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March 17, 2020

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) information for food premises

What is Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and how does it spread?

COVID-19 is a respiratory infection caused by a newly identified virus. The infection has symptoms similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and common cold: cough, sneezing, fever, sore throat and difficulty breathing. While most people infected with COVID-19 experience only mild illness, severe illness can occur in some people, especially in those with weaker immune systems, the elderly and those with conditions such as diabetes, cancer or lung disease. COVID-19 is transmitted by droplets when a person coughs or sneezes in close contact with another person, or onto surfaces which are later touched by another. The virus can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. The virus causing COVID-19 is not known to become airborne, and does not pass through the skin.

Should I close my food premise?

As of March 17th, 2020 the Provincial Health Officer has ordered all clubs and bars to be closed. This Order takes effect immediately and applies until further notice.

Closing of restaurants has not been recommended in British Columbia at this time, however gatherings of over 50 people are prohibited. To comply with this, your food premise should not have over 50 people on site, including staff and patrons. Additionally, restaurants that are unable to adhere to adequate social distancing (i.e. separating tables by at least 2 metres), must move to take-out service only.

What if an employee is sick?

All food premises should have an updated employee illness policy that is communicated with all staff immediately. Tell your employees that if an employee is sick with acute respiratory illness symptoms, they should remain at home and contact HealthLink BC at 8-1-1. If any employee is showing symptoms for COVID-19, ask them to leave work immediately and have them contact 8-1-1 for further guidance.

What if an employee has returned from travelling?

At this time, the provincial government is recommending against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including the United States. All employees returning from travel outside of Canada are to monitor for symptoms, self-isolate and avoid working for 14 days after returning from travel.

Should I be doing anything different at my food premise to minimize risk of transmission during the COVID-19 outbreak?

There are a number of other new things you should do that include:

1. Encourage social distancing and reduce opportunities for interactions among large groups and prolonged close contact. Current recommendations do not place a specific distance between tables within a restaurant but rather are focused on ensuring sick staff or patrons stay away from the premises and self-isolate.
2. Enhance your premise's sanitation plan and schedule, and ensure staff are practicing proper hygiene including frequent hand washing and proper cough and sneeze etiquette by doing so into your elbow rather than your hands.

A food premise should do the following to reduce COVID-risk among their patrons:

- Enhance and increase the frequency of your cleaning of high-touch areas (such as door knobs, faucets, payment card touch pads, bathroom surfaces, menus and condiments) with regular disinfecting solutions found in your sanitation plan (bleach or quaternary ammonium is recommended). Use detergents prior to disinfecting the surfaces in the premises. Specialized disinfection products are not necessary.
- Ensure service areas are properly cleaned and sanitized according to the product manufacturer's instructions after each customer service, staff shift changes, and before and after closing.
- Do not provide self-serve food to patrons; Have your staff serve all foods and service ware
- Have separate cleaning and sanitizing equipment for customer and kitchen areas.
- Have dedicated staff for cleaning and sanitizing the service area and customer seating.
- Regularly clean and disinfect equipment for handling payments.
- Set up customer tableware and utensils when customers are being seated and not pre-set prior to seating to reduce potential contamination.
- Provide alcohol-based hand rubs in the food premise for patrons.
- Ensure washrooms are well stocked with liquid soap and paper towels at all times, and that warm running water is available.
- Place hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette signs within areas in the food premise (provided in this document)
- Place signage on front doors that tell guests not to enter the premises if they are feeling ill and to contact HealthLink BC 8-1-1 if they have symptoms of COVID-19 (provided in this document)
- Encourage your patrons to use your delivery take-out options (e.g. especially free delivery if it is an option) to encourage your patrons to avoid lining up onsite to pick up meals in person.

What about if my food premise offers self-service like a buffet or salad bar?

At this time, we are recommending self-service buffet and salad bars be restricted from food premises.

We do suggest the following if you offer this type of food service:

- Close the self-service buffet or salad bars; no self-service to be allowed
- Provide hand sanitizer to customers before they access the area
- Have an employee act as an attendant at the buffet to oversee the operation and have staff serve food to customers

Should food premises be using disposable gloves?

Frequent and proper handwashing is always encouraged, as it is the best way of preventing all respiratory virus infections and other foodborne illnesses. If a food premises chooses to use gloves, employees should wash their hands thoroughly before putting on the gloves and change them often. Change the gloves before you handle money or credit card machines, and afterward. Wearing gloves does not exclude you as a food handler from washing your hands.

Do you have further questions?

Please refer to our website for further up-to-date information on COVID-19.

www.fraserhealth.ca

Contact us with questions about food premises and health protection at 604-587-3936; if staff have individual health concerns, please call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1.



NOTICE

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Do not visit if you are sick.

If you are experiencing ANY cough, fever or other respiratory symptoms OR believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19 or any other respiratory illness, please do not enter our facility for the protection of our customers and employees.

If you have any questions, please **call** a health care provider or 8-1-1.

Visit fraserhealth.ca/coronavirus.



CLEAN YOUR HANDS USING SOAP AND WATER



1

Wet hands with
warm water.



3

Lather soap and
rub hands palm
to palm.



5

Rub back of each
hand with palm of
other hand.



7

Rub each
thumb clasped
in opposite hand.



9

Pat hands dry
with paper towel.



11

Your hands
are now clean.



2

Apply soap.



4

Rub in between
and around
fingers and wrists.



6

Rub nail beds
of each hand in
opposite palm.



8

After 15 to 20
seconds rinse
thoroughly under
running water.



10

Turn off
water using
paper towel.