



**LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
**DHM 2021-17**  
**Appendix 1 - Requirements and Guidance for Restaurant In-Room Dining**  
**January 22, 2021**

The following are requirements and guidelines for restaurants and foodservice businesses to allow them to operate with dine-in customers.

**1) Requirements**

**All licensed food establishments shall:**

- a. Limit capacity to no more than 50% of rated occupancy.
- b. Arrange seating to provide a minimum of six (6) feet between tables.
- c. Limit group size to no more than eight (8) people.
- d. Disinfect tables and chairs after each customer use.
- e. Disinfect all high touch surfaces at least every four (4) hours.
- f. Prior to working, screen each individual working or providing services for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 by checking the body temperature of each individual upon arrival at work and dismissing any individual with a temperature above 100.4° F or who is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 including, but not limited to
  - o One of the following: new onset of dry cough, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, or new onset of loss of taste or smell;
  - o Two of the following: chills longer than two hours, congestion and/or runny nose, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, nausea, diarrhea or vomiting.
- g. Require front of the house employees who have contact with the public including but not limited to greeters, wait staff, and cashiers, to wear a face covering over their mouth and nose when present and working in any area open to the public.
- h. If allowing customer self-service from buffets and salad bars, make hand sanitizer available to patrons and ensure serving utensils are changed out every thirty (30) minutes.
- i. Require all patrons age five (5) and older to wear a face covering over their mouth and nose while indoors unless the individual maintains at least six (6) feet of separation at all times from anyone who is not their household member, they are seated to eat or drink, or they are immediately consuming food or beverages.

**2) Guidance for all licensed food establishments:**

- a. Post DHM requirements at entry to the facility. Monitor employee health during their shift, quickly excusing from work any employee who exhibits COVID-19 [symptoms](#) of fever of 100.4 or greater, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated muscle pain, headache, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, new loss of smell, nausea, diarrhea or vomiting. Staff exhibiting symptoms should contact their health care provider or complete the [online COVID assessment](#). Communicate daily with staff the urgency of informing their manager if they begin to experience symptoms.
- b. Create a response plan for any instance of an employee with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

- c. Create employees “contact pods” that only work together and redesign workflow to eliminate cross-pod interactions that meet the close contact criteria (contact within six (6) feet for several minutes or more). Close contacts of COVID-19 positive individuals are required to self-quarantine. Working in “contact pods” may reduce the number of employees that must self-quarantine for 14 days in the event that an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- d. Back of the house employees should wear face coverings whenever possible.
- e. Whenever possible, practice physical distancing between staff. Redesign workflow, designate tasks and workstations to specific employees or contact pods to minimize commingling and maximize physical distancing.
- f. Create and implement an enhanced cleaning/[sanitizing](#) schedule for all food contact surfaces, and cleaning/[disinfecting](#) of non-food contact surfaces. Increase disinfection frequency of commonly touched surfaces throughout the entire facility (both front and back-of-house), including but not limited to, door handles, credit card machines, bathrooms. Although the food code does not emphasize front-of-house sanitation, COVID-19 requires enhanced cleaning/disinfection of any frequently touched but non-food contact surface, in addition to enhanced sanitization of food contact surfaces.
- g. Remove table items, including but not limited to, table tents, shakers, bottles, and use only single use, to-go packaging.
- h. Enhance employee safety training, emphasizing proper handwashing and hygiene etiquette.
- i. Have hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers.
- j. Designate with signage, tape, or by other means appropriate, physical distancing spacing for employees and customers. Facilitate and designate physical distancing for those waiting to enter your establishment.
- k. When possible, provide distinct walking lanes to minimize close contact as customers are being seated to conform with physical distancing practices. E.g. in a table/booth layout, central tables can be removed, and markings can be installed designating the path for seating.
- l. Implement touchless payment options when possible.

See State of Nebraska [Restaurant In-Room Dining Reopening Guidelines](#) for additional guidance.