

# Safe at Work: COVID-19 Foodservice Toolkit



## We're here to help.

The COVID-19 outbreak has profoundly impacted your operations. As consumers practice "social distancing" and stay home per public health officials' recommendations, you have had to quickly pivot business models, whether that means reducing operating hours, shutting down in-restaurant dining, or only offering takeout, drive-through and delivery services.

As the leading global professional hygiene brand, we're here to help. Our professional hygiene knowledge helps keep your employees and customers safe and reassured, both through the immediate crisis and beyond. We've developed this toolkit with our recommendations on how to make hand hygiene a priority in your food service operation. We hope you find the information in this toolkit both relevant and useful.

Thank you for your efforts on the front lines of this crisis, and we hope that you and your staff stay safe throughout these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Hanneke Kuipers  
Marketing Director – Foodservice  
Essity Professional Hygiene



## COVID-19

Hygiene is always of the utmost importance when handling, distributing and serving food. This responsibility has taken on even greater significance for the restaurant industry as COVID-19 continues to spread around the world. To prevent any avoidable pressure on our already strained healthcare systems, we must now serve our communities by taking the necessary steps to protect them from not only foodborne illnesses, but also the novel coronavirus.

COVID-19 can spread in your restaurant between employees and customers through droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through contaminated surfaces or objects. But your foodservice operation can help reduce the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak by reviewing with team members the importance of regular hand hygiene and routine disinfecting procedures with a special focus on the virus that causes the disease.

This toolkit provides you with the resources needed to help reinforce best practices in your restaurant during this outbreak and beyond.



### How can COVID-19 spread in your restaurant?



**Through the air  
by coughing and  
sneezing**



**Close personal contact,  
such as touching or  
shaking hands**



**Touching an object or  
surface with the virus on  
it, then touching your  
mouth, nose, or eyes**

# Hand hygiene

If your restaurant continues to operate amid COVID-19, it's essential to place an increased focus on frequent and proper handwashing to protect your staff and customers. Recommendations for handwashing in foodservice operations have only become more critical as a result of the pandemic. Your team should wash their hands after:

- Using the restroom
- Leaving and returning to the kitchen and prep areas
- Taking out garbage
- Handling cleaning solutions
- Eating, drinking, smoking or chewing gum or tobacco
- Handling raw meat, poultry or seafood
- Touching the body or clothing
- Sneezing, coughing, or using a tissue
- Handling money
- Before putting on gloves and after removing them

Ensure that handwashing stations are always stocked with soap and paper hand towels. Below are resources to reinforce proper hand hygiene techniques within your foodservice operation.



## Resources

**Handwashing procedure**

Wash your hands with soap, water and paper towel!

For more information visit [www.torkglobal.com](http://www.torkglobal.com)

**TORK**

**Handwashing procedure**

[Download](#)

**Hand rub procedure**

Disinfect your hands

For more information visit [www.torkglobal.com](http://www.torkglobal.com)

**TORK**

**Hand rub procedure**

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**TORK** Think ahead.

**Tork Clean Care**  
Hygiene tips for food service staff  
Wash your hands!

**Hygiene tips for foodservice staff**

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# Hygiene beyond handwashing

Personal hygiene is crucial when working with food and especially during the COVID-19 outbreak. While proper hand hygiene is critical, other aspects of personal hygiene should also be considered.

1. Hair should be covered when preparing or handling food and tied back when serving.
2. Change work clothes daily. Staff should not use their work clothes outside of the facility, and machine-washable garments should be washed with hot water to kill any bacteria or viruses.
3. Do not wear jewelry, wristwatches or nail polish. If employees' skin is cracked or wounded, they should use gloves when handling food.
4. Towels can harbor unwanted microbes that can easily transfer to food either directly or via hands. If towels are used, ensure these are washed frequently and replaced if visibly dirty. Chef or kitchen towels should not be used for drying clean hands; use paper towels instead.

When possible, provide personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks, hair nets and disposable gloves for staff. Staff should not work if they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms. Allow your employees enough recovery time after sickness.



"Gloves may be used by food workers but must be changed frequently and hands must be washed between glove changes and when gloves are removed. Gloves must be changed after carrying out non-food related activities, such as opening/closing doors by hand, and emptying bins. Disposable gloves should not be used in the food work environment as a substitute for handwashing. The COVID-19 virus can contaminate disposable gloves in the same way it gets onto workers' hands."

—World Health Organization

# Surface cleaning

To help reduce the spread of COVID-19, restaurants must continue to follow routine cleaning and sanitizing recommendations for high-touch surfaces, including:

- **Back of house:** Door handles, light switches, dispensers, food contact surfaces, hand contact surfaces, sink faucets and handles and utensils.
- **Front of house:** Door handles, light switches, dispensers, sneeze guards, menus, tables and chairs, countertops, takeout counter and register/credit card machines.
- **Bathrooms:** Door handles, light switches, dispensers, sink faucets and handles, toilet seats and flushers.

Create a clear protocol for employees to follow and schedule frequent cleanings throughout the day as people may be able to contract COVID-19 by touching surfaces contaminated with the virus. Studies suggest that the virus can live on surfaces from a few hours to several days.

Below are some resources to help ensure your restaurant remains clean and hygienic to reduce the spread of COVID-19.



## Resources

**Cleaning vs. Sanitizing**

There's a big difference between cleaning and sanitizing. Cleaning removes food and other types of dirt from a surface such as a countertop or table. Sanitizing reduces the number of germs on the food surface to safe levels. To be effective, cleaning and sanitizing must be a 5-step process.

- 1 SCRAPE OR REMOVE FOOD FROM THE SURFACE
- 2 WASH THE SURFACE
- 3 RINSE THE SURFACE
- 4 SANITIZE THE SURFACE
- 5 ALLOW THE SURFACE TO AIR DRY

**WHEN TO CLEAN & SANITIZE**

Everything in your operation must be kept clean, but any surface that comes into contact with food must be cleaned AND sanitized. These surfaces must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized:

- Each time you use them.
- Before you use them to prepare a new batch.
- After handling different raw TCS food and ingredients.
- When you begin working with a different type of food.
- At the end of each shift, but at least every four hours if you are in contact with.

For more information and resources on food safety, visit [foodsafetyfocus.com](http://foodsafetyfocus.com)

**Cleaning vs. sanitizing (via National Restaurant Association)**

[Download](#)



**COVID-19 and food safety: guidance for food businesses**

Interim guidance  
7 April 2020

**Background**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has confirmed that the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus is a global health emergency. This document provides interim guidance for food businesses on how to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

**Key messages**

- COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that spreads through droplets and aerosols.
- Food businesses should follow good food hygiene practices and implement additional measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Staff should be encouraged to wear face masks and avoid close contact with others.
- Food businesses should ensure that all food contact surfaces are cleaned and sanitized regularly.

**COVID-19 and food safety: guidance for food businesses (via WHO)**

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Think ahead.

# Dispenser placement recommendations

As you continue to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforce proper hand hygiene through optimal dispenser placement. Here are some guiding principles for areas in your restaurant.

- 1 Entrances**

Provide employees and customers picking up orders the opportunity to practice good hygiene with hand hygiene stands at restaurant entrances. Post visible notices that promote proper hand hygiene and physical distancing.
- 2 Kitchen**

Ensure there are fully stocked dispensers for soap and paper towels at handwashing sinks and smaller hygiene dispensers at individual workstations for easy access. Touch-free dispensers can reduce contamination and the spread of germs.
- 3 Kitchen exit**

Keep a dispenser filled with white disposable towels and cleaning supplies by the kitchen door to encourage regular wiping down of the front counter where customers may be picking up orders during the pandemic. Also, place hand sanitizer dispensers at all doors to back-of-house rooms.
- 4 Front counter**

Place hand sanitizer dispensers near the front counter to promote hand sanitizing between customer pickup transactions, especially those that involve cash, which is known to spread germs. Provide one-at-a-time napkin dispensers, so customers touch only the napkins they take.
- 5 Restrooms**

Ensure you have enough dispensers for soap, towels, tissues and hand sanitizer. Restock them regularly. Touch-free dispensers reduce touchpoint surfaces, and hand sanitizer dispensers further encourage personal hygiene during the pandemic. Providing tissues for coughing or sneezing into can help prevent the spread of pathogens.
- 6 Waste Bins**

Place covered waste bins near all dispensers to avoid paper towel waste and cross-contamination. Also, place waste bins by doors, so paper towels can be used to open the door and then thrown out to reduce contamination.

