

# GETTING BACK TO WORK IN NEVADA

## FOOD TRUCKS TIP SHEET

Your business may look radically different as it begins to recover from COVID-19 impacts. To move forward, your business will need to adapt to new safety and health guidelines and respond to new and increased expectations from staff and customers. New practices and guidelines will become commonplace in order for customers to feel safe frequenting their favorite food trucks.

To help you get started we have put together this tip sheet that focuses on three important areas: **React, Recover, Be Resilient**. We conclude the tip sheet with a list of **Resources** to help you.

### **Requirements:** *Nevada Phase 1 Reopening*

On May 7, 2020, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak announced *The Roadmap to Recovery for Nevada: Phase 1*. In the roadmap, food establishments are strongly encouraged to continue curbside, delivery, and/or pickup operations. The following guidelines are provided for reopening food establishments during Phase 1 of the reopening.

Food establishments are allowed to open under strict social distancing requirements:

- Reservations should be required when practicable to better achieve social distancing requirements
- If waiting to be served, patrons must practice social distancing – mark 6 foot socially distanced waiting areas with cones for each party or ask guests to wait in their cars
- Food establishments shall require employees to wear face coverings and should encourage customers to wear face coverings, to the maximum extent practicable
- Employers must perform a daily assessment of employees for any COVID-19 type symptoms (fever, cough, and trouble breathing); require employees to stay home when symptomatic
- If provided, on-premises seating is limited to no more than 50% of available seating capacity and tables must be spaced at least 6 feet apart; encourage guests to sit only with their own party
- Self-service stations (condiment bars, salad bars, beverage stations, etc.) are NOT permitted

All businesses *are encouraged to*:

- Have hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers
- Frequently perform enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces
- Designate – with signage, cones, tape or by other means – six feet of spacing for employees and especially customers to maintain appropriate social distancing while ordering and waiting for food
- Remind employees to stay home if they have any COVID-19 type symptoms, use cough and sneeze etiquette, and practice frequent hand hygiene
- Implement separate operating hours for the elderly and vulnerable customers

## **React:** *Get ready to open your food trucks again!*

**Be Prepared** – Based on the above guidelines, below is a starter checklist of what you might need or find helpful to purchase or prepare before you reopen. **Always check with the state, your county, and your local health district for current operating guidelines because requirements are being frequently updated and local jurisdictions can impose stricter requirements:**

- Face masks for employees
- Face shields for employees, where applicable (for example, dishwashers)
- Nitrile gloves for employees
- EPA-approved COVID-19 cleaners & disinfectants (See RESOURCES for link)
- Touchless hand sanitizer stations
- Touchless payment systems
- Plexiglass/clear acrylic partitions for ordering windows
- Chalkboards or whiteboards for menus
- Web-based menus that guests can view via phone or mobile app
- Touchless thermometer for employee use
- Pre-packaged condiments

### **Expand Services to Meet your Customer's Needs**

Have you already started pre-order service and/or delivery options as part of your reaction to COVID-19? If not, start considering now if you can add pre-order service and/or delivery to your operations:

- Offer on-line pre-order service with timed curbside pickup and online, over-the-phone, or touchless payment choices
- Partner with delivery services such as DoorDash, Grubhub, and Uber Eats to have more avenues for your food to be delivered. Drivers should use hand sanitizer or new gloves before each delivery
- Offer family meals, meal kits, and quarantine kits for families to cook, prepare and eat at home
- Consider bundling orders with high demand items such as complimentary packets of disinfecting wipes or small bottles of hand sanitizer
- If signature is required for credit or debit payment, offer single use complimentary pens with your business name and logo
- Consider offering cocktails and/or beer to go if licensed and where allowed

## **Recover:** *Expect new ways of doing business. The new food truck experience.*

Reopening requires food establishments to adapt to new operating requirements that include the above social distancing and enhanced health and safety guidelines. Some best practices and tips that may help implement the new guidelines include:

### **Operations**

- Deep clean your food truck before the initial reopening and then daily upon reopening
- Maintain frequent housekeeping practices on high touch surfaces such as ordering and pickup window shelves; it is recommended to routinely clean dirty surfaces first with soap and water and then use US EPA-approved COVID-19 disinfectants (maintaining recommended product manufacturer dwell times) to limit the spread of the virus
- Assign a dedicated staff member to regularly disinfect touch points such as food delivery windows once guests have departed
- Establish new operating hours so you can close earlier and each night an employee can thoroughly clean the food truck
- Where applicable, ensure 6ft spacing between any existing tables; consider temporarily eliminating picnic tables, asking guests to sit only with their party, and recommending customers take food home
- Provide touchless hand sanitizer stations for employees and guests, particularly at truck entry points for employees and at food ordering and distribution points for guests
- Provide pre-wrapped/rolled disposable utensils
- Eliminate condiment stations and self-serve utensils (use pre-packaged)
- Menus:
  - Set up chalkboards or whiteboards to display your menu
  - Update your website to be mobile-friendly and post your menu for guests to view on their phones
- Payment:
  - Use a touchless, non-signature payment system
  - Have customers pay through an app on their phones

### **Employees**

- Provide and require employees to wear face masks
- Provide employees with nitrile gloves to wear and/or provide instruction on proper hand hygiene to practice between interactions with each guest
- Consider no touch thermometers to conduct pre-shift employee temperature checks and do not allow anyone with a temperature over 100F degrees to work (keep a log of daily assessments and shifts)
- Stagger employee lunches and breaks for social distancing

### **Guests**

- Require social distancing outside the food truck and/or have customers wait in their cars until their food is ready
- Mark off six-foot distances with cones or tape in front of the delivery and pickup window(s) to maintain social distancing at the ordering window and food waiting area
- Provide signage and encourage patrons with COVID-19 symptoms to order for delivery or have a healthy family member pick up their food order

## **Be Resilient:** *This is all new. Adapt as necessary. Let's stay in business together.*

Business basics will be more important than ever. Evaluate your profit and loss statement. Look for ways to reduce operating and food costs. Analyze your cash flow and new breakeven to evaluate the impacts of the new guidelines and best practices on your food truck operations. As Nevada reopens in phases, you may need to continually adjust your operations. Here are a few things to think about:

### **Get Help**

- Contact a business development counselor at the Nevada SBDC by calling 800.240.7094 – we can help you assess your operations and decide on best strategies for your business
- For questions about cleaning and disinfecting, strategies to control new waste streams, or other environmental questions, contact an environmental business advisor at BEP at 800.882.3233.

### **Communicate**

- Keep communicating with your customers on social media and your website with announcements about your reopening and where your food truck will be, make sure they know you are not shut down for good
- Be open about the measures you are taking to meet the Phase 1 reopening guidelines; consider signage outside your food truck so customers can be aware of the steps you are taking
- Provide information on your website to let your customers know what you are doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to meet new industry guidelines
- Be patient, communicate openly with staff while waiting for customers to return

### **Expanded Services**

- Offer take-out with curbside pickup
- Offer delivery options
- Offer gift cards
- Consider new locations such as neighborhoods and smaller communities to reach new audiences where allowed. Announce times and dates through social media
- Offer meal kits for cooking at home
- Offer to sell fresh fruits and vegetables and other food items, where allowed

### **Potential Cost-Saving Measures**

- Revamp and simplify your menu to increase margins, minimize food prep and reduce food waste
- Revisit your menu costing and adjust pricing if necessary, to cover costs
- Reduce hours to minimize utility bills and increase time for cleaning

### **Creative Marketing**

- Update or redesign your website; make sure it is mobile friendly
- Use micro social media and focus on neighborhoods in order to bring in local customers
- Research regulations for local neighborhoods to see if you can host an event for residents with other food trucks
- Advertise through local homeowner associations
- Consider sharing some favorite recipes, wine and drink pairing suggestions, and other tips for customers on social media; create a following and keep in touch with customers

## Resources

Below are additional resources to help restaurants react, recover, and be resilient in the face of COVID-19.

### **Nevada SBDC Small Business Recovery Procurement List**

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vRaNqMHmNRt3ZAIsoivMUghuvuZBOsNx8d6WG-S7HVjfPlsqrb5HfYXd6OCl2-9FA/pubhtml>

### **US EPA List N: Disinfectants Approved for Use Against SARS-CoV-2**

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

### **Center for Disease Control (CDC) Guidance for Businesses and Employers**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

### **Nevada Health Response | COVID-19 in Nevada | Roadmap to Recovery for Nevada**

<https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Industry-specific-Guidance-Documents.pdf>

### **Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) COVID-19 Guidance for Food Establishments**

<https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/coronavirus/guidance-to-reopen-businesses-and-permitted-facilities/>

### **Nevada Restaurant Association Coronavirus Information**

<https://www.nvrestaurants.com/welcomeback.html>

### **Washoe County Restaurants and Food Trucks Guidelines**

<https://www.nvrestaurants.com/uploads/1/2/6/8/126860803/restaurant-and-food-trucks.pdf>

### **National Restaurant Association COVID-19 Reopening Guidance**

<https://restaurant.org/Downloads/PDFs/business/COVID19-Reopen-Guidance.pdf>

### **Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development**

<https://www.diversifynevada.com/>

### **Nevada Department of Business & Industry, Occupational Safety & Health Administration**

<http://dir.nv.gov/OSHA/Home/>

### **Small Business Federal Financial Assistance**

<https://www.coronavirus.gov/smallbusiness>

*DISCLAIMER: This guidance document is intended as general information and is not provided nor intended to act as a substitute for legal advice or other professional services. The Nevada SBDC advises the regulated business community to read all applicable regulations and to check with state and local authorities, including local health districts, for the latest in guidelines and requirements for businesses reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

The Nevada Small Business Development Center (SBDC) guides and assists Nevadans looking to start and grow businesses. We are available to counsel on business planning and management issues raised in this tip sheet. One-on-one counseling services are free and confidential.

The Business Environmental Program is affiliated with the Nevada SBDC and provides free and confidential environmental compliance and management assistance and can help your business think about cleaning and waste issues. Our focus is on making Nevada's businesses stronger and more environmentally responsible.

**This tip sheet will be updated as new information becomes available.**

***Stay Safe to Stay Open Nevada!***