



April 10, 2020

Inspection Services

4 Boltwood Avenue
Amherst, MA 01002
413.259.3030

Guidance for Grocery Stores

The Amherst Health Department is asking for all establishments open to the public to follow the recommendations released by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as follows:

1. Reduced Occupancy Levels. Maximum occupancy shall be limited to 40 percent of the normal permitted occupancy level. Staff shall be assigned and positioned to monitor the occupancy levels.
2. Staff shall be position at the exterior of the building to monitor customers waiting if lines begin to form outside the store.
3. Delivery and curbside pickup is encouraged.
4. Appropriate signage should be installed to communicate with customers. If practical, one-way aisles should be designated. Floor markings should be used to identify proper spacing between customers.
5. Provide alternative hours, at least one hour every day in the early morning, for adults 60 years and older in order to limit their potential exposure. These hours must be conspicuously posted and should be enforced by the owners of the establishments. It is further encouraged to provide at least one hour every day in the morning for customers who self-identify as immune compromised.
6. Deploy strategies to reduce COVID-19 exposure for their customers and employees including but not limited to:
 - Provide access to handwashing facilities and allow employees sufficient time to wash hands
 - Provide a sufficient number of handwashing facilities with hot water soap and paper towels
 - Display instructions on how to wash hands

lather hands - rub vigorously for 20 seconds - rinse thoroughly with warm water

- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Provide disinfecting wipes at point of entrance for customers to disinfect carts, at check out, and/or other appropriate locations
- Initiate procedures to ensure that both employees and customers remain at least 6 feet apart at all times at the entrance, exit and interior of the establishment

- Designate and enforce 6 foot separations at entrance (may use traffic cones or other markers) and limit the entry of people that may occupy the establishment at one time, such that only one person per every 36 square feet of interior space is allowed
 - Display exterior signage prominently posted at entrance – [see example below](#)
 - Monitor and direct interior flow of foot traffic by designating and enforcing one way directions for aisles (may use signs with arrows and/or tape on the floor)
 - Monitor and enforce 6 foot separation at checkout points, paths and other counters with designated staff or floor markings
 - Discontinue any salad bar or other self-serve prepared or other open food stations such as coffee, frozen drinks, soda fountains, olive station etc.
 - Prohibit any open free samples or tastings
 - Sanitize frequent touchpoints throughout the day
7. Accommodate employees who fall within the higher-risk populations, as defined by the CDC guidelines, with lower-exposure work assignments, or allowing them to stay home.
 4. Close to the public for a sufficient time overnight to allow for proper sanitizing and restocking.
 5. Employees shall not allow use of reusable bags.
 6. Stores may choose to provide recyclable paper bags, compostable plastic bags, or single-use plastic bags at no charge to the consumer.
 8. Disinfect high-touch areas frequently throughout the day. Follow manufacturers' recommendations for proper use of products.
 9. Designate an employee to wash carts and basket handles after each customer use.
 10. Provide safety equipment for staff including (see below listed) and enforce use of equipment among all owners, managers and employees:
 - gloves;
 - face covers (non-medical grade, woven cloth recommended);
 - plexiglass or other barrier/shielding between employees and consumers at checkout or service counters
 11. Employees who appear in good health may still carry the virus COVID-19, even though they exhibit no symptoms. For this reason, all owners, managers and employees shall comply with social distancing and hygiene protocols:
 - Maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet apart;
 - Wash hands frequently;
 - Wear a non-medical face covering;
 - Use disposable gloves as required by the food code;
 - Avoid touching your face;
 - Do not report to work if you are sick
 12. Screen employees upon arrival to work by asking about any symptoms or potential exposure.

13. Send home employees with symptoms or suspected exposure to COVID-19 following DPH Guidelines.

Additional Resources:

<https://www.amherstma.gov/3519/Coronavirus>

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

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

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/grocery-and-pharmacy-store-order/download>

<http://www.massmed.org/Patient-Care/COVID-19/COVID-19-Quarantine-Information/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.html>

Signage prominently posted at entrance:

IMPORTANT INFORMATION- PLEASE READ BEFORE ENTERING

- Do not enter if you are feeling ill.
- Wear a non-medical face covering, such as a cloth mask or similar item.
- A minimum of 6 feet of social distancing is required upon entering this establishment.
- Follow the designated store traffic pattern.
- Practice proper respiratory etiquette (sneeze/cough into elbows, not hands).
- Frequently wash your hands and refrain from touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Frequently use hand sanitizer as needed.
- Hours designated for adults 60 years and older are daily (when store is open) at: _____

Contact an Amherst Health Official at 413-259-3030 with questions or for any assistance:

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