



Food Handlers and COVID-19

The novel coronavirus responsible for the current pandemic is a specific strain from a large family of viruses that includes those that cause the common cold. This strain, SARS-CoV-2, causes a respiratory illness designated COVID-19, and symptoms include high fever, intense headache, and difficulty breathing, among others. These symptoms can be more severe in populations considered to be high risk, such as the elderly or people with underlying health conditions, where pneumonia and even death can result.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person to person through respiratory droplets. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Currently, there is no evidence to support that transmission of COVID-19 is associated with food. However, before preparing or handling foods, food handlers should follow these practices.

When sick, stay home from work.



Symptoms specific to COVID-19 include:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Or at least two of the following symptoms:

- chills
- repeated shaking with chills
- muscle pain
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- headache

Employees who are well but have a family member who is sick at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC-recommended precautions. Remember that even if they have no symptoms or mild symptoms, infected people can still spread the virus.

Take precautions when not at work.

- Maintain social distancing—stay 6 feet away from people, and do not shake hands or hug.
- Wear a face mask/covering in public settings where social distancing may be difficult.
- Stay home; avoid being in groups and around people who are sick.



Wash hands frequently and anytime you touch a potentially contaminated object.



1. Wet hands with water.
2. Put on soap.
3. Lather and scrub hands and arms for 20 seconds. Be sure to scrub tops of hands and between fingers.
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
5. Dry hands using single-use paper towel or hand dryer.
6. If required for your job, put on gloves or use hand sanitizer.

In addition to handwashing, maintain other good personal hygiene practices while at work.



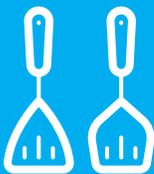
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and then wash your hands.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Wear gloves when handling money.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces more often.

- doorknobs
- toilet room facilities
- tables and chairs
- pens
- point-of-service touch systems



Food-contact surfaces should be cleaned and sanitized.



- cutting boards
- tabletops
- sheet trays
- utensils

Follow safety recommendations while working.

- Maintain 6 feet between you and the customer.
- Ensure customers practice social distancing when waiting for an order.
- Clean and disinfect contacted surfaces between customers.
- Maintain social distancing as much as possible with co-workers while working and during breaks.
- Wear face mask/covering per work and government policies.

