



COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Essential Businesses in Cecil County

On April 5, 2020, Governor Hogan issued Executive Order Number 20-04-05-02, Delegating Authority to Local Health Officials to Control and Close Unsafe Facilities. The Executive Order authorizes the Local Health Officer to issue orders as necessary to require businesses to operate in a manner that is in compliance with the social distancing guidelines published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Maryland Department of Health.

In addition, on April 15, 2020, Governor Hogan issued Executive Order Number 20-04-15-01, Requiring Use of Face Coverings under Certain Circumstances and Requiring Implementation of Certain Physical Distancing Measures. The Executive Order requires the use of face coverings by staff and customers of certain businesses as well as implementation of other measures to facilitate infection prevention.

The Cecil County Health Department is providing this guidance to assist essential businesses in their efforts to comply with the Governor’s Executive Order. CCHD appreciates your efforts to protect our community. If your organization has not yet implemented protocols for social distancing, please develop and implement a plan as soon as possible.

COVID-19 Prevention Measures for Essential Businesses

Based on CDC and MDH guidance, essential businesses should take the following preventive measures:

Face Coverings

- Post signage that face coverings are required at each entrance to your establishment and in other nearby areas where they are likely to be seen by customers and clients.
 - a. Face covering requirement applies to all customers over age nine while inside the establishment.
- Direct staff to wear face coverings while working in areas accessible to customers as well as staff common areas.
- Contact local law enforcement authorities, as needed, if customers refuse to comply with the requirement.

Signage

- Place posters and other signage that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance to your establishment and in other nearby areas where they are likely to be seen by customers and clients.
- Post signage encouraging customers and employees to maintain six feet of distance from others.

Employee Communications

- Send communications and post signage to discourage attendance of sick employees.
- Management should send regular communications and post signage that includes specific direction to employees that if they become ill, they are to leave the facility immediately and notify HR that they are doing so without penalty.

Employee leave and absence policies

- Sick employees should be encouraged to stay home.

Healthy People. Healthy Community. Healthy Future.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.....	410-996-5550	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.....	410-996-5160
ALCOHOL AND DRUG RECOVERY CENTER.....	410-996-5106	HEALTH PROMOTION.....	410-996-5168
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.....	410-996-5113	MENTAL HEALTH AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS SERVICES.....	410-996-5112
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES.....	410-996-5130	TTY USERS FOR DISABLED: MARYLAND RELAY.....	800-201-7165
DISEASE CONTROL.....	410-996-5100	EN ESPAÑOL.....	410-996-5550 EXT 4680

- Employee leave policies should specifically permit employees to take paid leave if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, cohabitate with someone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or have reason to believe that they have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Strive for flexible leave policies for staff who need to stay home due to school/childcare dismissals.
- Relax requirements for medical documentation in the event of COVID-19

Facility screening process for symptoms

- All employees must be screened daily for COVID-19 symptoms upon entry to the facility using a standardized questionnaire and temperature check.
- In the event that a thermometer is unavailable, the business should, at minimum, use the symptom screen questionnaire. A sample questionnaire is attached for reference.
- Employees must be excluded if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Social distancing compliance throughout the facility, including all work stations, break rooms, lockers, entrances

For Customers

- Place floor markings to ensure adequate distance (i.e. at least 6 feet) between customers.
- Establish customer flow patterns (e.g. separate entry/exit points, designate aisles as one-way) to prevent close contact between customers.
- Place signage outside of the facility to ensure distance between customers while waiting outside.
- Designate an employee to enforce social distancing outside of the facility.

For Employees

- Place signage and/or floor markings to ensure adequate distance (i.e. at least 6 feet) between employees.
- Implement policies prohibiting in-person staff meetings or work assignments unless at least 6 feet of distance between employees can be maintained at any time.
- Modify work station/worker placement to ensure that social distancing recommendations are met (i.e., limit contact of people within 6 feet from each other for 10 minutes or longer).
- Modify break areas to accommodate social distancing (e.g. remove chairs at dining tables to encourage distancing).
- Other recommended actions:
 - Encourage staff who are able to telework to do so.
 - Stagger work schedules to reduce employee exposure.

Availability of and access to handwashing/disinfection

- Proper hand hygiene and sanitation must be readily available to all attendees and employees.
- Ensure access to handwashing stations including soap and water or, at minimum, provide access to hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Allow staff to wash their hands at least once every 30 minutes.

Enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices to prevent the transfer of SARS-CoV-2

- Create a schedule to frequently disinfect surfaces that customers regularly touch, including shopping carts, door handles, checkout areas, and other high-touch surfaces.
- Sanitize, or provide customers with a means to sanitize, handles of carts and baskets available for customer use.
- Ensure that employees have access to approved disinfectants to clean surfaces.

- Ensure a clean and sanitary environment in all work areas. Have employees disinfect frequently-touched surfaces such as doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails. CDC provides detailed environmental and disinfection recommendations.
- Disinfect shared work surfaces between each shift.
- Regularly disinfect surfaces in employee common areas.
- Use EPA-approved disinfectants. The current list can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.

Facility visitor/customer policies

- Older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions or compromised immune systems who are at increased risk of serious illness from COVID-19 should be encouraged to stay home (including employees).
- For groceries, banks, and other essential establishments, consider setting aside dedicated times such as early morning or immediately after intensive disinfection to serve highly vulnerable populations.
- Limit the number of people in the facility, or in particular areas of the facility, at one time to ensure that all customers and employees can maintain 6 feet of distance.

Compliance Checks and Enforcement

Unscheduled compliance checks may be conducted by the Cecil County Health Department or state or county law enforcement entities at any time while the executive order is in effect. The Statewide Emergency Proclamation by the Governor is enforceable by law.

We will be encouraging Cecil County citizens to report issues with social distancing in retail establishments. Failure to comply with social distancing guidelines may result in the issuance of an order requiring an establishment to close until a social distancing plan is developed and implemented.

While the Cecil County Health Department can provide guidance on a plan, it is the responsibility of each retail establishment to determine which measures will ensure a safe environment for customers. Repeated violations of social distancing requirements may result in an Order to close for the duration of the emergency.

Please ensure that your business has implemented an adequate social distancing plan within ten (10) business days of receipt of this notice. We recommend that each business designate a lead employee to ensure compliance with this guidance.

If you have any questions about this guidance, you are encouraged to call the COVID-19 call center at 410-996-1005, Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm.

Resources for Essential Businesses

U.S. Centers for Disease Control, Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

Maryland Department of Health, Resources for Businesses and Employers: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/business-resources>

COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire for Employees

The Cecil County Health Department recommends that all employers put COVID-19 screening protocols in place. You can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your facility by screening employees on a daily basis.

Screening questions:

Since your last day of work, have you had any of the following:	Yes	No
A new fever (100.4°F or higher), or a sense of having a fever?		
A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?		
New shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?		
A new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?		
New muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition, or that may have been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)?		
Sudden loss of taste or smell		

If an employee answers YES to any of the screening questions, they should not work. Please advise the employee to return home and to contact their primary care provider, as needed.

Summary of Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

BE HEALTHY, BE CLEAN



- Employees - Stay home or leave work if sick; consult doctor if sick, and contact supervisor
- Employers - Instruct sick employees to stay home and send home immediately if sick
- Employers - Pre-screen employees exposed to COVID-19 for temperature and other symptoms



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer per CDC
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Wear mask/face covering per [CDC](#) & [FDA](#)



- Never touch Ready-to-Eat foods with bare hands
- Use single service gloves, deli tissue, or suitable utensils
- Wrap food containers to prevent cross contamination
- Follow 4 steps to food safety [Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill](#)

CLEAN & DISINFECT



- Train employees on cleaning and disinfecting procedures, and protective measures, per CDC and FDA
- Have and use cleaning products and supplies
- Follow protective measures



- Disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently
- Use EPA-registered disinfectant
- Ensure food containers and utensils are cleaned and sanitized



- Prepare and use sanitizers according to label instructions
- Offer sanitizers and wipes to customers to clean grocery cart/basket handles, or utilize store personnel to conduct cleaning/sanitizing

SOCIAL DISTANCE



- Help educate employees and customers on importance of social distancing:
 - Signs
 - Audio messages
 - Consider using every other check-out lane to aid in distancing



- Avoid displays that may result in customer gatherings; discontinue self-serve buffets and salad bars; discourage employee gatherings
- Place floor markings and signs to encourage social distancing



- Shorten customer time in store by encouraging them to:
 - Use shopping lists
 - Order ahead of time, if offered
- Set up designated pick-up areas inside or outside retail establishments

PICK-UP & DELIVERY



- If offering delivery options:
 - Ensure coolers and transport containers are cleaned and sanitized
 - Maintain time and temperature controls
 - Avoid cross contamination; for example, wrap food during transport



- Encourage customers to use "no touch" deliveries
- Notify customers as the delivery is arriving by text message or phone call



- Establish designated pick-up zones for customers
- Offer curbside pick-up
- Practice social distancing by offering to place orders in vehicle trunks