



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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www.scceh.com

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

April 9, 2020

Social Distancing Guidelines for Food Facilities

Dear Food Facility Owner/Operator:

Thank you for your continued service to our community during the COVID-19 outbreak. You provide an essential service to the public and your continued function is important. It is also important that you, your employees, and the public take any reasonable and necessary steps to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 within our community.

The following are things that food facilities must do to maintain social distancing:

1. **Limit the number of people in the food facility.** Too many people in a space cannot maintain a minimum 6-foot distance from each other. To calculate the number of people a food facility can have divide your public area floor space by 133 square feet (sf). 133 sf equates to a 6-foot radius around each person. Below are some examples of floor space sizes and the maximum amount of people that can be in that space.

Floor space (sf) of the food facility	Maximum number of people**
750 square feet	5 people
1,000 square feet	7 people
5,000 square feet	37 people
10,000 square feet	75 people

Count any employees that work within the public spaces.

2. **Provide an employee that can control the flow of people into and out of the food facility.**
 - a. Maintain no more than the maximum number of people within the facility.
 - i. Having additional shoppers wait outside is safer than having an over-crowded food facility.
 - ii. Provide spacing signage outdoors to maintain proper distancing in the waiting line.
 - b. Recommend restricting multiple family members or others from entering as a group. We recognize that there may be a group of two (i.e. an older person being assisted by someone or a couple that would be acceptable.)
 - i. This can reduce the effectiveness of distancing efforts,
 - ii. Reduces the number of customers a facility can be served at a time, and
 - iii. Increases the risk of spread of the virus to the group or others.

3. Post signs and provide visual cues for customers to maintain the 6-foot distance from others while shopping. These can be:

- a. Signs at the front door, or sign stands with the facility,
- b. Stickers or tape marking spots (at least 6 feet apart) where people should wait in lines.
- c. Arrows showing direction of travel or direction of the line at a check-out stand.

4. Face coverings by employees and customers is recommended.

- a. It is recommended that employees wear face coverings especially when maintaining proper distancing may not be possible. Face coverings should not be surgical or medical masks, which are in short supply and urgently needed by healthcare workers. Instead, face coverings such as bandanas, scarfs, or home-sewn fabric coverings should be used. Note that wearing a cloth face covering does not eliminate the need to follow social distancing and hygiene measures, including physically distancing yourself from others and frequently washing your hands. Here's Federal and State guidance to face coverings:
[Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
[California Public Health Officials Release Guidance on Use of Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- b. We also recommend you encourage customers to have face coverings when in the food facility.
- c. Additionally, the installation of a plastic shield (barrier) between the employee at a cash register and the customer is another way to maintain separation.

5. Complete and follow the recommendations of Appendix A in the Shelter in Place order.

- a. Post the document at all entry points.
- b. Appendix A can be found at www.scceh.com

If you have any questions about social distancing, signage, Appendix A or COVID-19 please contact us at (831) 454-2022 or visit our website at www.scceh.com.

Sincerely,



Dr. Marilyn Underwood, PhD, REHS
Director of Environmental Health