of or laundered after each customer. Soiled napkins and tablecloths must be kept in a closed container.
  - Shared food items such as condiment bottles or salt and pepper shakers should not be left on tables and should be provided in single serve containers or portions. Where this is not possible, shared items should be disinfected after each use.
  - Encourage customers to use touchless payment options while abiding by San Francisco’s requirement that cash must be accepted for payment. When touchless payment is not used, avoid direct contact between customers and Personnel, and sanitize any shared pens, counters, trays, or point of sale (POS) systems between each use.
- Discontinue use of shared entertainment items such as board games, pool tables, and arcade games.

- Close areas where customers may congregate, serve themselves, or touch food or other items that other guests may use. Provide these items to guests individually. Discard such items after use or clean and disinfect them after each use, as appropriate.

## Disinfecting and Cleaning

The forthcoming Directive is expected to describe appropriate disinfection and cleaning practices including:

- Maintain sanitizer effective against the human coronavirus at point of sales area, and at guest and Personnel entrances, including areas where individuals must touch a door handle to enter.

- Thoroughly disinfect each customer dining location before opening each day and after every use, including tables, chairs, booster seats, highchairs, booths, and the sides of such surfaces.

- Disinfect highly touched surfaces (e.g. doors, handles, faucets, tables, etc.), and high traffic areas (e.g. waiting areas, hallways, bathrooms) at least once per hour.

- Frequently disinfect bathrooms. Create and use a daily checklist to document each time disinfection of bathrooms occurs. Conspicuously post the checklist inside each bathroom clearly detailing the dates and times the room was last cleaned, disinfected, or restocked.

- Servers, bussers, and other Personnel moving items used by customers, dirty linens, or handling trash bags must wash hands after handling those items, or use disposable gloves (and wash hands before putting them on and after removing them) and change aprons frequently.

- Provide dishwashers with equipment to protect the eyes, nose, and mouth from contaminant splash using a combination of face coverings, protective glasses, and/or face shields. Dishwashers must be provided impermeable aprons and change frequently. Reusable protective equipment such as shields and glasses must be properly disinfected between uses. Cleaned/sanitized utensils must be handled with clean gloves.

- Reusable customer items including utensils, food ware, breadbaskets, etc., must be properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized. Cleaned flatware, stemware, dishware, etc., must be properly stowed away from customers and personnel until ready to use. Use disposable items if proper cleaning of reusable items is infeasible.

## Operations

The Directive and accompanying guidance are expected to suggest Outdoor Dining Establishments increase fresh air circulation for Personnel by opening windows or doors. Outdoor Dining Establishments may consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building’s air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in all working areas.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission has released guidance to assist buildings with flushing their water lines to remove stagnant water in establishments that have seen a long period of disuse.

Outdoor Dining Establishments should remember that major changes to food service operations, such as the addition of cleaning stations, food preparation areas, or food storage areas may require advance approval by the Department of Environmental Health.