

What you need to know as a food operation

How it spreads

Coronaviruses are spread primarily from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. It spreads between people who are in close contact (less than two metres/six feet). Currently, there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food.

What you should do:

- Advise employees to stay at home if they are sick.
- Encourage proper and frequent handwashing.
- Ensure staff are washing hands before starting work, before handling any food, after handling raw food, after handling waste, after cleaning duties, after using the toilet, after blowing their nose, after sneezing or coughing, after eating, drinking or smoking, before handling clean dishes and utensils and after handling dirty dishes and cutlery.
- Ensure liquid soap and paper towels are available at all hand wash sinks in the food service and washroom facilities.
- Ensure mechanical dishwashers are sanitizing properly. A high temperature dishwasher must reach a minimum 65.5 °C (150 °F) on the wash cycle and 82 °C (180 °F) on the rinse cycle for at least 10 seconds. Chemical dishwashers /glasswashers must provide 50 to 100 ppm chlorine or 12.5 ppm iodine.
- Ensure alcohol-based hand sanitizers are widely available to staff and patrons.
- Regularly clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces (customer tables, equipment, utensils, cutting boards) after each use or as often as necessary.
- Sanitizers such as chlorine and quaternary ammonium (quats) are effective sanitizers on food contact surfaces. Allow a one minute contact time or as directed on the label.
- Check sanitizer strengths with test papers (100 ppm for chlorine, 200 ppm for quats, and 12.5ppm for iodine).
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least twice per day (i.e. doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- Avoid touching mouth, eyes and nose.
- The routine use of facemasks by staff is **NOT recommended**.

Remind employees that anyone who becomes sick with a fever and cough at work should go home immediately and call Health Links – Info Santé at: 204-788-8200, or toll free elsewhere in Manitoba at 1-888-315-9257.

Social distancing strategies for food handling establishments include:

- avoiding greetings that involve touching, such as handshakes;
- disinfecting frequently used surfaces;
- switching operations to take out or delivery only;
- distancing tables in the restaurant;
- minimizing prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two metres) contact between other individuals in public.

Employers should review their business continuity plans and take steps to ensure their employees can stay home when ill, without facing barriers such as the requirement for sick notes.

Being prepared also means seeking official sources of information to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate information is being used.

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the Manitoba public health website at www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/. For health questions or more information on respiratory illness, Manitobans can phone Health Links – Info Santé at **204-788-8200** or **1-888-315-9257** (toll-free).

Hand hygiene and cough etiquette posters are available in 32 different languages:

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/health-providers/coronavirus-resources/hand-hygiene-posters/>

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/health-providers/coronavirus-resources/cough-etiquette-posters/>

If you need to speak with a Public Health Inspector, please call **204-945-4204** or email: healthprotection@gov.mb.ca.