

# Restaurant Industry

The “Tennessee Pledge” is a plan to help Tennesseans get back to work in a safe environment, restore their livelihoods and reboot our state’s economy.



**Tennessee**  
*Pledge*

# Universal Guidelines

## For All Businesses

The State is recommending safeguarding protocols for all businesses in Tennessee, including those that are re-opening and those essential businesses that have remained open during the Safer at Home order. These safeguarding protocols are based on the recommendations of the CDC and OSHA. To support the Pledge for Tennessee, all employers and employees should take steps to reopen safely, help other industries be able to open more quickly, and help Tennessee remain healthy and open for business.

## Employers

- **Screen all employees reporting to work for COVID-19 symptoms** with the following questions:
  - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
  - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
  - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
  - Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
  - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- **Temperature screening employees:**
  - Best practice: employers to take temperatures on site with a no-touch thermometer each day upon arrival at work.
  - Minimum: Temperatures can be taken before arriving. Normal temperature should not exceed 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Direct any employee who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms** (i.e., answers yes to any of the screening questions or who is running a fever) to leave the premises immediately and seek medical care and/or COVID-19 testing, per CDC guidelines. Employers should maintain the confidentiality of employee health information.
- **Implement workplace cleaning and disinfection** practices, according to [CDC guidelines](#), with regular sanitization of high-touch surfaces at least every two hours
- **Mitigate exposure in the workplace** by implementing social distancing guidelines and modify scheduling
- **Allow employees to work from home as much as possible**
- **Plan for potential COVID-19 cases**, and work with local health department officials when needed (e.g., monitor and trace COVID-19 cases, deep clean facilities)
- **Covered employers and employees should be aware of the provisions of the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act**, which allows for paid sick leave

or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons, such as for self-quarantining or seeking a medical diagnosis for COVID-19 symptoms

- **Update the Employee Illness Policy** to include the symptoms of “COVID-19” or create a COVID-19 specific policy. All staff should sign the policy, and the policy should be posted for confirmation
- **Limit self-service options** (customer samples, communal packaging, food/beverages, etc.)
- **Post extensive signage on health policies**, including the following documents in the workplace to help educate building occupants on COVID-19 best practices:
  - [CDC guidance to stop the spread of germs](#)
  - [CDC guidance on COVID-19 symptoms](#)

## Employees

- **Stay home when feeling ill**, when exposed to COVID-19 (e.g., positive household member case), or if diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Employees who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the CDC (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home
- **Increase hygiene practices**—wash hands more frequently, avoid touching face, practice good respiratory etiquette
- **Wear a cloth face covering (not an N-95 or medical mask, which should be reserved for healthcare workers)** while at work and in public to help protect against the spread of the virus
- **Practice recommended social distancing** to the greatest extent possible - **“Further is safer”**
- **Abide by guidelines established by employer**, which may include the use of gloves, social distancing practices in the workplace, and increased sanitation

Businesses should follow guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as any applicable federal or regulatory requirements. In addition to these general guidelines for all Tennessee employers and employees, each employer and employee should refer to their industry-specific guidance, as set forth on the following pages. These industry-specific safeguarding protocols have been created with the input of private sector working groups in partnership with the Economic Recovery Group. Protocols are subject to change and may be released on a rolling basis. Companies doing business in Tennessee should follow Tennessee guidance and best practices outlined in this document.

# Restaurant Industry

## Safeguarding Guidance

In addition to strict adherence to CDC guidelines, the State recommends restaurants put into place an assortment of measures to protect consumers and employees, including:

## Employee Protection

- Follow sanitation frequency guidance contained in this document at all times
- Have dedicated face coverings and dedicated gloves (i.e., only used by one person) worn by all employees, at all times
  - Should not be N-95 or medical variety – these should be saved for use by healthcare workers
- Require all employees to report any symptoms of illness to supervisor and require notification of COVID-19 positive case in employee's household
- Provide ServSafe COVID-19 training for all food handlers as soon as possible

## Consumer Protection

- Limit the number of customers in the restaurant to 50% of seating capacity
- Tables should be spaced at least 6 feet apart
- Limit tables to no more than 6 guests per table
- Mark any indoor or outdoor waiting area so that social distancing standards are met (options can include a text system to alert guests of available seating, an intercom system, or only one member of a party being allowed to wait in the waiting area)
- Bar areas should remain closed
- Live music should not be permitted
- Screen customers for illness upon their entry into the restaurant:
  - Best practice: Temperature checks for every customer. Customers with temperatures above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should not be permitted on premise
  - Minimum: Question customers regarding COVID-19 symptoms
    - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
    - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
    - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?

## Business Process Adaptations

- Place hand sanitizer stations in restaurant lobby and bathrooms, as well as at cashier stations
- Sanitize all front-of-house contact surfaces including door handles, screens, phones, pens, keyboards and other areas of hand contact every two hours, at a minimum
- Use menus that are disposable or sanitized between each use
- Use rolled silverware/napkins stored in sealed bins (gloves should be used by staff while rolling silverware in designated sanitary areas)
- Sanitize all tabletop items, including condiments, after each table turns (or use disposables)
- Sanitize chairs, especially where contact occurs, after each table turns
- Do not offer self-serve buffets, condiments on a counter for use by multiple tables, or beverage station re-use