



Town of Walpole
Health Department
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You are receiving this notice as you were identified as a food establishment in the Town of Walpole. The Walpole Health Department has been closely following the continuously changing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. The Department of Public Health (DPH) recognizes that there are several procedures that are not in place yet, however they are working closely with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Federal Government to develop more guidelines as more information is gathered.

The CDC and DPH have been providing very informative updates via their websites:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

DPH: <https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

As you know this is a very fluid situation and information regarding COVID-19 is changing rapidly. The Walpole Health Department wants to keep you informed so that you can take the necessary steps to protect your patrons.

The Walpole Health Department is reminding food establishments of specific Federal Food Code requirements to ensure food safety and reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19 and Influenza. It is highly recommended that you meet with all employees to remind them of the following:

1. Food Employee Illness Reporting Requirements

- All employees are required to sign this document when first hired. The Person in Charge should have a copy of these signed forms.
- The Person in Charge is required to notify the Board of Health of specific conditions listed in Chapter 2 of the Food Code.
- As always, encourage ill employees to stay home.

2. Proper handwashing by all employees

- Correct procedure – wet hands with warm running water, lather with soap and scrub between fingers, on the back of your hands and under nails. Wash for at least 20 seconds. Dry hands using a single use drying provision.
- Food handlers are required to wash their hands before and after completing a task. All employees in a food establishment should be reminded to wash their hands as often as possible, especially after handling menus, money, customer plates, phones, etc.
- All employees are required to wash their hands before leaving the restroom.
- Proper handwashing may only be completed when the hand sink is fully stocked – hot water 100-110 degrees F, soap and paper towel dispensers fully stocked as needed.

3. Proper glove use

- Glove use is only effective if used properly and if the gloves fit correctly. Hands must be washed before putting gloves on and before changing to a fresh pair. Gloves should be changed as soon as they become soiled or torn, before starting a new or different task, at least every four hours during continual use (or more often as necessary), after handling raw meat, seafood, or poultry and before handling ready-to-eat food. Gloves must be removed properly and never reuse or wash them.

4. Dishwashers

- Must be at the correct temperature in order to clean and sanitizer properly. High Temperature Dishwashers should have a Wash temp of 160 degrees F and a Rinse temp of 180 degrees F. Establishments should be using their internal max registering thermometer to check the wash temperature if a high temperature dishwasher is in place.
- Low temperature or chemical dishwashers dispense a sanitizing solution must be checked using a test strip.

5. Compartment sink

- Scrape or rinse away any leftover food on the dishes. In the first bay, scrub all surfaces of the dishes in warm, soapy water. Sanitizing will not kill pathogens if grime is in the way.
- In the second bay, rinse the dishes you previously cleaned in clear warm water. Soap residue can prevent sanitizer from killing germs. Good rinsing makes sanitizing more effective.
- In the third bay, soak rinsed dishes in a chemical sanitizing solution or hot water. Dishes should be completely submerged. If using a chemical sanitizer, read the directions on the container to know how long the dishes must stay in the solution (contact time).
- The final step is to air-dry the dishes. This is very important, as towel-drying cleaned and sanitized dishes may contaminate them.
- It is very important you follow the product manufacturer instructions. Directions should be posted above the 3bay sink for employees to refer to.

6. Sanitizer – Test strips are required to check the sanitizer concentration. You must use the correct strip for the correct sanitizer.

- Chlorine should be at 50-100 ppm and Quaternary Ammonium should be 200-400 ppm (or according to manufacture specifications)
- Always follow directions for chemicals exactly as written on the bottle. MSDS sheets must be available onsite. Never mix chemicals.

7. Clean and Disinfect non-food contact surfaces

- Keep non-food contact surfaces clean and use diluted bleach solution or alcohol solution with at least 70% alcohol to disinfect those surfaces. (Cleaning and disinfecting are both important.)
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that customers touch often such as tables, door handles, serving utensils, tables, chair, menus, etc.
- Items directly touched by customers must be cleaned and sanitized after use and before use by a new customer. Specifically tables, menus, condiments, chairs, etc.

8. Food contact surfaces

- Must be cleaned with a food approved cleaning solution, such as chlorine or quaternary ammonium mentioned above.
- Sanitizer solutions/buckets should be tested when first mixed, and changed at least every four hours. Sanitizing cloths should be stored in the solution in between use.
- It is important to clean and sanitize surfaces in the kitchen frequently such as door handles, sink handles, refrigerator door handles, etc. Dampness can cause remaining viruses on surfaces to survive and multiply, avoid this by cleaning, disinfecting and drying frequently.

Additional recommendations that may help your establishment, customers and employees:

- Hand wash signage should be placed in the restrooms of your establishment to remind staff and patrons the proper steps to wash hands to prevent the spread of germs.
- Various signs throughout the kitchen for food employees regarding proper handwashing should located at the hand wash sinks.
- Keep up-to-date logs in the kitchen for employees to track sanitizer concentrations.
- Dedicate an employee to wipe down menus with sanitizer after use with a disinfectant.

- Implement a check list for a designated employee to clean and disinfect various surfaces throughout the establishment at specific times and frequently during the day.
- Self-service/buffets should be discontinued for the time being. Management team should considered other alternative methods to provide food to patrons.
- Designating an employee to be responsible for wiping down shopping carts with disinfectant before handing off the shopping cart to new customer. - Hand sanitizer available at all check out registers/ counters.
- Management should be holding routine staff meetings to keep their staff up to date with the evolving COVID-19 so that additional preventative measures can be implemented as needed.

These additional procedures and protocols that your food establishment puts in place will help the public to better understand that food safety and public health are a high priority in your establishment.

We ask that you take the time to work with your management team and staff to assure that all of the above items are being met and that your food establishment is taking the proper precautionary measures to better protect all patrons entering your food establishment and to prevent community spread.

The Health Department will continue to share new information with you, as necessary, about this evolving situation and please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns: 508-660-7321.



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