



Health Department

Environmental & Consumer Health

COVID-19 SURFACE CONTAMINATION GUIDELINES: RESTAURANTS

According to the CDC:

- Transmission of COVID-19 occurs much more often through respiratory droplets than through inanimate objects
- Transmission of COVID-19 from surfaces to persons has not been documented but the virus may remain on surfaces for hours to days
- Cleaning and disinfection is the best method of prevention for the spread of COVID-19
- There is no current evidence linking COVID-19 to food. However, proper food safety and hygiene procedures should be followed as usual.ⁱⁱ

Length of survivability on surfaces:

- One studyⁱⁱⁱ found:
 - Hard surfaces such as metal, glass, and plastic can harbor COVID-19 for up to 2-3 days although the viral load was reduced.
 - No viable COVID-19 could be measured on cardboard after 24 hours.
- A literature review of 22 studies of other human coronaviruses (SARS, MERS)^{iv} with the results believed to be relevant to COVID-19:
 - The viruses can survive up to 9 days on hard surfaces at room temperature with an average of 4-5 days.

Recommended cleaning and disinfection procedures for frequently touched hard surfaces:

- Clean visibly dirty surfaces first with detergent or soap and water.
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces once every hour.
- Change disinfectant solution at least every 4 hours.
- Disinfection options^v include:
 - Household bleach – use 1/3 cup regular (not scented or splashless) household bleach to 1 gallon water. Follow manufacturer's directions for use and proper safety procedures.
 - Quaternary ammonium per manufacturer's instructions
 - Alcohol solution of at least 70% alcohol
 - Other EPA-registered disinfectants. https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf

"Promoting health and wellness in our community through education and prevention"

449 AUSTIN AVENUE · PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS 77640 · (409)983-8807 OFFICE · (409)983-5012 FAX ·
www.portarthurtx.gov

Recommendations:

- Ensure dishwashers and/or three-compartment sinks are used properly and have the appropriate level of sanitizer for the final rinse.
- Prohibit employees from bare hand contact with ready to eat food. This includes operations with approved bare hand contact policies in place.
- Use disposable gloves while rolling clean silverware.
- Disinfect menus (or use one-time paper menus) and bill folders after each customer.
- Clean and disinfect frequently including but not limited to:
 - Door handles and push plates including refrigeration equipment, kitchen sink fixtures
 - Dispensing utensil handles
 - Ice scoops
 - Walk-in refrigerator and plastic freezer curtains
 - Tables and any condiments (salt/pepper shakers) after each table turn, chairs, highchairs
 - Customer service counters
 - Bar area
 - Public and employee restroom fixtures including soap dispenser plate, towel dispenser handles, and door handles, baby changing stations
 - Trash receptacle touch points
 - 3-compartment sink and mop sink
 - Cleaning tools and buckets
 - All touchscreen equipment (computers, iPads, drink machines)
 - Employee break rooms

Employee Precautions

- Place posters that encourage [staying home when sick](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), and [hand hygiene](#) at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
- Provide cleanliness re-training” to reinforce knowledge of safe food handling and sanitation procedures.
- Remind employees and vendors not to enter the restaurant if exhibiting symptoms or if caring for a family member diagnosed or with symptoms of COVID-19.
- Employees who appear to be ill upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be sent home immediately.
- Instruct wait staff and counter staff to practice social distancing between themselves and patrons as much as possible. (6ft distance)
- Consider temporarily assigning food employees at higher risk for coronavirus such as people 60 or older, people with underlying health conditions (heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes) or those with weakened immune systems or those who are pregnant to non-public-contact duties, if possible.

Public Precautions

- Offer on Drive-thru and Take out services only. No Dine-in service regardless of indoor or outdoor.
- Provide signs reminding customers to practice social distancing while in waiting areas or while in a line, to cough into sleeve, using tissue, etc.
- Have signs posted in visible locations asking customers to remain home if they are sick, even with mild illness.

“Promoting health and wellness in our community through education and prevention”

449 AUSTIN AVENUE · PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS 77640 · (409)983-8807 OFFICE · (409)983-5012 FAX ·

www.portarthurtx.gov

Re-opening Recommendations if closed due to incident/outbreak:

- Clean and disinfect all hard surfaces according to the above recommendations
- Discard any ready-to-eat food an infected employee may have contacted.

ⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

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

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.03.09.20033217v1.full.pdf>

^{iv} [https://www.journalofhospitalinfection.com/article/S0195-6701\(20\)30046-3/fulltext](https://www.journalofhospitalinfection.com/article/S0195-6701(20)30046-3/fulltext)

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