

Protocols for Grocery Stores and Retail Food Markets: Appendix B-1

Recent Updates: (Changes are highlighted in yellow)

12/9/2020: Updated to clarify that stand-alone grocery stores, where the principal business activity is the sale of food may open at 35% occupancy based on applicable building or fire code occupancy. All others must remain at 20% occupancy.

12/6/2020:

- In compliance with the State's Regional Stay at Home Order issued on December 3, 2020, and effective December 6, 2020 at 11:59PM (PST) until further notice, all retail food markets must:
 - Limit occupancy to 20% of building occupancy. Occupancy is based on the Building Code.
 - Implement a system for monitoring building occupancy.
 - Institute special hours for seniors and others with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.
- Face coverings must be worn by employees working in cubicles, including cubicles equipped with partitions.
- At all times when eating or drinking, employees must maintain a 6-foot distance from others and should eat and drink outdoors, if possible. Eating or drinking at a cubicle or workstation is preferred to eating in a breakroom.
- Frequently touched surfaces are disinfected on an hourly basis.

The requirements below are specific to retail food markets, including but not limited to grocery stores convenience stores, liquor stores and other retail locations that sell food or beverage products and have a health permit issued by the Department of Public Health as a Food Market Retail. In addition to the conditions imposed on these specific retail businesses by the Governor, these types of businesses must also be in compliance with the conditions required by this protocol.

Stand-alone grocery stores may be open at 35% capacity based on fire or building department occupancy limits. For the purposes of this protocol, a stand-alone grocery store is defined as a store where the principal business activity is the sale of food. All other business that have a health permit as a retail food market may be open at 20% capacity based on fire or building department occupancy limits.

For purposes of a grocery store this protocol shall apply to all departments within the retail food market, such as general merchandise, produce, florist, meat, deli, and bakery. Retail Food Markets may also need to comply with the following guidance:

- DPH Protocols for Restaurants, Breweries, and Wineries; however, no food may be taken "to-go" from the restaurant and consumed within the retail food market.

In addition, any independently operated businesses collocated within the premises of the Retail Food Market are required to complete the appropriate protocol for their business.

Please note: This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available so be sure to check the LA County website <http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/> regularly for any updates to this document.

This checklist covers:

- (1) Workplace policies and practices to protect employee health

- (2) Measures to ensure physical distancing
- (3) Measures to ensure infection control
- (4) Communication with employees and the public
- (5) Measures to ensure equitable access to critical services.

These five key areas must be addressed as your facility develops any reopening protocols.

All businesses covered by this guidance must implement all applicable measures listed below and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is not applicable to the business.

Business name: _____

Facility Address: _____

Maximum Occupancy, per Fire or Building Code, for Standalone Grocery Stores based on 35% Capacity: _____

Maximum Occupancy for all Retail Food Markets subject to this Protocol based on 20% Capacity: _____

Date Posted: _____

**A. WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO PROTECT EMPLOYEE HEALTH
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO THE FACILITY)**

- Everyone who can carry out their work duties from home has been directed to do so.
- Vulnerable staff (those above age 65, those with chronic health conditions) are assigned work that can be done from home whenever possible.
- All employees have been told not to come to work if sick. Employees understand to follow DPH guidance for self-isolation and quarantine, if applicable. Workplace leave policies have been reviewed and modified to ensure that employees are not penalized when they stay home due to illness.
- Workers are provided information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on [government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including employee's sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 exposures occurring between March 19 and July 5 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#).
- Work processes are reconfigured to the extent possible to increase opportunities for employees to work from home.
- Upon being informed that one or more employees test positive for, or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (case), the employer has a plan or protocol in place to have the case(s) isolate themselves at home and require the immediate self-quarantine of all employees that had a workplace exposure to the case(s). The employer's plan should consider a protocol for all for all quarantined employees to have access to or be tested for COVID-19 in order to determine whether there have been additional workplace exposures, which may require additional COVID-19 control measures. See the public health guidance on [responding to](#)

[COVID-19 in the workplace.](#)

- [Screenings](#) are conducted before employees may enter the workspace. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills and whether the employee is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These checks can be done remotely or in person upon the employees' arrival. A temperature check should also be done at the worksite if feasible.
- In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer must report this cluster to the Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821. When a cluster is identified at a worksite, the Department of Public Health will initiate a cluster response which includes providing infection control guidance and recommendations, technical support and site-specific control measures. A public health case manager will be assigned to the cluster investigation to help guide the facility response. The Department of Public Health will need the facility's immediate cooperation to determine whether the cluster of cases constitutes an outbreak of COVID-19.
- Employees who have contact with others are offered, at no cost, an appropriate face covering that covers the nose and mouth. The covering is to be worn by the employee at all times during the workday when in contact or likely to come into contact with others. Employees who have been instructed by their medical provider that they should not wear a face covering should wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves should not be used. Employees need not wear a face covering when the employee is alone in a private office or a cubicle with a solid partition that exceeds the height of the employee when standing.
- In compliance with HEALTH OFFICER ORDER FOR CONTROL OF COVID-19: TIER 1 SUBSTANTIAL SURGE RESPONSE issued November 28, 2020, all employees must wear face coverings at all times except when working alone in private offices with closed doors or when eating or drinking. The exception made previously for employees working in cubicles with solid partitions exceeding the height of the employee while standing is overridden during the effective period of the temporary order, from 12:01AM (PST) on November 30, 2020 until further notice.
- To ensure that masks are worn consistently and correctly, employees are discouraged from eating or drinking except during their breaks when they are able to safely remove their masks and physically distance from others. At all times when eating or drinking, employees must maintain at least a six-foot distance from others. When eating or drinking, it is preferred to do so outdoors and away from others, if possible. Eating or drinking at a cubicle or workstation is preferred to eating in a breakroom if eating in a cubicle or workstation provides greater distance from and barriers between workers.
- Occupancy is reduced and space between employees is maximized in any room or area used by employees for meals and/or breaks. This has been achieved by:
 - Posting a maximum occupancy that is consistent with enabling a distance of at least six feet between individuals in rooms or areas used for breaks;
 - Staggering break or mealtimes to reduce occupancy in rooms or areas used for meals and breaks; and
 - Placing tables six feet apart and assuring six feet between seats, removing or taping seats to reduce occupancy, placing markings on floors to assure distancing, and arranging seating in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact. Use of partitions is encouraged to further prevent spread but should not be considered a substitute for reducing occupancy and maintaining physical distancing.
- Employees are instructed to wash or replace their face coverings daily.
- Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for employees who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items, such as shopping carts, hand baskets, and items to be restocked.
- All workstations are separated by at least six feet.
- Distribution areas (for curbside pickup), break rooms, restrooms and other common areas are disinfected **hourly**, on the following schedule:

- Distribution area _____
 - Break rooms _____
 - Restrooms _____
 - Other _____
- In compliance with wage and hour regulations, breaks are staggered to ensure that six (6) feet between employees can be maintained in break rooms at all times.
- Disinfectant and related supplies are available to employees at the following location(s):

- Hand sanitizer effective against COVID-19 is available to all employees at the following location(s):

- Employees are allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands.
- A copy of this protocol has been distributed to each employee.
- To the extent possible, each worker is assigned their own tools, equipment and defined workspace. Sharing held items is minimized or eliminated.
- Workers are provided time during their shifts to implement cleaning practices. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the employee's job duties.
- All policies described in this checklist other than those related to terms of employment are applied to staff of delivery and any other companies who may be on the premises as third parties.
- Optional—Describe other measures:

B. MEASURES TO ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- The number of customers in a **stand-alone grocery store** is low enough to ensure physical distancing but in no case more than **35%** of the maximum occupancy of the **stand-alone grocery store** capacity, as determined by the applicable **Building** or Fire Code. **The number of customers in all other retail food markets is low enough to ensure physical distancing but in no case more than 20% of the maximum occupancy of the retail food market capacity, as determined by the applicable Building or Fire Code.**
- Maximum number of customers in the facility limited to: _____
- The retail food market monitors all entrances in order to track occupancy. Where possible, provide a single, clearly designated entrance and separate exit to help maintain physical distancing.
- Be prepared to queue customers outside while still maintaining physical distance, including through the use of visual cues. If necessary, an employee (or employees if there is more than one entrance) wearing a cloth face covering may be posted near the door but at least 6 feet from the nearest customers to track occupancy and to direct customers to line up six feet apart outside the entrance if the establishment has reached its occupancy limit.
- Measures are implemented to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between employees and customers. This can include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings, colored tape, or signs to indicate where workers and/or employees should stand.)
- Measures have been taken at check-out stations to minimize exposure between cashiers and customers, such as Plexiglas barriers. Barriers should be at least 6 feet high when measured from the floor. Signs are posted near entrances, check-out lanes and registers to remind customers of physical distancing.
- Tape or other markings identify both a starting place for customers entering the check-out line and 6-foot

intervals for subsequent customers who are joining the line.

- Employees have been instructed to maintain at least a six (6) feet distance from customers and from each other in all areas of the store. Employees may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or as otherwise necessary.
- Restrooms required for public use remain accessible to the public.
- Employee workstations are separated by at least 6 feet and common areas are configured to limit employee gatherings to ensure physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Break rooms and other common areas are configured to limit employee gatherings to ensure physical distancing of at least 6 feet. Where possible, outdoor break areas with shade covers and seating are created to help ensure physical distancing. In compliance with wage and hour regulations, employee breaks are staggered to help maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Physical distancing requirements are implemented at loading bays and contactless signatures have been implemented for deliveries.
- Non-employee truck drivers, delivery agents, or vendors who are required to enter retail locations are to wear cloth face coverings.

C. MEASURES FOR INFECTION CONTROL

- The HVAC system is in good, working order; to the maximum extent possible, ventilation has been increased. 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 offices and other spaces.
- Contactless payment systems are in place or, if not feasible, payment systems are sanitized regularly. Describe:

- Common areas and frequently touched objects in the customer pickup and payment (e.g., tables, doorknobs or handles, credit card readers) are disinfected on an hourly basis during business hours using EPA approved disinfectants.
- Workspaces and the entire facility are cleaned at least daily, with restrooms and frequently touched areas/objects cleaned more frequently.
- Retail store hours have been adjusted to provide adequate time for regular deep cleaning and product stocking. Stagger stocking so that employees are in different aisles.
- Where possible, encourage the use of debit or credit cards by customers. Require customers who bring reusable bags to bag their own purchases, or, if an employee bags the groceries, they should change gloves after handling customer bags. Encourage customers to clean their reusable bags frequently.
- Visitors arriving at the establishment are reminded to wear a face covering at all times while in the establishment or on the grounds of the establishment. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Only individuals who have been instructed not to wear a face covering by their medical provider are exempt from wearing one. To support the safety of your employees and other visitors, a face covering should be made available to visitors who arrive without them.
- Symptom checks are conducted before visitors may enter the facility. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These checks can be done in person or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through [signage](#) posted at the entrance to the facility stating that visitors with these symptoms should not enter the premises.
- Customers arriving at the site with children must ensure that their children stay next to a parent, avoid

touching any other person or any item that does not belong to them, and are masked if age permits.

- Areas which sell ready to eat foods have signs posted instructing customers that food and beverages may not be consumed within the store.
 - In-store bars, soda fountains, self-service food items, bulk-bin options and product sampling have been discontinued.
 - Where possible, hands-free devices, including motion sensor lights, contactless payment systems, automatic soap and paper towel dispensers and timecard systems have been installed.
 - Hand sanitizer and trash cans are available to the public at or near the entrance of the facility.
 - Provide a method to sanitize shopping cart and hand basket handles – either by providing sanitizing wipes adjacent to the storage area for shopping carts and baskets or by having an employee manage the process between customer uses.
 - All payment portals, pens, and styluses are disinfected on an hourly basis.
 - Prohibit the use of customer’s reusable cups for filling beverages.
 - Optional - Describe other measures (e.g. providing senior-only hours, incentivizing non-peak sales):
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D. MEASURES THAT COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

- A copy of this protocol or the COVID Compliance Certificate is posted at all public entrances to the facility.
- Signage at the entry and/or where customers line up notifies customers of options for and advantages preordering and prepayment.
- Signage is posted that reminds customers to maintain social distancing of six (6) feet, wash hands or use sanitizer upon entry, stay home if they are ill or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and to communicate changes to service offerings. Signage should be posted in clearly visible locations, include pictograms, and be made available digitally (e.g., through e-mail).
- Online outlets of the establishment (website, social media, etc.) provide clear information about store hours, required use of face coverings, policies in regard to preordering, prepayment, pickup and/or delivery and other relevant issues.

E. MEASURES THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES

- Dedicated shopping hours for vulnerable populations, including seniors and those medically vulnerable have been instituted, if appropriate, preferably at a time following a complete cleaning.
- Services that are critical to the customers/clients have been prioritized.
- Transactions or services that can be offered remotely have been moved on-line.
- Measures are instituted to assure access to goods and services for customers who have mobility limitations and/or are at high risk in public spaces.

Any additional measures not included above should be listed on separate pages, which the business should attach to this document.

You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER**



Business Contact Name:

Phone number:

Date Last Revised:
